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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. JACKSON-LEE of Texas).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 30, 2009.

I hereby appoint the Honorable SHEILA JACKSON-LEE 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 6, 2009, 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 30 minutes and each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, limited to 5 minutes.

LIFE SUSTAINING TREATMENT PREFERENCES ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, as we approach health care reform, there is no area that is more vital for honest discussion and careful analysis than what happens at end of a patient's life. For most of us, we will get the majority of our lifetime health care in that last year. Indeed, for many it is just the last few months of life, we use the most doctor care, the most intervention in terms of medical procedures, the most days in a hospital. This is clearly the time of greatest stress both for the patient and the family as they watch their loved one enter what is often a struggle in these last few months.

The evidence is that this is the hardest period to be able to make those critical decisions. We don't want to force spur-of-the-moment action for families when they are talking about things that have great consequence for the quality of life for not just a ''patient'' but a family member, the ability to extend the quality of life, and perhaps deal with recovery. This is also the worst time for people to go on autopilot check out, to have a default option where they just turn decisions over to whatever the local medical activity may be on that site without a thought and consequence to what the individual wishes of the patient and their family may be.

There is strong evidence that in many cases the very intensive activities—the tubes, the procedures, the operations, the ventilators—actually don't prolong life, and they certainly impact in a negative sense the quality of life, the way that the patient may be able to interact with their family and friends in those last few days and their mind-set and their pain level.

This research has sparked action from coast to coast. Many States have developed a new end-of-life care directive called Orders For Life Sustaining Treatment. They are being developed in over 30 States. They help the seriously ill patient identify their treatment preferences using clear, standardized language. It is written as actionable medical orders signed by a physician, and they help communicate patient preferences regarding the intensity of medical intervention, transfers to hospitals, use of antibiotics, artificially administered nutrition and resuscitation.

Members of my family and I have concluded that we don't want those extraordinary measures as our default, and have signed instructions accordingly.

What we find, however, is that too many people don't have access to the counseling and activities for them to be able to make an informed decision. The irony is that the Medicare system will spend thousands and thousands of dollars on intense medical intervention, intense medical activities, but they won't spend a few dollars to pay a doctor to have a conversation with a patient and the family about what they can expect, what their choices are, and to be able to engage with the patient and the family to decide what they want to have happen.

I guess that we don't do it to save money; but the evidence suggests that when people actually have a choice, they choose things that not only improve their quality of life, but actually save money. Why don't we give individual patients and their families that choice under Medicare?

That's why I will be introducing the Life Sustaining Treatment Preferences Act which will provide coverage under Medicare for consultations regarding end-of-life treatment options. It is time for Medicare to be able to address the needs that will truly reflect the preferences, the wishes, and the quality-of-life choices for Medicare patients and their families. It is the humane, compassionate thing to do. It will help us allocate our health care resources more appropriately to treat what people want, and it will relieve the pressure on the health care system so the default isn't always the most intensive, expensive interventions that often deteriorate the quality of life in those final days.

I would urge my colleagues to look at this option and join me in making sure that we modernize Medicare to meet the needs of patients and their families in their final hours.

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PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT OF AIG

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHERMAN. Madam Speaker, this country is being treated to Kabuki theater in three acts. In the first act the American people are told, ''We feel your anger. We share your anger. You have a right to be angry at AIG and all the others on Wall Street that are bailed out.''

But in the second act, Wall Street nitpicks to death any practical proposal that would be adverse to the interests of Wall Street.

And then in the third act, we transfer a trillion dollars to Wall Street on very favorable terms. That is to say, terms that are unfavorable to the taxpayer, terms very favorable to Wall Street.

Now the first act is one in which those of us who are angry are told that we are blinded by our anger and therefore should not participate in the decision-making. Rather, that should be left to those who are blinded by their gullibility for Wall Street's demands and entreaties. We are told that those of us who are angry are stupid peasants with pitchforks and torches. We are told that it is wrong to be angry with the bonuses because that is just the tip of the iceberg, and it is wrong to be angry with the $170 billion we gave to AIG because that is too complicated to talk about.

The fact is AIG should have been in receivership; that would have voided its employment contracts, and we need to compare AIG to GM in just a second.

The second act is one where we nitpick to death any proposal that Wall Street disagrees with. We had a proposal to impose taxation on excess compensation, and we are told, ''Oh, we can't change the rules after the game.'' The fact is that this Congress has often passed tax laws a few months into 2009, or any particular tax year, that would affect the 2009 tax year or even prior tax years. We have done it repeatedly. We just never did it to Wall Street.

Finally, we go to the third act where we transfer a trillion dollars to Wall Street as part of this public-private partnership. Now how does that work? Wall Street puts up 6 percent of the money. They get 50 percent of the profits and 100 percent of the control. I would say those are terms very favorable to Wall Street. I am not blinded by my anger; but I am, indeed, angry.

Now let us compare how we have dealt with AIG and how we dealt with General Motors. Both entities need to continue to produce. The AIG insurance companies are relatively safe. They are State-regulated. They weren't part of the big disaster. The big disaster occurred at the parent company where they opened a casino and all of the guys on Wall Street and the powerful interests around the world went to the casino. They placed their bets. They bet against the mortgage market in the United States. They won and they broke the bank. And now they are being paid every penny they are owed, down to the last penny. How can that be done when AIG is bust? Simple, taxpayer money, $170 billion. Some of it, we put it into AIG, and tens of billions of dollars go to overseas banks within minutes.

How does that compare to the creditors of General Motors? General Motors owes its bondholders. It owes its retirees, and General Motors owes its workers. What is happening to what is owed by General Motors under these contracts? Those contracts are being shrunk. The bondholders are going to have to take about a third of what they are entitled to in cash. The retirees are going to get about half of what they are entitled to in cash, and the UAW has already made substantial changes in their union contract.

So with General Motors, there is either a bankruptcy, and I hope we avoid a formal bankruptcy, or there is, in effect, an informal bankruptcy. What is a bankruptcy? It is a reorganization process in which the company goes forward but its creditors have to take a haircut. They have to lose money. And all of the creditors of General Motors are losing substantial amounts, even people who worked their whole lives expecting retirement benefits and health benefits when they retired. They are taking major haircuts.

What about the rich and powerful that AIG owed money to? They are getting paid every penny. They demand it, and it comes from the American taxpayer. It is time that we respect the companies like GM that do work and make products. It is time that we not hollow out our manufacturing sector.

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 42 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. JACKSON-LEE of Texas) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

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

Show us Your mercy, Lord. Look upon our weakness and insecurity, and keep us safe.

In the midst of the work this week and among all the Members, grant the fullness of Your peace in all their undertakings. Strengthen this Congress with the renewed resolve of common purpose. Together, both Chambers hold the sacred trust of the people as they face issues disturbing the Nation. May all decisions serve the common resolve of the people and give You the glory both now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. HALVORSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. HALVORSON 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.

TOUGH CHOICES MUST BE MADE FOR AUTO INDUSTRY'S SURVIVAL

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

Mr. CARNAHAN. Madam Speaker, today both American families and businesses are struggling to make ends meet during these tough economic times. Like President Obama, I am optimistic that America can and will build the cars of the future.

When GM and Chrysler are both asking for additional taxpayer dollars, it is only common sense they explore every option to tackle this crisis. Both companies must be pressed to once again lead the world in car manufacturing. Chrysler's best option is to make an alliance with an outside company like Fiat, to make a successful product that can profit and sustain itself for the future. I am optimistic about what a more advanced engine could do for the company and its workers.

The men and women at the Fenton plant in Missouri helped Chrysler survive in the early eighties, and I fully expect them to be an integral part of Chrysler's future survival. It is essential that Chrysler continue at least the same amount of current manufacturing in the U.S. today, and Fiat is committed to do that, and that they continue to grow production in the U.S. as the auto industry rebounds. My constituents, who have helped make the Fenton plant the state-of-the-art facility it is today, rightfully expect their tax-funded assistance to create American jobs.

The auto industry must make tough choices to keep their loyal and hard-working workforce employed and, once again, become the world's leader. And Congress must also make the difficult choices to get out of this economic and fiscal crisis and move America in a new direction.

MEDIA IGNORE SUPPORT FOR IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, a Rasmussen poll found that 67 percent of likely voters support worksite enforcement actions to identify and deport illegal workers. That included a majority of Republicans, Democrats, and Independents.

The poll results are no surprise. Enforcement protects jobs for citizens and legal immigrants alike. Also, a long-term study released last week by the Center for Immigration Studies found that wages increased for legal workers after a worksite enforcement operation at a large meatpacker.

But you are unlikely to hear about studies and polls like these from the national media because of their left-wing slant on immigration issues. In fact, not a single major daily newspaper or a single network news program covered either the poll or the study.

Americans need the media to report the facts, not ignore the news.

H.R. 745, PANCREATIC CANCER RESEARCH AND EDUCATION BILL

(Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak about H.R. 745, the Pancreatic Cancer Research and Education bill, which I introduced together with my colleague, ANNA ESHOO.

I just came from a meeting of the Pancreatic Cancer Network, and they are going to be lobbying on the Hill for additional funding for pancreatic cancer research, which is exactly what this bill does.

Many in this chamber and many in my district know that my husband passed away from pancreatic cancer last August 19. This is a very, very special bill to me, because we will have the kind of funding so that there can be an early warning detection system for those who may have pancreatic cancer. Catching pancreatic cancer in the early stages is absolutely necessary. So, again, that bill is H.R. 745.

I was a little disillusioned to hear one of the people who was at this event today tell me that when they went to their Member of Congress, their Member of Congress said, ''Well, I am sorry, but you are a special interest group.'' Yes, they are a special interest group. They lost a loved one to pancreatic cancer.

I urge my colleagues to please listen to the family members of those who have lost loved ones to pancreatic cancer.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO BOARD OF VISITORS TO UNITED STATES MERCHANT MARINE ACADEMY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to 46 U.S.C. 51312(b), and the order of the House of January 6, 2009, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Members of the House to the Board of Visitors to the United States Merchant Marine Academy:

Mrs. MCCARTHY, New York
Mr. KING, New York

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 4 of rule I, the following enrolled bill was signed by the Speaker on Thursday, March 26, 2009:

H.R. 146, to designate certain land as components of the National Wilderness Preservation System, to authorize certain programs and activities in the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture, and for other purposes.

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, March 30, 2009.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
The Speaker, The Capitol, 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 March 30, 2009, at 9:38 a.m.:

That the Senate passed with amendments H.R. 1388.

Appointments:
Senate National Security Working Group.
National Council of the Arts.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

LORRAINE C. MILLER,
Clerk of the House.

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 incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken after 6:30 p.m. today.

HOMELESS VETERANS REINTEGRATION PROGRAM REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2009

Mrs. HALVORSON. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1171) to amend title 38, United States Code, to reauthorize the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program for fiscal years 2010 through 2014, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1171

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 ''Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program Reauthorization Act of 2009''.

SEC. 2. REAUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR HOMELESS VETERANS REINTEGRATION PROGRAM.

Section 2021(e)(1)(F) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking ''2009'' and inserting ''2014''.

SEC. 3. HOMELESS WOMEN VETERANS AND HOMELESS VETERANS WITH CHILDREN REINTEGRATION GRANT PROGRAM.

(a) GRANT PROGRAM.—Chapter 20 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 2021 the following new section:

''§ 2021A. Homeless women veterans and homeless veterans with children reintegration grant program

''(a) GRANTS.—Subject to the availability of appropriations provided for such purpose, the Secretary of Labor shall make grants to program and facilities that the Secretary determines provide dedicated services for homeless women veterans and homeless veterans with children.

''(b) USE OF FUNDS.—Grants under this section shall be used to provide job training, counseling, placement services (including job readiness and literacy and skills training) and child care services to expedite the reintegration of homeless women veterans and homeless veterans with children into the labor force.

''(c) REQUIREMENT TO MONITOR EXPENDITURES OF FUNDS.—(1) The Secretary of Labor shall collect such information as that Secretary considers appropriate to monitor and evaluate the distribution and expenditure of funds appropriated to carry out this section. The information shall include data with respect to the results or outcomes of the services provided to each homeless veteran under this section.

''(2) Information under paragraph (1) shall be furnished in such form and manner as the Secretary of Labor may specify.

''(d) ADMINISTRATION THROUGH THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF LABOR FOR VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING.—The Secretary of Labor shall carry out this section through the Assistant Secretary of Labor for Veterans' Employment and Training.

''(e) BIENNIAL REPORT TO CONGRESS.—The Secretary of Labor shall include as part of the report required under section 2021(d) of this title an evaluation of the grant program under this section, which shall include an evaluation of services furnished to veterans under this section and an analysis of the information collected under subsection (c).

''(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—(1) In addition to any amount authorized to be appropriated to carry out section 2021 of this title, there is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section $10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2010 through 2014.

''(2) Funds appropriated to carry out this section shall remain available until expended. Funds obligated in any fiscal year to carry out this section may be expended in that fiscal year and the succeeding fiscal year.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 2021 the following new item:

''2021A. Homeless women veterans and homeless veterans with children reintegration grant program.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. HALVORSON) and the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Illinois.

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

I would like to thank my distinguished colleague, Congressman JOHN BOOZMAN of Arkansas, for crafting H.R. 1171, the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program Reauthorization Act of 2009, to help our Nation's veterans overcome the barriers of homelessness. I would also like to thank Chairman BOB FILNER and the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity Chairwoman STEPHANIE HERSETH SANDLIN of South Dakota for the strong bipartisan leadership she demonstrated in working on this legislation.

H.R. 1171, as amended, would augment current Federal programs by reauthorization of the Labor Department's Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program through fiscal year 2014.

Specifically, this program would allocate grants for State and local workforce investment boards, local public agencies, nonprofit and community organizations to provide employment assistance and supportive services, such as transportation assistance in finding housing and referral for mental health treatment or substance abuse counseling.

Furthermore, this legislation would authorize $10 million for fiscal years 2010 through 2014 to expand the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program to address the unique needs of homeless women veterans and veterans with children.

While the exact number of homeless veterans is unknown, the VA estimates that approximately 154,000 veterans were homeless across the country during the last week of January 2007. These homeless veterans will benefit from organizations like the Volunteers of America in Illinois, Medical Professionals for Home Health Care, and the Inner Voice, Incorporated, which currently participate in the homeless veterans reintegration program in my State of Illinois.

Providing these organizations the resources to improve preventive measures and address the unique health and mental illness needs of veterans will help ensure our homeless veterans succeed in life after their service to our country. I urge all of my colleagues to join me in reaffirming our Nation's commitment to care for our servicemembers, veterans, and their dependents by supporting H.R. 1171.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise today in support of H.R. 1171, as amended, the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program Reauthorization Act of 2009. This bill would extend the Homeless Veteran Reintegration Program, HVRP, through fiscal year 2014. This bill was introduced by Ranking Member Dr. JOHN BOOZMAN and the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity, and I am proud to join him as an original cosponsor.

I would also like to thank Chairwoman HERSETH SANDLIN of the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity and Chairman FILNER and Ranking Member BUYER of the full Committee on Veterans' Affairs for moving this important measure with our first group of authorizing bills.

At the proper time, I will yield to Ranking Member BOOZMAN to describe his bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. HALVORSON. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN).

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam Speaker, I want to first thank the chair of the Economic Opportunity Subcommittee, HERSETH SANDLIN, and the committee chairman, Mr. FILNER, for bringing forth H.R. 1171, as amended, to the House. I am also grateful to Ranking Member BUYER for being an original cosponsor.

Today, VA estimates that 154,000 veterans are homeless, down from 250,000 just a few years ago. While the VA data shows that we are making progress in reducing the number of homeless veterans, there is still a need to get our veterans off the streets and into jobs.

□ 1415

That is why we need to continue the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program, known as HVRP, administered by the Department of Labor's Veterans Employment and Training Service, or VETS. Madam Speaker, HVRP is being cited by GAO as an example of a successful program designed to put homeless veterans back to work. It is a relatively inexpensive program, authorized at $50 million per year and funded last year at about $26 million.

The goal of HVRP is to put homeless veterans back to work. The latest data shows that in fiscal year 2007, HVRP providers served 13,446 homeless veterans and put 9,061 back to work for a placement rate of 67 percent. The average wage was $13 per hour with a cost per placement of about $2,407. If you figure a wage of $26,000 per year, a veteran in the 15 percent tax bracket would pay about $3,900 in Federal income taxes alone. That is a bargain for taxpayers who have gained another contributor to society.

To be successful in returning veterans to full members of society, it is vital that homeless veterans programs offer more than just shelter and meals. Services such as substance abuse treatment and mental health services are needed to lay the foundation for a return to work whenever possible. It is the ability to make one's way in the world, to contribute rather than just take, that gives us a sense of self-worth and pride.

I am also pleased that the Veterans' Affairs Committee voted unanimously to amend H.R. 1171, as amended, by adding the provisions of Ranking Member BUYER's H.R. 293, a bill that would create a separate program to employ homeless women veterans and veterans with children. Unfortunately, the homeless veteran population is seeing an increase in these two groups, and it is time to incentivize homeless providers to meet the needs of women veterans and veterans with children.

Clearly, HVRP has played an important role in reducing homelessness among veterans, and that is why it is important to extend the program, which would otherwise expire next September.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. I yield the gentleman as much time as he may consume.

Mr. BOOZMAN. H.R. 1171, as amended, would continue the program through 2014. As always, I appreciate the hard work of our staffs, both on the Republican and Democratic side, in regard to this legislation.

Madam Speaker, I would urge each of my colleagues to support H.R. 1171, as amended.

Mrs. HALVORSON. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 1171, as amended, includes an amendment offered by Ranking Member BUYER during our full committee markup session on March 25, 2009. This amendment is similar to language in H.R. 293, the Homeless Women Veterans and Homeless Veterans With Children Act of 2009, or what is also referred to as HVRP-W.

Mr. BUYER's amendment adds the provisions of H.R. 293 to H.R. 1171, as amended, to create a new grant program that complements the current HVRP program with a focus on homeless women veterans and homeless veterans with children.

As amended, H.R. 1171 authorizes a separate appropriation of $10 million to fund grants to community organizations that provide service to homeless women veterans and homeless veterans with children. Today, VA estimates there are about 154,000 veterans counted among the homeless, and this is indeed a tragedy. As many of you may be aware, women now comprise a larger percentage of our military, and in addition to sexual trauma, women are increasingly exposed to the same stressors and dangers as men, and we are now seeing more women in need of homeless services, including the training and employment services offered through HVRP.

This legislation is critically important to our Nation's veterans, and expanding the program to include additional grant services for homeless

women veterans and veterans with dependent children continues our mandate to care for those who fought so bravely for many freedoms which we, as a Nation, enjoy.

Madam Speaker, despite the headway this country has made in reducing the number of homeless veterans, we have much further to go in order to end homelessness among our Nation's heroes. I believe H.R. 1171, as amended, will go a long way towards this goal.

I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Having no further requests at this time, I yield back the balance of my time.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. HALVORSON. 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 H.R. 1171, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BUYER. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1171, as amended, the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program Reauthorization Act of 2009. Ranking Member JOHN BOOZMAN of the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity introduced this bill to extend the Homeless Veteran Reintegration Program (HVRP) through fiscal year 2014, and I am proud to join him as an original cosponsor.

I would also like to thank Chairwoman HERSETH SANDLIN of the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity and Chairman FILNER of the Full Committee on Veterans' Affairs for moving this important measure with our first group of authorizing bills.

Madam Speaker, I am also proud that H.R. 1171, as amended, also includes an amendment that I offered in the full committee markup. My amendment is similar to H.R. 293, The Homeless Women Veterans and Veterans with Children Act of 2009, or what I refer to as HVRP–W.

H.R. 293 was one of several bills I suggested that House Leadership include in the original stimulus package and is part of what I call the Noble Warrior Initiative which has received widespread support from the VSO community. My amendment adds the provisions of H.R. 293 to H.R. 1171, as amended, to create a new grant program that complements the current HVRP program with a focus on homeless women veterans and homeless veterans with children.

As amended, H.R. 1171 authorizes a separate appropriation of $10 million to fund grants to community organizations that provide services to homeless women veterans and homeless veterans with children.

Today, VA estimates there are about 154,000 veterans counted among the homeless. With women comprising a larger percentage of our military, in addition to sexual trauma, women are increasingly exposed to the same stressors and dangers as the men and we are now seeing more women in need of homeless services including the training and employment services offered through HVRP.

Therefore, I believe we need to add the focus of the HVRP-W to make sure that job skill services are being provided to homeless women veterans and veterans with children. These two groups have separate and unique needs and wants from those of what we think of as the traditional homeless veteran population.

Here are a few facts from VA regarding homeless women veterans and homeless veterans with children:

VA's March 2007 Northeast Program Evaluation Center (NEPEC) contacted 38,667 homeless veterans. About 4 percent were women.

In 2008 VA and communities held 157 Stand Downs and aided 2,347 homeless women veterans and 1,327 children.

Last year VA's community based Homeless Grant and Per Diem program served 19,345 veterans including 1,277 women veterans.

VA's Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans treated 5,905 veterans including 242 female veterans.

The HUD-VASH housing voucher program for homeless veterans referred 8,000 veterans of whom 880 were women. 1040 veterans (male and female) housed through HUD-VASH had dependent children.

Madam Speaker as you may know, despite the headway in reducing the number of homeless veterans, there is still much more work ahead of us to end homelessness among our nation's heroes. I believe H.R. 1171, as amended, will go a long way towards this goal and I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Mrs. HALVORSON. Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to unanimously support H.R. 1171, as amended.

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 Illinois (Mrs. HALVORSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1171, as amended.

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

The title was amended so as to read: "A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to reauthorize the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program for fiscal years 2010 through 2014, and for other purposes."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPANDING VETERAN ELIGIBILITY FOR REIMBURSEMENT IN NON-VA FACILITIES

Mrs. HALVORSON. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1377) to amend title 38, United States Code, to expand veteran eligibility for reimbursement by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for emergency treatment furnished in a non-Department facility, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1377

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

SECTION 1. EXPANSION OF VETERAN ELIGIBILITY FOR REIMBURSEMENT BY SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR EMERGENCY TREATMENT FURNISHED IN A NON-DEPARTMENT FACILITY.

(a) EXPANSION OF ELIGIBILITY.—Section 1725 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(3)(C), by striking "or in part"; and

(2) in subsection (f)(2), by striking subparagraph (E).

(b) LIMITATIONS ON REIMBURSEMENT.—Subsection (c) of such section is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(4)(A) If the veteran has contractual or legal recourse against a third party that would only, in part, extinguish the veteran's liability to the provider of the emergency treatment, and payment for the treatment may be made both under subsection (a) and by the third party, the amount payable for such treatment under such subsection shall be the amount by which the costs for the emergency treatment exceed the amount payable or paid by the third party, except that the amount payable may not exceed the maximum amount payable established under paragraph (1)(A).

"(B) In any case in which a third party is financially responsible for part of the veteran's emergency treatment expenses, the Secretary shall be the secondary payer.

"(C) A payment in the amount payable under subparagraph (A) shall be considered payment in full and shall extinguish the veteran's liability to the provider.

"(D) The Secretary may not reimburse a veteran under this section for any copayment or similar payment that the veteran owes the third party or for which the veteran is responsible under a health-plan contract.".

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The amendments made by subsections (a) and (b) shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act, and shall apply with respect to emergency treatment furnished on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) REIMBURSEMENT FOR TREATMENT PROVIDED BEFORE EFFECTIVE DATE.—The Secretary may provide reimbursement under section 1725 of title 38, United States Code, as amended by subsections (a) and (b), for emergency treatment furnished to a veteran before the date of the enactment of this Act, if the Secretary determines that, under the circumstances applicable with respect to the veteran, it is appropriate to do so.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. HALVORSON) and the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Illinois.

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

I rise in strong support of H.R. 1377, as amended, which would expand veteran eligibility for reimbursement by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for emergency treatment furnished in a nondepartment facility. This legislation would assist veterans who get hurt while they are off duty and require emergency care in a non-VA medical facility.

These veterans do not currently receive any reimbursement from the VA if they have third-party insurance that pays either full or a portion of the emergency care. This creates an inequity that penalizes veterans with insurance, including auto insurance, which is oftentimes mandated by law.

A veteran with an insurance policy which covers any portion of the cost for emergency treatment would be burdened with the remaining amount not covered by insurance. This unfair policy has caused many veterans undue stress and has placed them in unnecessary financial hardship. H.R. 1377, as amended, eliminates this inequity by requiring the VA to pay for emergency care in a non-VA facility, even if the veteran holds a policy that will pay for any portion of their care.

Madam Speaker, I would like to thank Ranking Member BUYER and the Health Subcommittee chairman, Mr. MICHAUD, for their contributions to this bill as well as the staff.

I urge your support in passing H.R. 1377, as amended.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise in support of H.R. 1377, as amended, to amend title 38, United States Code, to expand VA's authority to reimburse veterans for the cost of emergency care provided in a non-department facility. I want to thank the chairman for introducing this bill, which would provide financial protections for veterans in need of emergency care.

Current law allows VA to reimburse a veteran for emergency treatment obtained in a non-VA facility only if the veteran does not have any other entitlement to pay from a private party. As a result, a veteran with a policy that covers only a small part of the emergency care costs could be personally liable for substantial out-of-pocket expenses.

H.R. 1377, as amended, would change current law to authorize VA to cover additional expenses in cases where a veteran receives only partial payment from a third party. However, the legislation does make it clear that VA would be the secondary payer and that payment would be limited to the difference between the amount paid by the private insurance and the VA authorized rate. It also ensures that VA payment fully absolves a veteran from any liability to that provider.

In addition to providing prospective protection for veterans, H.R. 1377 was amended to allow the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to retroactively apply this law on a discretionary basis for a veteran who may have incurred a medical debt for emergency treatment prior to the date of enactment.

Madam Speaker, the chairman has talked about the need for this discretionary authority. As such, Ranking Member BUYER requested during our markup last week that the bill report make it clear that it is the committee's intention for the Secretary to use this authority and take into consideration the facts and circumstances of each veteran's situation. A veteran should not be discouraged from seeking emergency care at the closest community hospital for fear of financial uncertainty.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. HALVORSON. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida, Congresswoman BROWN-WAITE.

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I rise today in support of H.R. 1377, a commonsense bill to reimburse veterans for emergency treatment in non-VA facilities. Our first Commander in Chief, George Washington, once said that the willingness with which our young people are likely to serve in any war, no matter how justified, will be directly proportional to how they perceive the veterans of earlier wars were treated and appreciated by their country. Taking care of those who have sacrificed for our Nation is truly our sacred duty. It is a national promise that goes back to Presidents Washington and Lincoln. Yet a couple of weeks ago, President Obama proposed billing veterans for treatment of combat-related injuries. Although the President announced that he was rescinding this proposal, it is nonetheless alarming to our veteran population.

The courageous Americans who have served our country should know that all of us recognize their sacrifice, and this bill by Representative FILNER will go a long way in doing just that.

Back in Florida, I represent over 110,000 veterans, the second highest number of any Member of Congress. Many of these brave men and women are disabled either in battle or in the course of their service to the United States military. Yet, veterans in my district must frequently travel long distances to obtain care from a VA facility. As a result, those requiring emergency care must seek treatment in a private or a community-run hospital. Passage of this bill will ensure that veterans are not saddled with massive emergency room bills.

I thank my colleague, Mr. FILNER, for introducing H.R. 1377. And I would hope that all Members of this body can support such a worthy message of support for our veterans.

Mrs. HALVORSON. I continue to reserve the balance of my time, Madam Speaker.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute.

Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the Subcommittee on Health chairman, MIKE MICHAUD, and Ranking Member HENRY BROWN for their hard work on this legislation and Chairman FILNER and Ranking Member BUYER for moving this bill so quickly through the committee process.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. HALVORSON. 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 H.R. 1377, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. HALVORSON. Madam Speaker, I also want to thank Chairman FILNER and Ranking Member BUYER for working so hard together to make sure that these wonderful Veterans Affairs issues come before the body. No matter what rumor has ever come up that might come from the administration, the Veterans Committee has always made sure that the veterans are first and foremost in all of our minds.

I urge my colleagues to unanimously support H.R. 1377, as amended.

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 Illinois (Mrs. HALVORSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1377, 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.

□ 1430

VETERANS' COMPENSATION COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT ACT OF 2009

Mrs. HALVORSON. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1513) to increase, effective as of December 1, 2009, the rates of disability compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for survivors of certain service-connected disabled veterans, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1513

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 ''Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2009''.

SEC. 2. INCREASE IN RATES OF DISABILITY COMPENSATION AND DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION.

(a) RATE ADJUSTMENT.—Effective on December 1, 2009, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall increase, in accordance with subsection (c), the dollar amounts in effect on November 30, 2009, for the payment of disability compensation and dependency and indemnity compensation under the provisions specified in subsection (b).

(b) AMOUNTS TO BE INCREASED.—The dollar amounts to be increased pursuant to subsection (a) are the following:

(1) WARTIME DISABILITY COMPENSATION.—Each of the dollar amounts under section 1114 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION FOR DEPENDENTS.—Each of the dollar amounts under sections 1115(1) of such title.

(3) CLOTHING ALLOWANCE.—The dollar amount under section 1162 of such title.

(4) DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION TO SURVIVING SPOUSE.—Each of the dollar amounts under subsections (a) through (d) of section 1311 of such title.

(5) DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION TO CHILDREN.—Each of the dollar amounts under sections 1313(a) and 1314 of such title.

(c) DETERMINATION OF INCREASE.—

(1) PERCENTAGE.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), each dollar amount described in subsection (b) shall be increased by the same percentage as the percentage by which benefit amounts payable under title II of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 401 et seq.) are increased effective December 1, 2009, as a result of a determination under section 215(i) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 415(i)).

(2) ROUNDING.—Each dollar amount increased under paragraph (1), if not a whole dollar amount, shall be rounded to the next lower whole dollar amount.

(d) SPECIAL RULE.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may adjust administratively, consistent with the increases made under subsection (a), the rates of disability compensation payable to persons under section 10 of Public Law 85–857 (72 Stat. 1263) who have not received compensation under chapter 11 of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 3. PUBLICATION OF ADJUSTED RATES.

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall publish in the Federal Register the amounts specified in section 2(b), as increased under that section, not later than the date on which the matters specified in section 215(i)(2)(D) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 415(i)(2)(D)) are required to be published by reason of a determination made under section 215(i) of such Act during fiscal year 2010.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. HALVORSON) and the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Illinois.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of passage of the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2009, H.R. 1513, which was introduced by one of the newer members of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and sure to be one of our body's most dynamic Members, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK from Arizona. And I thank you for your leadership on the bill.

I also want to thank the ranking member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Mr. BUYER, who has been supportive of this noncontroversial bill and helped with its unanimous passage from our committee to allow consideration by the full House. The fact that we were able to get this bill to the floor within nearly a month of its introduction shows the House leadership's commitment to our Nation's veterans, their families, and their survivors.

Like it has done since 1976, Congress, through the passage of this measure, would direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to increase the rates of basic compensation for disabled veterans and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation, the DIC, to their survivors and dependents, along with other benefits in order to keep pace with the rising cost of living.

The disability COLA would become effective December 1, 2009, and will be equal to that provided on an annual basis to Social Security recipients. Last year, the COLA was set at 5.8 percent, an increase direly needed, as the financial crush of the recession from the previous administration closed in on many of our disabled veterans' households.

Madam Speaker, this bill will benefit each disabled veteran and their survivors from the World War I era through the current conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Many of the nearly 3 million veterans who receive these benefits depend upon these tax-free payments, not only to provide for their own basic needs, but for those of their spouses, children and parents as well. Without an annual COLA increase, these veterans and their families would see the value of their hard-earned benefits slowly erode. We would be derelict in our duty if we failed to guarantee that those who sacrifice so much for our country receive benefits and services that keep pace with their needs.

We fund the war. Let's fund the warrior and his family and survivors by ensuring that their benefits keep pace with their living expenses. Let's ensure that their benefits make ends meet at the end of the month.

Madam Speaker, as we approach our country's 141st Memorial Day commemoration, I ask my colleagues to support this bill and send a clear message to support our troops. ''You will be taken care of when you return. We will not forget your sacrifice.''

Just like our military men and women did not hesitate to offer to lay down their lives to defend our freedom and the way of life that we cherish, we will not hesitate to defend the funds they need to support themselves and their families.

I urge my colleagues to support passage of the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2009, H.R. 1513, without delay. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1513.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1513, the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2009.

I would like to thank my colleagues, Mr. HALL of New York and chairman of the Disabilities Assistance and Memorial Affairs Subcommittee, and Mr. LAMBORN of Colorado, the ranking member of the subcommittee, as well as the bill's sponsor, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK of Arizona, for their leadership on this bill.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 1513 would increase, effective as of December 1, 2009, the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities, and the rates of dependents and indemnity compensation for the survivors of certain disabled veterans. The COLA adjustments include veterans disability compensation, additional compensation for dependents, clothing allowance, and dependents and indemnity compensation for surviving spouses and children.

Madam Speaker, this is an important annual authorization which provides much-needed assistance to our Nation's veterans, and I encourage all of my colleagues to support this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. HALVORSON. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. I recognize Congresswoman BROWN-WAITE for as much time as she may consume.

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1513, the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2009. Previously, I served on the Veterans' Committee for 6 years, and I'm very glad to see Chairman FILNER and Ranking Member BUYER doing this fine work this year, as they did in the 2 years that I was on the last time.

While all veterans made sacrifices for our Nation, those men and women who were disabled during their service must receive proper benefits in order to meet their care. Disabled veterans have given their blood, sweat and tears on battlefields from Germany to Japan, from Korea to Vietnam, from Iraq to Afghanistan.

In this time of economic turmoil, it is vital that Congress preserve the cost-of-living adjustment to help disabled veterans. Indeed, with rising prices and falling home values, it's more important than ever that the needs of veterans be adequately funded.

The cost-of-living adjustment means that veterans will be better armed with the resources that they need to survive in our communities.

As President Lincoln said in his second inaugural address, government's obligation is, and I quote, ''to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and orphan.'' It is our sacred obligation to care for those injured while in the service.

I thank my colleague from Arizona for introducing this bill. And I urge all of my colleagues to support its passage.

Mrs. HALVORSON. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Again, I'd like to thank Chairman FILNER, Ranking Member BUYER, Subcommittee Chairman HALL and ranking member of the subcommittee, Mr. LAMBORN, for their leadership in bringing this much-needed legislation to the

floor. And I urge my colleagues to support it.

And I'd like to thank the gentlelady from Illinois (Mrs. HALVORSON) for her help today. This is a great piece of legislation, and I urge tonight we vote unanimously for this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. HALVORSON. 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 H.R. 1513.

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. HALVORSON. Madam Speaker, I too want to thank my fellow freshman colleague, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) for his help today, as well as Chairman FILNER and Ranking Member BUYER for the wonderful work we've been able to do this year.

Madam Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to unanimously support H.R. 1513.

Ms. KIRKPATRICK of Arizona. Madam Speaker, I thank the Speaker for allowing me the opportunity to address the bill I sponsored—H.R. 1513, "The Veterans" Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2009."

Many of my constituents in Greater Arizona are hurting, and the Nation's economy, while showing some signs of improvements, still has a long road to a full recovery.

No one feels this pressure or deserves the support of a grateful Nation more than our disabled Veterans.

Our Nation's veterans have made costly sacrifices to ensure the safety of America's families. For that reason, our country provides both compensation payments to service-disabled Veterans and Dependency and Indemnity Compensation benefits to the survivors of servicemembers who die in service to our Nation.

However, without this bill, these payments would not keep up with rising prices for everyday items like gas and groceries.

That's why, on behalf of the over 3 million veterans nationally—including 65,000 in my home state of Arizona—who are currently receiving disability compensation, I am asking you to join me in support of this bill.

This bill keeps the promise to our Nation's veterans to honor the sacrifice that these brave men and women have endured while serving our country in uniform.

Mrs. HALVORSON. 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 Illinois (Mrs. HALVORSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1513.

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 PAUL HARVEY

Mr. LYNCH. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 223) Honoring the life, achievements, and contributions of Paul Harvey, affectionately known for his signature line, "This is Paul Harvey . . . Good Day," as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 223

Whereas Paul Harvey, a son, brother, husband, father, friend, pioneering American, and a cherished voice, passed away on February 28, 2009;

Whereas Paul Harvey Aurandt was born on September 4, 1918, in Tulsa, Oklahoma;

Whereas prefacing a storied career in radio by making radio receivers as a young boy and a fill-in announcer while a student at the University of Tulsa, he epitomized American values and American ideals proving that one can lead a decent life with hard work and solid values;

Whereas Paul Harvey, through open expression, pioneered the format of radio broadcasts that so many now find commonplace;

Whereas Paul Harvey was a blogger before it was a known medium, he just did his blogging on the radio;

Whereas Paul Harvey was elected to the National Association of Broadcasters Radio Hall of Fame and Oklahoma Hall of Fame and appeared on the Gallup poll list of America's most admired men;

Whereas in 2005, Paul Harvey was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the United States' most prestigious civilian award, by President George W. Bush;

Whereas Paul Harvey's career in radio spanned over 70 years and he is considered one of the United States' most accomplished radio personalities and a trail blazer;

Whereas Paul Harvey was beloved by his family, friends, neighbors, and vast listening audience for his great generosity, good humor, and spirited charm;

Whereas Paul Harvey, the "largest one-man network in the world", was heard on 1,200 radio stations, 400 Armed Forces Network stations around the world, and in 300 newspapers; and

Whereas Paul Harvey's broadcasts and newspaper columns have been reprinted in the Congressional Record more than those of any other commentator: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives honors the life and accomplishments of Paul Harvey.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH) and the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, it is with profound honor that I rise in support of House Resolution 223, which celebrates the life of legendary radio and television personality, Paul Harvey.

I'd first like to thank my colleague from Oklahoma, Congressman JOHN SULLIVAN, for sponsoring this afternoon's condolence measure, which has amassed over 60 cosponsors here in the Congress since being introduced on March 9, 2009.

I'd also like to thank Chairman TOWNS from Brooklyn and my colleagues on the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee for their unanimous support in bringing this resolution to the floor.

We live in an age of unprecedented access to the news. Between the 24-hour cable news networks and the Internet, there's no shortage of sources from which citizens are informed.

Most of us remember a different time when Americans relied on a small number of outlets for each day's events. Before everybody had a blog, we placed our trust in a few individuals to represent the voice of the average citizen. And I am proud to say that Paul Harvey was certainly one of those trusted individuals.

There is no greater testament to Paul Harvey's distinguished career than its longevity. He was no more than a teenager when he first hit the airwaves, reading advertisements and news clips. After studying speech and literature at the University of Tulsa, Oklahoma, Mr. Harvey worked at radio stations across the American heartland.

In 1941, Mr. Harvey sacrificed his personal aspirations in order to defend our country. He was a reporter in Hawaii during the attack on Pearl Harbor, and decided to enlist in the United States Army immediately following.

Upon conclusion of his national service, Paul Harvey set about redefining what it meant to be a radio host by delivering news in his own unique and humble way. Paul Harvey was never afraid of controversy, and he was not one to forfeit his principles. His style was part journalist, part showman and, fortunately for America, part everyman.

As many as 22 million people tuned in daily to hear Mr. Harvey give his take on the day's news. Perhaps it was his plain-spoken ability to connect with and reassure the American people that made him so popular. Consider this remark, which is as relevant today as it was when first spoken. "In times like these, it helps to recall that there have always been times like these."

Paul Harvey was constantly recognized for his achievements, both as a broadcaster and as an outstanding citizen. He received accolades from the State of Oklahoma, the National Association of Broadcasters, the Salvation Army, the United States Air Force, The Humane Society and the American Legion, just to name a few.

□ 1445

In 2005, he was presented with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest honor available to American civilians.

Throughout his life, Mr. Harvey was rarely without his loving wife, Lynn, whom he called ''Angel.'' Married in 1940, Lynn passed away on May 3, 2008. They are survived by Paul Jr., who followed his parents into broadcasting.

I ask that this body join the American people in celebrating the life of Paul Harvey, whom we lost on February 28, 2009 at the age of 90. We will certainly miss his contributions to the national dialogue. So, Madam Speaker, let us collectively and formally express our appreciation for Paul Harvey's life and career by adopting House Resolution 223.

I now reserve the balance of our time.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 223, ''Honoring the Life, Achievements and Contributions of Paul Harvey.''

Born in 1918 in Tulsa, Oklahoma, Paul Harvey's fascination with radio started at a very young age when he would pick up radio stations on his homemade cigar box crystal set. As a teenager, he worked, sweeping the floors at the station KVOO until the station manager decided to give him a job. The rest, as they say, is radio history.

Mr. Harvey moved from Tulsa to accept a position working at KXOK in St. Louis. While working in St. Louis, Mr. Harvey met his beloved wife of 68 years, who later became the producer of his show.

From St. Louis, the Harveys moved to Chicago, where his daily program for ABC Radio, Paul Harvey News and Comment, became the highest rated radio program in the region. Building on his audiences in Chicago, his show was soon broadcast throughout the entire country. In 1976, Harvey started a second daily radio show, The Rest of the Story, telling anecdotes about famous people or historic incidents, always with a little twist at the end.

Mr. Harvey's upbeat, positive demeanor and the ability to weave together the stories of life in America made him a national treasure. His uncanny ability to find a story, then to give it his own folksy style, delivered in his unique cadence, was remarkably popular. Mr. Harvey never lost sight of the significance of everyday life and of the stories of ordinary people in America.

With well over a half century of broadcasting experience, Mr. Harvey's show reached an estimated 24 million listeners daily. Receiving countless honors over the years for his broadcasts, he received the highest acknowledgment of his career when, in 2005, Mr. Harvey was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President George W. Bush.

Sadly, after more than 70 years on the air, Mr. Harvey passed away in February at the age of 90. The loss of Paul Harvey is the loss of a symbol of a simpler era in America. Even with the passage of time, his broadcast stories were as timely at the end of his life as they were back in Tulsa, where his career started. As Mr. Harvey would say at the end of each story, at the end of each show, ''And now you know the rest of the story.''

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LYNCH. Madam Speaker, we have no further speakers, but I continue to reserve.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Madam Speaker, I would like to recognize my distinguished colleague, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. SULLIVAN), the author of this resolution, and yield him as much time as he may consume.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam Speaker, today, I rise to honor the life, achievements and contributions of one of Tulsa, Oklahoma's favorite sons and one of America's most cherished voices, Paul Harvey.

Perhaps best known for his signature line ''Good Day,'' Paul Harvey began his storied career in radio in Tulsa, making radio receivers and working as a fill-in announcer while a student at the University of Tulsa. Little did he know then that over the next 70 years he would go on to become one of America's most accomplished and beloved radio personalities of all time.

Referred to as the ''largest one-man network in the world,'' Paul Harvey was heard on 1,200 radio stations and 400 Armed Forces networks around the world. His broadcast and newspaper columns have been reprinted in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD more than those of any other person. Through the use of free expression, Paul Harvey pioneered the format of radio broadcasts that we now find commonplace. He was a blogger before we knew what that was. He just did his blogging on the radio.

Over the course of his trailblazing career, Mr. Harvey received numerous accolades for his work, including being elected to the National Association of Broadcasters Radio Hall of Fame and the Oklahoma Hall of Fame. He received 11 Freedom Foundation Awards as well as the Horatio Alger Award. In 2005, Paul Harvey was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, our Nation's most distinguished civilian award.

Prior to his passing on February 28, 2009, Paul Harvey was a beloved son, brother, husband, father, and friend. It is with great pride that I stand here today to say, ''Good day to you, Paul Harvey.''

I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring a man who epitomized American values and ideals. With that, I urge the passing of my resolution, H.R. 223, honoring his life and legacy.

Mr. LYNCH. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Madam Speaker, I have no further speakers and would yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LYNCH. Madam Speaker, in closing, I was introduced to Paul Harvey 30 years ago as an ironworker, working at the Inland Steel Plant in East Chicago, Indiana. Every day, when that lunch whistle would blow, all the ironworkers would gather at the lunchroom or in the trailer where we had lunch, and every ear was glued to that radio set. It was the plain-spoken, moral and commonsense views of Paul Harvey's that I think enlightened us all.

So, with that, I just want to ask all of my colleagues to join with me and with the chief sponsor of this resolution, JOHN SULLIVAN, the gentleman from Oklahoma. I ask that we pass this unanimously in memory of the life of Paul Harvey.

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 Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 223, 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.

RECOGNIZING 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF EGYPT-ISRAEL PEACE TREATY

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 282) recognizing the 30th anniversary of the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 282

Whereas the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel signed in Washington, DC, on March 26, 1979, set an unprecedented example of reconciliation following decades marked by nearly unremitting tension and confrontation, including the 1948 War of Israeli Independence, the 1956 Suez War, the 1967 Six-Day War, the 1968-70 War of Attrition along the Suez Canal, and the 1973 Yom Kippur War;

Whereas United States diplomatic efforts and initiatives in the aftermath of the 1973 Arab-Israeli War helped build the foundations of a lasting peace between Egypt and Israel;

Whereas pursuant to an invitation by Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin, President Anwar al-Sadat became the first Arab leader to visit Israel on November 20, 1977, when he delivered a historic address before Israel's Parliament, the Knesset, calling for Egypt and Israel to ''. . . stand together with the . . . boldness of heroes who dedicate themselves to a sublime aim . . . to erect a huge edifice of peace . . . an edifice that . . . serves as a beacon for generations to come'';

Whereas Prime Minister Menachem Begin and President Sadat demonstrated remarkable character and courage in their willingness to move beyond decades of hostility,

bitterness, and mistrust to launch an unprecedented rapprochement without any guarantee as to the potential outcome of their mutual determination to engage in United States-mediated peace talks;

Whereas successive administrations worked diligently to facilitate intensive discussions in the hope of achieving a historic diplomatic breakthrough on Middle East peace, and President Jimmy Carter invited the two leaders to Camp David for intensive discussions from September 5–17, 1978;

Whereas, on September 17, 1978, the United States witnessed the signing of two framework agreements between the Governments of Egypt and Israel, ''A Framework for Peace in the Middle East'' and ''A Framework for the Conclusion of a Peace Treaty between Egypt and Israel'';

Whereas, on March 26, 1979, President Sadat and Prime Minister Begin signed the first treaty between an Arab nation and Israel;

Whereas the primary features of the peace treaty included the mutual recognition of Egypt and Israel, the end of the state of war between the two nations dating back to the 1948 War of Israeli Independence, the complete withdrawal by Israel of its armed forces and civilians from the Sinai Peninsula, freedom of passage for Israeli ships through the Suez Canal, and recognition of the Strait of Tiran and the Gulf of Aqaba as international waterways;

Whereas United States leadership played a decisive role in enabling Egypt and Israel to set aside longstanding animosities;

Whereas the conclusion of the treaty between Egypt and Israel set a courageous example of statesmanship;

Whereas as a direct result of the peace treaty, the Arab League suspended Egypt from its membership from 1979 until 1989;

Whereas, in 1981, President Sadat was assassinated in Cairo by Egyptian soldiers who belonged to the al-Gama'ah al-Islamiyah (Islamic Group) and Egyptian Islamic Jihad;

Whereas, on October 26, 1994, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and King Hussein of Jordan followed in the path set by President Sadat and Prime Minister Begin, signing the Israel-Jordan Treaty of Peace;

Whereas, despite the existence of tensions and grievances, the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel continues to challenge presuppositions about the intractability of conflict in the Middle East and provides an enduring framework for facilitating dialogue; and

Whereas Egypt and Israel continue to collaborate in ongoing efforts to address regional difficulties despite the security challenges facing both nations: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the 30th anniversary of the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel, celebrates the treaty's strength and endurance, and commends the extraordinary diplomatic achievement that the treaty exemplifies;

(2) recalls the historic sacrifices sustained by Egypt and Israel in the cause of peace and commends the steadfast determination of both nations to sustain their mutual commitment to peace;

(3) calls for the strengthening of economic, diplomatic, and cultural relations between Egypt and Israel;

(4) urges the Governments of Egypt and Israel to strengthen the spirit of cooperation that emerged in 1979 as the Middle East faces new challenges;

(5) seeks to encourage continued United States efforts to foster constructive initiatives to resolve existing conflicts and mitigate current and emerging threats to a just and lasting Middle East peace; and

(6) calls for recognition of the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel as a model mechanism upon which partner nations may build to overcome longstanding barriers to peace and effective cooperation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) and the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Resolution 282, ''Recognizing the 30th Anniversary of the Peace Treaty between Egypt and Israel,'' and I commend our good friend Mr. FORTENBERRY for introducing it.

Last week on March 26, we marked the 30th anniversary of the signing of the 1979 peace accord between Israel and Egypt, brokered and witnessed by the United States of America. The signing of that treaty remains one of the most dramatic and strategically important events of our life times.

It culminated a process of peacemaking that Israeli and Egyptian diplomats had begun secretly in Morocco in mid-1977. That process, Madam Speaker, was most memorably punctuated by the stunning visit of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat to Israel in November of 1977 and by the signing, subsequently, of the Camp David Peace Accords in September of 1978, laying the groundwork for the peace treaty signed 6 months later that we celebrate today with this resolution.

The significance of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty cannot be overstated. With the signing of the treaty, Egypt became the first Arab State to recognize the state of Israel. More than that, the treaty demonstrated the dream of the Arab-Israeli peace, a dream that most experts at that time put in the ''not in my lifetime'' category, and it was, indeed, possible.

In 1994, Jordan became the second Arab State to make peace with the state of Israel. Egyptian-Israeli peace has saved countless lives. Between 1948 and 1973, Egypt and Israel fought four fierce land wars, plus the 1968–1970 War of Attrition, resulting in tens of thousands of casualties. Thanks to the 1979 peace treaty, there have been no further Egyptian-Israeli wars nor have there been any wars between Israel and other Arab States since that time. Although, as we all know, Israel continues to be threatened by well-armed, non-state actors like Hamas and Hezbollah, who are used as proxies by states such as Syria and Iran.

The 1979 peace treaty also extended the prospect of superpower conflict over the Arab-Israeli conflict. In 1973, the U.S. and the USSR, at that time, had gone nearly to the brink of war for the sake of their allies, Israel and Egypt respectfully. The peace treaty ensured that would never happen again, and the central diplomatic role played by the United States facilitated Egypt's transition to the pro-Western camp. This was truly the age, as one scholar has called it, of heroic diplomacy in the Middle East.

President Sadat risked his career and, ultimately, his life on his bold action. Many Arab leaders accused him of treason—the Warsaw Pact states as well. Egypt was expelled at that time from the Arab League, and was not welcomed back for a decade. Just 2½ years after signing the peace treaty, Anwar Sadat was dead, the victim of an assassin's bullet. Although his murderers ascribed their actions to other motives, mainly their outlandish claim that Sadat was not a true Muslim, there is little doubt, Madam Speaker, that those who supported the assassins were deeply outraged by his peace treaty with Israel.

Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin went against the grain of his own party by leading the fight for total withdrawal from the Sinai, which was the Egyptian price for this peace treaty. When Begin brought the treaty to the Knesset vote, he had to rely on his longtime nemesis of the Israeli left for votes, as many of his Likud Party colleagues refused to support him and the peace treaty at that time.

Both Sadat and Begin richly earned the Nobel Peace Prize they won in 1978, probably the easiest decision the Nobel Peace Prize Committee ever made. President Carter, whose relentless diplomacy was critical for achieving the Camp David Accords and the peace treaty, was unquestionably yet another hero of the Egyptian-Israeli peacemaking process.

When President Sadat spoke before the Knesset on November 20, 1977, he asked, ''Why don't we stand together with the courage of men and the boldness of heroes who dedicate themselves to a sublime aim?'' Menachem Begin took up that challenge, and 30 years ago, those two leaders achieved the seemingly impossible, and their achievement endures yet today.

Today, we honor their remarkable achievement, and we express the hopes that others in the Middle East who have not yet embraced peace will someday see the wisdom of the path and show the courage of Sadat and Begin. Madam Speaker, I strongly support this important resolution, and I urge all of my colleagues to do likewise.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to come before this House today to express support for a resolution I recently introduced to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel.

In a world where force and hatred often overcome understanding and reconciliation, where individuals can too easily allow conflict and strife to mute the call of conscience to peace and concord, this treaty stands as an enduring reminder that no conflict can be pervasive enough, no animosity strong enough to triumph over the will of men who turn to one another in a gesture of goodwill and humility to make a decision for peace.

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For peace is a choice. Sometimes hard, sometimes costly, and when we look at the recent history of the Middle East, we see layer upon layer of suffering and grievance. Innocent lives needlessly destroyed through relentless and unforgiving cycles of seemingly uncontrollable anger and retribution.

We can choose to believe that these forces are so powerful that no political solution can be brought to bear. Perhaps that is right. Perhaps there is no political solution. Perhaps we are seeking a political solution when only a solution of the human heart can suffice, a solution that recognizes that each person in this world longs for the same things and that the bond of our common humanity is stronger than the hatred that seeks to divide neighbor from neighbor, Muslim from Jew, or Arab from Israeli. A solution that recognizes that peace can only be found in treating others with dignity and respect, and that regardless of the circumstances, this is always possible unless one chooses otherwise.

The choice for true peace does not demand appeasement of tyranny, false sentimentality or warmth that cannot easily be summoned. It is, at its most practical, a commonsense choice for self-preservation, and at its most noble, a choice to build up rather than to tear down, a choice by leaders to bind wounds and heal the past.

Mr. Speaker, as a young man in 1979, I entered the Sinai Peninsula across from the Suez Canal, and in the vastness of the beige sand and desert, I came upon a twisted heap of metal and concrete—a scene all too familiar now throughout the Middle East—and upon that heap of concrete were scrawled in words in both English and Arabic, ''Here was the war—here is the peace.''

The atmosphere at that time and at that place was one of jubilation and deep abiding respect for the role that the United States played in brokering a compromise for peace.

Because Menachem Begin, the Prime Minister of Israel, and Anwar Sadat, the President of Egypt, at great personal risk to each, chose peace on March 26, 1979. They opened channels of communication that endure to this day and continue to point towards hope in a war-weary region.

Despite the painful legacy of the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, the Suez Crisis of 1956, the Six-Day War of 1967, the War of Attrition along the Suez Canal, and the Arab-Israeli War of 1973, these leaders stood together to make peace possible. In the poignant words of Prime Minister Begin, ''No more wars, no more bloodshed. Peace unto you. Shalom, salaam, forever.

The peace treaty provided for the mutual diplomatic recognition of Egypt and Israel and ended the state of war between the two nations dating back to the 1948 Arab-Israeli war. Mr. Speaker, this was no easy choice. It was a costly choice. The choice these leaders took, to stand together ''with the boldness of heroes who dedicate themselves to a sublime aim . . . to erect a huge edifice of peace . . . an edifice that . . . serves as a beacon for generations to come,'' led to the expulsion of Egypt from the Arab League and to the assassination of President Sadat himself. Yet to this day, the treaty beckons us to ''challenge presuppositions about the intransigence and inevitability in the Middle East.''

Perhaps the Israeli-Egyptian Peace Treaty of 1979 is an example that can be replicated and modeled throughout the region. Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, we will see twisted piles of rubble and concrete from more recent conflicts marked with the poignant words, ''Here was the war, here is the peace.''

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlelady from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. I thank the distinguished Speaker and the distinguished gentleman from Virginia for his leadership in the management of this bill and Mr. FORTENBERRY for his vision.

As a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, I cannot imagine a better time to rise to the floor of the House and to speak about long-lasting peace. This Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty as articulated and led by President Jimmy Carter, along with Menachem Begin, and, of course, Anwar Sadat, captures the possibilities of the impossibilities. We can have peace in the Mideast.

Having traveled to Israel any number of times and certainly in the 1980s and now into the 1990s and now in the 21st century, I know the people of Israel love peace. Having met with the present president, President Mubarak of Egypt, speaking directly to him on the issues of peace and the security of the border, I understand the sacrifice that Egyptians have made to ensure that peace may be had.

Therefore, it is a possibility. And as we look at the exact language of the features of the peace treaty, which included the mutual recognition of Egypt and Israel, the end of the state of war between the two nations dating back to the 1948 War of Israeli independence, the complete withdrawal by Israel of its armed forces and civilians from the Sinai Peninsula, the freedom for passage of Israeli ships through the Suez Canal and the recognition of the Strait of Tiran and the Gulf of Aqaba as international waterways, that means major obstacles of peace can be overcome.

And the peace and the question of peace between Palestinians and Israelis are before us. The envoy that has been appointed by this President, President Barack Obama, it is a serious statement in Senator Mitchell's position to know that we mean business, good business, for peace to happen. I thank Secretary Hillary Rodham Clinton and, of course, this new envoy who will capture the peace treaty between Israel and Egypt and understand that the American people believe in strength, believe in integrity and the security of Israel, and they believe in peace. This commemoration of the 30th anniversary of this particular agreement says to us that peace is real.

I thank my colleague for yielding.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, about thirty years ago, when diplomacy did not have to be reintroduced as a fresh new approach to our national security, the United States helped bring Egypt and Israel together to make peace.

Israel at the time was anything but a regional power. Though it had survived wars in 1948, 1956, 1967 and, with enormous U.S. aid, in 1973, it was isolated and, frankly, right to be concerned for its continued survival. Egypt, the clear leader among the Arab states, had a new leadership that was prepared to make a sharp and unmistakable break with its past policies and re-align its future toward peace and prosperity.

The wreckage and slaughter of the 1973 Yom Kippur war, unlike all the preceding wars, thus produced fertile ground for American diplomacy. With bold, strong leaders in both Egypt and Israel who were not only ready for peace, but ready to make the sacrifices necessary to achieve it, the Camp David Accords were signed on September 17, 1978.

Since then the Middle East has been a very different place, clearly a much better one for ourselves and, I would argue, even more so for Egypt and for Israel. From our perspective, the peace made at Camp David has linked the two most important militaries in the region to the goodwill of the United States; it has prevented any further Arab-Israeli state-to-state conflicts, though the problem of non-state proxies has grown. And, most importantly, the peace between Israel and Egypt shifted the political center of gravity in the region toward peace with Israel, versus the prior consensus for continual war against the Jewish State.

This point can not be overemphasized. But for the peace between Israel and Egypt we might still be fighting against the Arab League's ''Three No's'': no peace with Israel, no recognition of Israel, and no negotiations with Israel. If this policy sounds familiar, it's because it is still the policy of Iran and the terrorist groups it supports, Hamas and Hizballah.

The Camp David Accords not only cemented America's role as the architect of any future Arab-Israeli peace, but obliterated the ''Three No's,'' a defeat that extremists have been struggling to reverse ever since.

For Egypt, the peace made at Camp David freed their nation to pursue economic and social development without the continual intrusion and disruption of war. Israel, which had never before in its entire existence had even one completely peaceful and quiet border, probably gained the most. For ourselves, the total cost of 30 years of peace forged at Camp David is about $150 billion, which is a lot of money. But, by comparison, that same $150 billion buys 1¼ years of war in Iraq.

Unfortunately, over time, Americans, Egyptians and Israelis have all lost sight of the singular importance of the peace made at Camp David, and the massive strategic benefits each nation has silently accrued as a consequence every day since. This oversight is more than just a shame, it is a strategic risk.

Each nation has its complaints with the others, and these are not trivial, nor imagined. Over time it is easy for us as human beings to take each other for granted, and the same can be said about the relationships between nations. But in the Middle East today, the risks are too great to allow this pattern to persist in the trilateral relationship. The security of all three nations depends on our re-remembering what made peace so important thirty years ago.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 282, ''Recognizing the 30th anniversary of the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel.'' I want to thank my colleague Congressman JEFF FORTENBERRY of Nebraska for introducing this resolution.

As we near the 30th anniversary of the Camp David Accords, relations between Israel and Egypt, though peaceful, remain cool. In recent days, news headlines have proclaimed positive news for a troubled region. According to reports, rival Lebanese leaders have agreed on steps to end the political crisis which has gripped the country since late 2006.

The Middle East peace process is a complex and multi-faceted issue, requiring the good-faith work and cooperation of a number of countries. Egypt has, historically, been a key player in any effort to establish peace in the region. While relations between Israel and Egypt have been labeled as the ''cold peace'' and truly difficult points of conflict remain unresolved, the two nations also have areas of common interest. Further, the peace treaty signed in 1979 between Egypt and Israel has remained an important foundation for all subsequent efforts to build a broader peace in the region.

The Arab-Israeli peace process is absolutely vital to achieving security and stability in a crucial region of the world. An Iraq Study Group testified before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, stating that:

''You cannot get anything done in the Middle East without addressing the Arab-Israeli issue. We want these other countries, especially the Sunni Arab countries, to help us. When we go to talk to them about Iraq, they will want to talk to us about the Arab-Israeli conflict.''

Mr. Speaker, the United States has played an active role in creating and maintaining peaceful relations between Egypt and Israel. In 1978, the U.S. played an integral role in the Camp David negotiations, helping Israel and Egypt take the risks necessary to sign a peace treaty in 1979. Since that time, the peace has been maintained, due in no small part to the high amounts of economic and military aid that the United States continues to give to both nations. Between FY 1979 and FY 2008, the United States provided a total of $89.73 billion to Israel, and $62.36 billion to Egypt.

While the peace established in 1979 has been maintained, close diplomatic, political, and economic ties between the two neighboring nations have never been achieved. Despite some specific initiatives, including energy and economic cooperation agreements, relations have never truly warmed between Egypt and Israel.

Part of any successful negotiation between Israel and Egypt must be the question of Hamas, a group which poses a threat to the entire region. Hamas is an Islamic fundamentalist organization formed in late 1987 as an outgrowth of the Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, which became active in the early stages of the intifada, operating primarily in the Gaza District. Various Hamas elements have used both political and violent means to pursue the goal of establishing an Islamic Palestinian state in place of Israel. Loosely structured, with some elements working clandestinely and others working openly through mosques and social service institutions to recruit members, raise money, organize activities, and distribute propaganda.

Particularly since Hamas's 2007 takeover of Gaza, there is a growing need for the Egyptian government to take a strong stand against Hamas. In the tense climate of today's Middle East, Egyptian silence on this issue will be viewed as tacit approval, and will stand in the way of any attempts for lasting peace with Israel.

Mr. Speaker, the successful resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process is essential to any effort to build a positive relationship between Israel and Egypt. Currently, decades of mistrust coupled with ongoing regional violence are at odds with any attempt to secure improved relations.

President Obama recently stated that the peace agreement between Egypt and Israel shows that ''peace is always possible'' even in the harshest of conflicts.

Mr. Speaker, I continue to believe in strong diplomacy and multilateralism. The United States has a history of concerted leadership on the development of Israeli-Egyptian relations, and I believe that we have the opportunity now to continue this legacy.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution to commemorate this reach for peace.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time at this time.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JACKSON of Illinois). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 282, 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. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

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.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

MAINTAINING COMMITMENT TO NATO

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 152) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States remains committed to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 152

Whereas for 60 years the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has served as the preeminent organization to defend the territories of its member states against all external threats;

Whereas NATO, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty, and the rule of law, has proved an indispensable instrument for forging a transatlantic community of nations working together to safeguard the freedom and common heritage of its peoples, and promoting stability in the North Atlantic area;

Whereas NATO has acted to address new risks emerging from outside the treaty area in the interests of preserving peace and security in the Euro-Atlantic area, and maintains a unique collective capability to address these new challenges which may affect Allied interests and values;

Whereas such challenges to NATO Allied interests and values include the potential for the re-emergence of unresolved historical disputes confronting Europe, rogue states and non-state actors possessing nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons and their means of delivery, transnational terrorism and disruption of the flow of energy resources, and conflicts outside the treaty area that affect vital security interests;

Whereas the security of NATO member states is inseparably linked to that of the whole of Europe, and the consolidation and strengthening of democratic and free societies on the entire continent, in accordance with the principles and commitments of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, is of direct and material concern to the NATO Alliance and its partners;

Whereas NATO enhances the security of the United States by providing an integrated military structure and a framework for consultations on political and security concerns of any member state;

Whereas NATO remains the embodiment of United States engagement in Europe and therefore membership in NATO remains a vital national security interest of the United States;

Whereas the impending membership of Albania and Croatia will add to NATO's ability to perform the full range of NATO missions and bolster its capability to integrate former communist countries into a community of democracies;

Whereas the organization of NATO national parliamentarians, the NATO Parliamentary Assembly (NATO PA), serves as a unique transatlantic forum for generating and maintaining legislative and public support for the Alliance, and has played a key

role in initiating constructive dialogue between NATO parliamentarians and parliamentarians in associate and observer states;

Whereas NATO PA activities, such as the Rose-Roth program, have played a pioneering role in promoting democratic institutions and encouraging adherence with the principles of the rule of law; and

Whereas the 60th anniversary NATO summit meeting, to be held on April 4, 2009, in Strasbourg, France, and Kehl, Germany, offers the historic opportunity to chart a course for NATO for the next decade: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that—

(1) the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is to be commended for its pivotal role in preserving transatlantic peace and stability;

(2) NATO continues to be the premier institution that promotes a uniquely transatlantic perspective and approach to issues concerning the interests and security of North America and Europe;

(3) the NATO allies, at the Summit meeting to be held in Strasbourg, France, and Kehl, Germany, in April 2009, should articulate a concrete vision for the Alliance in the 21st century, clearly setting out the continued importance of NATO for the citizens of the Allied nations;

(4) the Alliance should begin considering a new strategic concept that takes into account the changing international security environment, reaffirms the Alliance's functional and symbolic purposes, and outlines how to develop its military capabilities accordingly;

(5) the Alliance, while maintaining collective defense as its core function, should, as a fundamental Alliance task, continue to identify and address new areas where it can provide added value in tackling future threats outside the NATO treaty area, based on case-by-case consensual Alliance decision;

(6) the Alliance should make clear commitments to remedy shortfalls in areas such as logistics, command, control, communications, intelligence, ground surveillance, readiness, deployability, mobility, sustainability, survivability, armaments cooperation, and effective engagement;

(7) the Alliance must ensure equitable sharing of contributions to the NATO operations, common budgets, and overall defense expenditure and capability building;

(8) the Alliance must recognize and act upon the threat posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and terrorism by intensifying consultations among political and military leaders, and consider alternative capabilities to counter these threats to the international community;

(9) the Alliance should pace the process of NATO enlargement and remain prepared to extend invitations for accession negotiations to any appropriate European democracy meeting the criteria for NATO membership as established in the Alliance's 1995 Study on NATO Enlargement; and

(10) the Alliance should fully support the NATO PA's activities in continuing to deepen cooperation within the Alliance to forge strong links with associate and observer nations.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) and the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of H. Res. 152 to reaffirm American commitment to the values and aspirations of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Mr. Speaker, I want to particularly thank our colleague, JOHN TANNER, our good friend from Tennessee and president of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, for introducing this resolution. I commend him for his leadership in ensuring that the voices of legislators are heard in the decision-making process of the Alliance.

The NATO PA serves as a unique transatlantic forum for generating public support for Alliance activities, as well as in facilitating dialogue between parliamentarians of member, associate and observer states.

On April 3 and 4, NATO will hold its 60th anniversary summit in Strasbourg, France, and Kehl, Germany. The joint hosting of this meeting by two former adversaries poignantly symbolizes NATO's successful role in contributing to the reconstruction and stabilization of Europe following the devastation of World War II.

By serving as a reminder of the peaceful prosperity that has spread across the continent since the bloody battles of the earliest 20th century, this historic summit should bolster the Alliance's commitment to confronting the new challenges that affect NATO interests values.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, the world is a very different place than it was when the North Atlantic Treaty was signed in Washington, DC, on April 4, 1949, with the chief aim of deferring then-Soviet aggression. In the 20 years since the fall of the Berlin Wall, NATO has sought to aid the democratization and Euro-Atlantic integration of former Warsaw Pact foes as well as to develop more cooperative relations with the Russian Federation.

NATO looks forward to welcoming the newest members of the Alliance, Albania and Croatia, at the upcoming summit. While pacing the process of enlargement, NATO remains prepared to extend invitations for accession negotiations to other European democracies meeting membership criteria.

In the last decade, NATO had increasingly sought to address new risks emerging from outside the treaty area itself that can threaten Euro-Atlantic peace and security. Such challenges include terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, and disruption in the flow of emergency resources. The Alliance should begin considering a new strategic concept that takes into account the changing international security environment and outlines how to develop military capabilities accordingly.

NATO's first and most significant out-of-area mission has been in Afghanistan, where the Alliance is engaged in stabilization and reconstruction efforts amidst ongoing combat operations against the Taliban. We are now embarking on a new chapter of the U.S. and NATO missions to Afghanistan, one centered around the national election for President and on defeating al Qaeda and its Taliban allies.

NATO's role continues to be critical to the future success in Afghanistan, and achieving that success remains a considerable test, Mr. Speaker, of the Alliance's political will and military capabilities. It is crucial that allies remain committed to the mission, remedy shortfalls in all areas affecting successful engagement, and ensure equitable sharing of responsibilities.

Mr. Speaker, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization is to be commended for its pivotal role of preserving transatlantic peace and stability over the last 60 years. I strongly support this resolution and urge my colleagues to do the same.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise here today, Mr. Speaker, in support of House Resolution 152, which expresses the sense of the House that the United States remains committed to the NATO Alliance.

For over half a century, NATO has played a vital role in preserving transatlantic peace and security and in safeguarding freedom and democracy. NATO has contributed to the security of the United States and continues to serve as an important component of our broader national security framework. Although the Cold War is over, the Alliance has and must continue to transform itself to better address new challenges confronting NATO member nations.

The job of the Alliance is not over as the security of NATO member states continues to be threatened by those who seek to spread destruction, oppression and instability. Addressing these challenges will not be easy, and much needs to be done to strengthen the strategic capabilities of the Alliance.

The upcoming summit in Strasbourg, France, and Kehl, Germany, in April serves as an opportunity not only to reaffirm NATO's fundamental purpose but also to articulate a concrete vision for the Alliance in the 21st century.

I would like to thank our distinguished colleague, Congressman TANNER, for introducing this important resolution. I would also like to express particular support for the language in the resolution that states that NATO must ensure equitable sharing of contributions to NATO operations by its members, encourages the Alliance to

begin considering a new strategic concept that would take into account the challenging security environment, and calls on NATO to recognize and help address the threat posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and by terrorism.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to our friend from Kansas (Mr. MOORE).

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my strong support for this very important resolution. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization's principal objective is to foster mutual understanding among Alliance parliamentarians of the key security challenges facing the transatlantic partnership. This organization provides a critical forum for international dialogue on an array of security, political and economic matters.

I am honored to represent the United States as a member of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, a group of bipartisan lawmakers representing all NATO countries who regularly meet to discuss matters of crucial importance, I believe it's crucial and critical to the United States' interests at home and abroad to maintain a solid line of communication with our neighbors in the global community.

That's why, Mr. Speaker, I am honored to be part of our country's NATO Parliamentary Assembly delegation, and I will continue to do my part to foster greater communications and cooperation. Now more than ever, we must support efforts to build relationships between nations so that we can work together to address the issues that affect our entire world.

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Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time at this 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 Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 152, 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.

EARLY HEARING DETECTION AND INTERVENTION ACT OF 2009

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1246) to amend the Public Health Service Act regarding early detection, diagnosis, and treatment of hearing loss.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1246

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 ''Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Act of 2009''.

SEC. 2. EARLY DETECTION, DIAGNOSIS, AND TREATMENT OF HEARING LOSS.

Section 399M of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 280g–1) is amended—

(1) in the section heading, by striking ''infants'' and inserting ''newborns and infants'';

(2) in subsection (a)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking ''screening, evaluation and intervention programs and systems'' and inserting ''screening, evaluation, diagnosis, and intervention programs and systems, and to assist in the recruitment, retention, education, and training of qualified personnel and health care providers,'';

(B) by amending paragraph (1) to read as follows:

''(1) To develop and monitor the efficacy of statewide programs and systems for hearing screening of newborns and infants; prompt evaluation and diagnosis of children referred from screening programs; and appropriate educational, audiological, and medical interventions for children identified with hearing loss. Early intervention includes referral to and delivery of information and services by schools and agencies, including community, consumer, and parent-based agencies and organizations and other programs mandated by part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, which offer programs specifically designed to meet the unique language and communication needs of deaf and hard of hearing newborns, infants, toddlers, and children. Programs and systems under this paragraph shall establish and foster family-to-family support mechanisms that are critical in the first months after a child is identified with hearing loss.''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(3) To develop efficient models to ensure that newborns and infants who are identified with a hearing loss through screening receive follow-up by a qualified health care provider. These models shall be evaluated for their effectiveness, and State agencies shall be encouraged to adopt models that effectively increase the rate of occurrence of such follow-up.

''(4) To ensure an adequate supply of qualified personnel to meet the screening, evaluation, diagnosis, and early intervention needs of children.'';

(3) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1)(A), by striking ''hearing loss screening, evaluation, and intervention programs'' and inserting ''hearing loss screening, evaluation, diagnosis, and intervention programs''; and

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by striking ''for purposes of this section, continue'' and insert the following: ''for purposes of this section—

''(A) continue'';

(ii) by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

''(B) establish a postdoctoral fellowship program to foster research and development in the area of early hearing detection and intervention.'';

(4) in paragraphs (2) and (3) of subsection (c), by striking the term ''hearing screening, evaluation and intervention programs'' each place such term appears and inserting ''hearing screening, evaluation, diagnosis, and intervention programs'';

(5) in subsection (e)—

(A) in paragraph (3), by striking ''ensuring that families of the child'' and all that follows and inserting ''ensuring that families of the child are provided comprehensive, consumer-oriented information about the full range of family support, training, information services, and language and communication options and are given the opportunity to consider and obtain the full range of such appropriate services, educational and program placements, and other options for their child from highly qualified providers.''; and

(B) in paragraph (6), by striking '', after rescreening,''; and

(6) in subsection (f)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking ''fiscal year 2002'' and inserting ''fiscal years 2010 through 2015'';

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking ''fiscal year 2002'' and inserting ''fiscal years 2010 through 2015''; and

(C) in paragraph (3), by striking ''fiscal year 2002'' and inserting ''fiscal years 2010 through 2015''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) and the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. 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 New Jersey?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, this is Public Health Week. Tomorrow, my subcommittee, that is, the Health Subcommittee of Energy and Commerce, will be holding a hearing on the role of public health and health care reform. We'll be exploring the role of public health systems and policies and improving the health status of all Americans.

We have before us today a bipartisan set of bills that exemplify this. The bills make a range of policy and program changes designed to keep Americans safer, help them access needed services, and support research into important health problems.

These bills have been introduced and cosponsored by Members on both sides of the aisle. They all passed the House under suspension in the last Congress. They were passed unanimously from committee this year, and I urge you to join me and the broad set of cosponsors in supporting these bills.

The first one, Mr. Speaker, is H.R. 1246, the Early Hearing Detection Intervention Act. I rise obviously in support of that.

Every year, more than 12,000 babies are born with hearing loss. Often, their condition goes undetected for years, and many of these children end up experiencing delays in speech, language, and cognitive development. However, if the hearing loss is detected early, many of these delays can be mitigated or even prevented. For that reason,

early detection is critical to improving outcomes for these children.

The Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Act would improve services for screening, diagnosing, and treating hearing loss in children by amending the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program which was first enacted in 2000.

The Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program provides grants and cooperative agreements for statewide newborn and infant hearing services. These programs focus on screening, evaluation, diagnosis, and early intervention.

I do want to particularly thank my colleague, Representative CAPPS, for her hard work on this very important issue. I obviously urge us passing this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to yield my time to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE) is recognized for 20 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. SCALISE. I want to thank the Speaker and the gentleman from Nebraska.

I rise in support of H.R. 1246, the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Act of 2009. This legislation was introduced by Representative LOIS CAPPS and was passed by the House last Congress. The bill reforms the Public Health Service Act and reauthorizes the newborns and infants hearing loss program.

Not only does the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Act reach out to cover more children, but it also provides the Secretary of Health and Human Services the ability to assist in recruitment, retention, education, and training of qualified personal and health care providers. These qualified health care providers will provide children, who have been identified with hearing loss through screening and detection, with adequate follow-up care.

In an effort to foster research and development in the area of early hearing detection and intervention, H.R. 1246 requires the director of the National Institutes of Health to establish a postdoctoral fellowship program. This program is intended to provide more information on how to better the lives of children through early intervention.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1246.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS), the sponsor of this legislation, and I don't need to tell anyone how hard she works on this and so many health bills. She is the vice chair of our Health Subcommittee.

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman of our subcommittee, Mr. PALLONE, for giving me time to speak. Of course, I'm speaking in strong support of H.R. 1246, the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Act. I am very proud to have introduced this bill with my colleague, Congresswoman Jo Ann Emerson of Missouri.

I want to commend the leadership of the Hearing Health Caucus, Congressman VERN EHLERS and Congresswoman CAROLYN MCCARTHY, our leaders of this caucus now, and I must also mention the work of former Congressman Jim Walsh of New York who had championed this issue for many years before his retirement.

As our chairman mentioned, each year more than 12,000 infants are born with hearing loss. If left undetected, this condition impairs speech development, language development, and cognitive development. Back in 2000, we developed the early hearing detection program, thanks to the hard work of the Hearing Health Caucus, and since that time, we've seen a tremendous increase in the number of newborns who are now being screened for hearing loss.

Back in 2000, only 44 percent of newborns were being screened for hearing loss. That's less than half of the babies born. Now, we're screening newborns at a rate of over 93 percent. So this legislation has had an impact. Again, I commend the work of those made it happen and all of the hard work of our colleagues here in Congress and the Senate and the signing into law.

But we know now that our work is not done. According to the Centers for Disease Control, almost half of the newborns who fail initial screening of their hearing do not go on to receive appropriate follow-up care, and we need to train more health professionals with the skills necessary to provide effective intervention.

As a school nurse for over 20 years, I had a lot of interaction with students who were lagging behind their classmates, failing in class due to undiagnosed or untreated hearing loss. We can prevent more children from suffering in the classroom and really suffering throughout their lives through better investment in follow-up intervention as a part of the successful hearing screening program for newborns and infants.

I urge our colleagues to join in voting in favor of H.R. 1246.

Mr. SCALISE. I have no speakers for this legislation, so I would yield the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I would also yield back the balance of my time and urge passage of the legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1246.

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.

NATIONAL PAIN CARE POLICY ACT OF 2009

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 756) to amend the Public Health Service Act with respect to pain care, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 756

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''National Pain Care Policy Act of 2009''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
Sec. 2. Institute of Medicine Conference on Pain.
Sec. 3. Pain research at National Institutes of Health.
Sec. 4. Pain care education and training.
Sec. 5. Public awareness campaign on pain management.

SEC. 2. INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE CONFERENCE ON PAIN.

(a) CONVENING.—Not later than June 30, 2010, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall seek to enter into an agreement with the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies to convene a Conference on Pain (in this section referred to as ''the Conference'').

(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of the Conference shall be to—

(1) increase the recognition of pain as a significant public health problem in the United States;

(2) evaluate the adequacy of assessment, diagnosis, treatment, and management of acute and chronic pain in the general population, and in identified racial, ethnic, gender, age, and other demographic groups that may be disproportionately affected by inadequacies in the assessment, diagnosis, treatment, and management of pain;

(3) identify barriers to appropriate pain care, including—

(A) lack of understanding and education among employers, patients, health care providers, regulators, and third-party payors;

(B) barriers to access to care at the primary, specialty, and tertiary care levels, including barriers—

(i) specific to those populations that are disproportionately undertreated for pain;

(ii) related to physician concerns over regulatory and law enforcement policies applicable to some pain therapies; and

(iii) attributable to benefit, coverage, and payment policies in both the public and private sectors; and

(C) gaps in basic and clinical research on the symptoms and causes of pain, and potential assessment methods and new treatments to improve pain care; and

(4) establish an agenda for action in both the public and private sectors that will reduce such barriers and significantly improve the state of pain care research, education, and clinical care in the United States.

(c) OTHER APPROPRIATE ENTITY.—If the Institute of Medicine declines to enter into an agreement under subsection (a), the Secretary of Health and Human Services may enter into such agreement with another appropriate entity.

(d) REPORT.—A report summarizing the Conference's findings and recommendations shall be submitted to the Congress not later than June 30, 2011.

(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—For the purpose of carrying out this section,

there is authorized to be appropriated $500,000 for each of fiscal years 2010 and 2011.

SEC. 3. PAIN RESEARCH AT NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH.

Part B of title IV of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 284 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 409J. PAIN RESEARCH.

''(a) RESEARCH INITIATIVES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director of NIH is encouraged to continue and expand, through the Pain Consortium, an aggressive program of basic and clinical research on the causes of and potential treatments for pain.

''(2) ANNUAL RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not less than annually, the Pain Consortium, in consultation with the Division of Program Coordination, Planning, and Strategic Initiatives, shall develop and submit to the Director of NIH recommendations on appropriate pain research initiatives that could be undertaken with funds reserved under section 402A(c)(1) for the Common Fund or otherwise available for such initiatives.

''(3) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term 'Pain Consortium' means the Pain Consortium of the National Institutes of Health or a similar trans-National Institutes of Health coordinating entity designated by the Secretary for purposes of this subsection.

''(b) INTERAGENCY PAIN RESEARCH COORDINATING COMMITTEE.—

''(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall establish not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this section and as necessary maintain a committee, to be known as the Interagency Pain Research Coordinating Committee (in this section referred to as the 'Committee'), to coordinate all efforts within the Department of Health and Human Services and other Federal agencies that relate to pain research.

''(2) MEMBERSHIP.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Committee shall be composed of the following voting members:

''(i) Not more than 7 voting Federal representatives as follows:

''(I) The Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

''(II) The Director of the National Institutes of Health and the directors of such national research institutes and national centers as the Secretary determines appropriate.

''(III) The heads of such other agencies of the Department of Health and Human Services as the Secretary determines appropriate.

''(IV) Representatives of other Federal agencies that conduct or support pain care research and treatment, including the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

''(ii) 12 additional voting members appointed under subparagraph (B).

''(B) ADDITIONAL MEMBERS.—The Committee shall include additional voting members appointed by the Secretary as follows:

''(i) 6 members shall be appointed from among scientists, physicians, and other health professionals, who—

''(I) are not officers or employees of the United States;

''(II) represent multiple disciplines, including clinical, basic, and public health sciences;

''(III) represent different geographical regions of the United States; and

''(IV) are from practice settings, academia, manufacturers or other research settings; and

''(ii) 6 members shall be appointed from members of the general public, who are representatives of leading research, advocacy, and service organizations for individuals with pain-related conditions.

''(C) NONVOTING MEMBERS.—The Committee shall include such nonvoting members as the Secretary determines to be appropriate.

''(3) CHAIRPERSON.—The voting members of the Committee shall select a chairperson from among such members. The selection of a chairperson shall be subject to the approval of the Director of NIH.

''(4) MEETINGS.—The Committee shall meet at the call of the chairperson of the Committee or upon the request of the Director of NIH, but in no case less often than once each year.

''(5) DUTIES.—The Committee shall—

''(A) develop a summary of advances in pain care research supported or conducted by the Federal agencies relevant to the diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of pain and diseases and disorders associated with pain;

''(B) identify critical gaps in basic and clinical research on the symptoms and causes of pain;

''(C) make recommendations to ensure that the activities of the National Institutes of Health and other Federal agencies, including the Department of Defense and the Department of Veteran Affairs, are free of unnecessary duplication of effort;

''(D) make recommendations on how best to disseminate information on pain care; and

''(E) make recommendations on how to expand partnerships between public entities, including Federal agencies, and private entities to expand collaborative, cross-cutting research.

''(6) REVIEW.—The Secretary shall review the necessity of the Committee at least once every 2 years.''.

SEC. 4. PAIN CARE EDUCATION AND TRAINING.

Part D of title VII of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 294 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"SEC. 759. PROGRAM FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN PAIN CARE.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may make awards of grants, cooperative agreements, and contracts to health professions schools, hospices, and other public and private entities for the development and implementation of programs to provide education and training to health care professionals in pain care.

''(b) PRIORITIES.—In making awards under subsection (a), the Secretary shall give priority to awards for the implementation of programs under such subsection.

''(c) CERTAIN TOPICS.—An award may be made under subsection (a) only if the applicant for the award agrees that the program carried out with the award will include information and education on—

''(1) recognized means for assessing, diagnosing, treating, and managing pain and related signs and symptoms, including the medically appropriate use of controlled substances;

''(2) applicable laws, regulations, rules, and policies on controlled substances, including the degree to which misconceptions and concerns regarding such laws, regulations, rules, and policies, or the enforcement thereof, may create barriers to patient access to appropriate and effective pain care;

''(3) interdisciplinary approaches to the delivery of pain care, including delivery through specialized centers providing comprehensive pain care treatment expertise;

''(4) cultural, linguistic, literacy, geographic, and other barriers to care in underserved populations; and

''(5) recent findings, developments, and improvements in the provision of pain care.

''(d) PROGRAM SITES.—Education and training under subsection (a) may be provided at or through health professions schools, residency training programs, and other graduate programs in the health professions; entities that provide continuing education in medicine, pain management, dentistry, psychology, social work, nursing, and pharmacy; hospices; and such other programs or sites as the Secretary determines to be appropriate.

''(e) EVALUATION OF PROGRAMS.—The Secretary shall (directly or through grants or contracts) provide for the evaluation of programs implemented under subsection (a) in order to determine the effect of such programs on knowledge and practice of pain care.

''(f) PEER REVIEW GROUPS.—In carrying out section 799(f) with respect to this section, the Secretary shall ensure that the membership of each peer review group involved includes individuals with expertise and experience in pain care.

''(g) PAIN CARE DEFINED.—For purposes of this section the term 'pain care' means the assessment, diagnosis, treatment, or management of acute or chronic pain regardless of causation or body location.

''(h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section, $5,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2010 through 2012. Amounts appropriated under this subsection shall remain available until expended.''.

SEC. 5. PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN ON PAIN MANAGEMENT.

Part B of title II of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 238 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 249. NATIONAL EDUCATION OUTREACH AND AWARENESS CAMPAIGN ON PAIN MANAGEMENT.

''(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than June 30, 2010, the Secretary shall establish and implement a national pain care education outreach and awareness campaign described in subsection (b).

''(b) REQUIREMENTS.—The Secretary shall design the public awareness campaign under this section to educate consumers, patients, their families, and other caregivers with respect to—

''(1) the incidence and importance of pain as a national public health problem;

''(2) the adverse physical, psychological, emotional, societal, and financial consequences that can result if pain is not appropriately assessed, diagnosed, treated, or managed;

''(3) the availability, benefits, and risks of all pain treatment and management options;

''(4) having pain promptly assessed, appropriately diagnosed, treated, and managed, and regularly reassessed with treatment adjusted as needed;

''(5) the role of credentialed pain management specialists and subspecialists, and of comprehensive interdisciplinary centers of treatment expertise;

''(6) the availability in the public, nonprofit, and private sectors of pain management-related information, services, and resources for consumers, employers, third-party payors, patients, their families, and caregivers, including information on—

''(A) appropriate assessment, diagnosis, treatment, and management options for all types of pain and pain-related symptoms; and

''(B) conditions for which no treatment options are yet recognized; and

''(7) other issues the Secretary deems appropriate.

''(c) CONSULTATION.—In designing and implementing the public awareness campaign required by this section, the Secretary shall consult with organizations representing patients in pain and other consumers, employers, physicians including physicians specializing in pain care, other pain management professionals, medical device manufacturers, and pharmaceutical companies.

''(d) COORDINATION.—

''(1) LEAD OFFICIAL.—The Secretary shall designate one official in the Department of Health and Human Services to oversee the campaign established under this section.

''(2) AGENCY COORDINATION.—The Secretary shall ensure the involvement in the public awareness campaign under this section of the Surgeon General of the Public Health Service, the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and such other representatives of offices and agencies of the Department of Health and Human Services as the Secretary determines appropriate.

''(e) UNDERSERVED AREAS AND POPULATIONS.—In designing the public awareness campaign under this section, the Secretary shall—

''(1) take into account the special needs of geographic areas and racial, ethnic, gender, age, and other demographic groups that are currently underserved; and

''(2) provide resources that will reduce disparities in access to appropriate diagnosis, assessment, and treatment.

''(f) GRANTS AND CONTRACTS.—The Secretary may make awards of grants, cooperative agreements, and contracts to public agencies and private nonprofit organizations to assist with the development and implementation of the public awareness campaign under this section.

''(g) EVALUATION AND REPORT.—Not later than the end of fiscal year 2012, the Secretary shall prepare and submit to the Congress a report evaluating the effectiveness of the public awareness campaign under this section in educating the general public with respect to the matters described in subsection (b).

''(h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—For purposes of carrying out this section, there are authorized to be appropriated $2,000,000 for fiscal year 2010 and $4,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2011 and 2012.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) and the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. 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 New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mr. PALLONE. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 756, the National Pain Care Policy Act of 2009.

Pain is the most common reason Americans access the health care system and is a leading cause of disability. It is also a major contributor to health care costs. National Center for Health Statistics estimates that 76.2 million, or one in four, Americans have suffered from pain that lasts longer than 24 hours. Millions more Americans suffer from acute pain. While untreated pain can seriously impact every aspect of daily living, most painful conditions can be relieved through treatment.

This bill will expand research on the causes and treatments of pain, award grants for pain care education and training programs for health professionals, and establish and implement a national pain care education outreach and awareness campaign.

Once again, I'd like to thank my colleague, Representative CAPPS, for sponsoring this bill and for her hard work on the bill. I urge my colleagues to pass this very important bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 756, the National Pain Care Policy Act of 2009. I want to commend Congresswoman LOIS CAPPS and Congressman MIKE ROGERS for their bipartisan work on this bill.

The National Center for Health Statistics estimates that 76.2 million Americans have suffered pain that lasts longer than 24 hours. Most painful conditions can be relieved with proper treatment and adequate pain management. This bill creates an interagency coordinating committee to coordinate all efforts within HHS and other Federal agencies related to pain research. This effort, along with efforts at the NIH via the pain consortium, will go a long way towards increasing research and awareness of chronic pain.

Mr. Speaker, I urge Members to support this legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, once again, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS), the sponsor of the legislation.

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, again, I thank our chairman of our subcommittee for giving me this time to speak in strong support of H.R. 756, the National Pain Care Policy Act.

I want to thank our colleague from Michigan, MIKE ROGERS, for his tireless advocacy on behalf of pain care. It's been several years that we've been working together, and we have a great deal of gratitude for the vast coalition of organizations who have been supporting this legislation and working so hard on behalf of people with pain who suffer every single day.

Most Americans would be surprised if they understood that the leading cause of disability in the United States is pain and that its treatment and management is straining our health care system. Americans suffering from chronic pain, or from pain as a symptom of another illness, face so many barriers to achieving relief. Fortunately, we don't have to remain debilitated by pain because we can take several steps in this legislation to improve the way we research, diagnose, and treat pain.

This legislation takes a multifaceted approach to addressing pain. First, it calls on the Institute of Medicine to convene a conference on pain. The bill will also enable coordination and improvement of pain research at the National Institutes of Health.

□ 1530

This information will then be disseminated to the health community. H.R. 756 will also create a grant program in order to improve training for health professionals in recognizing and treating pain effectively.

Finally, through this legislation we will initiate a public health awareness campaign so that patients know they do not need to suffer from pain, but rather they can seek available treatment options.

It is my hope that passage of this bill in the House today will spur the Senate to act soon so we can see this bill signed into law before the end of the year.

Most of us have either suffered from pain ourselves—and chronic pain, as our colleague from the other side said, is pain that doesn't go away for at least 24 hours. That's awfully miserable. Either we have experienced that ourselves or we have some family member or loved one that we can think of who would be very much affected in a positive way by passing this legislation.

So the sooner we get to work on improving pain care, the sooner we can see relief for the millions of Americans who are suffering from pain every day.

Again, I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on H.R. 756.

Mr. SCALISE. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of this bill and 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. PALLONE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 756, 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.

MELANIE BLOCKER STOKES MOM'S OPPORTUNITY TO ACCESS HEALTH, EDUCATION, RESEARCH, AND SUPPORT FOR POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION ACT

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 20) to provide for research on, and services for individuals with, postpartum depression and psychosis, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 20

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 ''Melanie Blocker Stokes Mom's Opportunity to Access Health, Education, Research, and Support for Postpartum Depression Act'' or the ''Melanie Blocker Stokes MOTHERS Act''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

For purposes of this Act—

(1) the term ''postpartum condition'' means postpartum depression or postpartum psychosis; and

(2) the term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

TITLE I—RESEARCH ON POSTPARTUM CONDITIONS

SEC. 101. EXPANSION AND INTENSIFICATION OF ACTIVITIES.

(a) CONTINUATION OF ACTIVITIES.—The Secretary is encouraged to continue activities on postpartum conditions.

(b) PROGRAMS FOR POSTPARTUM CONDITIONS.—In carrying out subsection (a), the Secretary is encouraged to continue research to expand the understanding of the causes of, and treatments for, postpartum conditions. Activities under such subsection shall include conducting and supporting the following:

(1) Basic research concerning the etiology and causes of the conditions.

(2) Epidemiological studies to address the frequency and natural history of the conditions and the differences among racial and ethnic groups with respect to the conditions.

(3) The development of improved screening and diagnostic techniques.

(4) Clinical research for the development and evaluation of new treatments.

(5) Information and education programs for health care professionals and the public, which may include a coordinated national campaign to increase the awareness and knowledge of postpartum conditions. Activities under such a national campaign may—

(A) include public service announcements through television, radio, and other means; and

(B) focus on—

(i) raising awareness about screening;

(ii) educating new mothers and their families about postpartum conditions to promote earlier diagnosis and treatment; and

(iii) ensuring that such education includes complete information concerning postpartum conditions, including its symptoms, methods of coping with the illness, and treatment resources.

SEC. 102. SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING LONGITUDINAL STUDY OF RELATIVE MENTAL HEALTH CONSEQUENCES FOR WOMEN OF RESOLVING A PREGNANCY.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the Director of the National Institute of Mental Health may conduct a nationally representative longitudinal study (during the period of fiscal years 2009 through 2018) of the relative mental health consequences for women of resolving a pregnancy (intended and unintended) in various ways, including carrying the pregnancy to term and parenting the child, carrying the pregnancy to term and placing the child for adoption, miscarriage, and having an abortion. This study may assess the incidence, timing, magnitude, and duration of the immediate and long-term mental health consequences (positive or negative) of these pregnancy outcomes.

(b) REPORT.—Beginning not later than 3 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, and periodically thereafter for the duration of the study, such Director may prepare and submit to the Congress reports on the findings of the study.

TITLE II—DELIVERY OF SERVICES REGARDING POSTPARTUM CONDITIONS

SEC. 201. ESTABLISHMENT OF GRANT PROGRAM.

Subpart I of part D of title III of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254b et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 330G the following:

"SEC. 330G–1. SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH A POSTPARTUM CONDITION AND THEIR FAMILIES.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may make grants to eligible entities for projects for the establishment, operation, and coordination of effective and cost-efficient systems for the delivery of essential services to individuals with a postpartum condition and their families.

''(b) CERTAIN ACTIVITIES.—To the extent practicable and appropriate, the Secretary shall ensure that projects funded under subsection (a) provide education and services with respect to the diagnosis and management of postpartum conditions. The Secretary may allow such projects to include the following:

''(1) Delivering or enhancing outpatient and home-based health and support services, including case management and comprehensive treatment services for individuals with or at risk for postpartum conditions, and delivering or enhancing support services for their families.

''(2) Delivering or enhancing inpatient care management services that ensure the well-being of the mother and family and the future development of the infant.

''(3) Improving the quality, availability, and organization of health care and support services (including transportation services, attendant care, homemaker services, day or respite care, and providing counseling on financial assistance and insurance) for individuals with a postpartum condition and support services for their families.

''(4) Providing education to new mothers and, as appropriate, their families about postpartum conditions to promote earlier diagnosis and treatment. Such education may include—

''(A) providing complete information on postpartum conditions, symptoms, methods of coping with the illness, and treatment resources; and

''(B) in the case of a grantee that is a State, hospital, or birthing facility—

''(i) providing education to new mothers and fathers, and other family members as appropriate, concerning postpartum conditions before new mothers leave the health facility; and

''(ii) ensuring that training programs regarding such education are carried out at the health facility.

''(c) INTEGRATION WITH OTHER PROGRAMS.—To the extent practicable and appropriate, the Secretary may integrate the grant program under this section with other grant programs carried out by the Secretary, including the program under section 330.

''(d) CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS.—A grant may be made under this section only if the applicant involved makes the following agreements:

''(1) Not more than 5 percent of the grant will be used for administration, accounting, reporting, and program oversight functions.

''(2) The grant will be used to supplement and not supplant funds from other sources related to the treatment of postpartum conditions.

''(3) The applicant will abide by any limitations deemed appropriate by the Secretary on any charges to individuals receiving services pursuant to the grant. As deemed appropriate by the Secretary, such limitations on charges may vary based on the financial circumstances of the individual receiving services.

''(4) The grant will not be expended to make payment for services authorized under subsection (a) to the extent that payment has been made, or can reasonably be expected to be made, with respect to such services—

''(A) under any State compensation program, under an insurance policy, or under any Federal or State health benefits program; or

''(B) by an entity that provides health services on a prepaid basis.

''(5) The applicant will, at each site at which the applicant provides services funded under subsection (a), post a conspicuous notice informing individuals who receive the services of any Federal policies that apply to the applicant with respect to the imposition of charges on such individuals.

''(6) For each grant period, the applicant will submit to the Secretary a report that describes how grant funds were used during such period.

''(e) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary may provide technical assistance to entities seeking a grant under this section in order to assist such entities in complying with the requirements of this section.

''(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) The term 'eligible entity' means a public or nonprofit private entity, which may include a State or local government; a public or nonprofit private recipient of a grant under section 330H (relating to the Healthy Start Initiative), public-private partnership, hospital, community-based organization, hospice, ambulatory care facility, community health center, migrant health center, public housing primary care center, or homeless health center; or any other appropriate public or nonprofit private entity.

''(2) The term 'postpartum condition' means postpartum depression or postpartum psychosis.''.

TITLE III—GENERAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 301. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

To carry out this Act and the amendment made by section 201, there are authorized to be appropriated, in addition to such other sums as may be available for such purpose—

(1) $3,000,000 for fiscal year 2010; and

(2) such sums as may be necessary for fiscal years 2011 and 2012.

SEC. 302. REPORT BY THE SECRETARY.

(a) STUDY.—The Secretary shall conduct a study on the benefits of screening for postpartum conditions.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall complete the study required by subsection (a) and submit a report to the Congress on the results of such study.

SEC. 303. LIMITATION.

Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act or the amendment made by section 201, the Secretary may not utilize amounts made available under this Act or such amendment to carry out activities or programs that are duplicative of activities or programs that are already being carried out through the Department of Health and Human Services.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) and the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, once again, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on the legislation.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 20, the Melanie Blocker Stokes Mom's Opportunity to Access Health, Education, Research, and Support for Postpartum Depression Act.

Postpartum depression occurs after 10 to 15 percent of all deliveries, and the majority of patients suffer from this illness for more than 6 months. In its most severe form, postpartum psychosis, women may actually suffer from hallucinations and delusions that can put them and their babies at risk.

The bill before us today amends the Public Health Service Act to include a new section that authorizes the Secretary of Health and Human Services to make grants for services related to postpartum depression and postpartum psychosis.

It would encourage continued research into the causes of and treatments for these conditions and would

give the Secretary the authority to provide grants to deliver services to women with these conditions and their families.

I want to thank my colleague, Representative BOBBY RUSH, for his work in raising this important issue. He is the sponsor of this bill and has worked hard on it for a long time.

I also want to thank Mary Jo Codey, who is the wife of former Governor Codey from my home State of New Jersey. She came and testified before our subcommittee on this bill and has been outspoken on the issue of postpartum depression.

I urge my colleagues to pass this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise today in support of H.R. 20, the Melanie Blocker Stokes MOTHERS Act. Last Congress, the Energy and Commerce Committee held hearings on this issue that were deeply emotional, especially when testimony was presented by Melanie Blocker Stokes' mother. This bill highlights the need to increase awareness of postpartum depression and expand the knowledge of its terrible effects.

It is important to note that as many as 80 percent of women experience some mood disturbances after pregnancy. For most women, the symptoms are mild and go away on their own. But 10 to 20 percent of women develop a more disabling form of mood disorder called postpartum depression.

This legislation encourages the continuation of research being done by Federal agencies to determine the causes of postpartum depression and how it can better be treated. I stand in support of this legislation and hope that my colleagues will join me.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. I yield 3 minutes to someone who has been such a leader on so many health care issues, including this one, the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. KENNEDY.)

Mr. KENNEDY. I thank the gentleman from New Jersey and thank him for his leadership on this issue and many others regarding mental health. I just want to concur with him and Mr. RUSH from Illinois that this issue of mental health and postpartum depression I'm glad to see is on the agenda for health care. We are in the year of health care reform, and it's so vital that the issue of the total health of our people makes its way into health care reform.

We find that so many in our country seek help in our health care system and yet don't receive it because our health care system does not respond to the total health of a person. It responds to the physical part of the person but it does not respond to the emotional—the sympathetic part of the person; the psychological, which is the mental health part of the person; the spiritual, which is the sense of purpose that a person has for their life.

We have done such a good job in this country in training our doctors to take care of a person as if they were a machine, and we could fix a person if they had a broken bone or if they had something that we could show on an x-ray or we could test through a blood test, but if we can't show it on an x-ray or a blood test, then we really don't know what to do.

My friends, the fact of the matter is we are much more than just the sum of our parts. Really, a much bigger part of this is the mental health and emotional health of our people. That is why we need to do a lot more to address this if we are going to address people's health in this country.

Frankly, mental illnesses are the second leading cause of lost days in our country. It's quite surprising that even given that statistic, our health care system doesn't respond to this challenge.

So I'm glad to see that this legislation calls on greater research into this area because, frankly, there is a physical element to this. The body does change as a result of mental health problems. We now know, thanks to the new x-ray machines, that we can actually see biochemical changes in the brain. We can see these biochemical changes in the brain, thanks to these new functional magnetic resonance imaging exams.

Furthermore, I think it's so important for people to know that we want a vibrant and a productive people, and we want them to feel active and alive. The best way to do that is to make sure that we give them all the support that they need in this country.

So, to do that, we need to make sure that they get all of the support and get their checkup from their neck up, just as they get their checkup everywhere else. So I'm glad that this proposal is going forward.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BROUN).

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. I thank the gentleman for yielding. Mr. Speaker, I'm a physician. I've dealt with anxiety and depression in patients throughout my medical career. Depression is an extremely debilitating disease.

What really concerns me at this point is Americans today are getting very, very depressed because of this steamroller of socialism that's being forced down their throats, this steamroller of socialism of bigger and bigger government that is taking money away from small business, it's taking money away from families. They are struggling.

We need to do something about the economy. Americans are hurting. We need to do something about it now. But greater spending and bigger government is not the solution.

In fact, we're going to be taking up a budget this week that is a budget that should cause people great angst here in America. It's a budget that's going to create a tremendous amount of anxiety and depression.

More people are going to see their doctors and ask for antidepressants and nerve pills because of this budget that we're going to see this week that's being presented by the Democratic majority. We've got to stop it.

Republicans have offered alternative after alternative, but the leadership of this House won't even consider them. The leadership of this House has said that Republicans are the ''Party of No,'' and that is absolutely not factual. Republicans have offered many alternatives, but they just won't be considered.

The American people need to wake up and understand that they're going to become more depressed, they're going to become more anxious, they're going to have greater strife within their families, we're going to have more marriages break up because of the budget, in my opinion, that we are going to be presented in this House—and undoubtedly this House will pass it. But it's going to wreck our economy.

America is bankrupt today because of the great spending that's been coming down through the latter part of the Bush administration and now in this administration. We've got to stop it.

The American people need to wake up and demand that we have a responsible government so that they won't be depressed, so they won't be anxious, so that we can have a good economy.

Republicans are offering solutions—commonsense, market-based solutions based on the private sector. It's absolutely critical that we find those solutions; that we work together, Democrats and Republicans alike, to find economic solutions to put this country back on the right course.

We're spending too much, we're taxing too much, we're borrowing too much, and we're bankrupting America—not only the government, but individuals and small businesses—and it has to stop. I call on the American people to write their Congressman, write their Senators, and say ''no.''

We've got to have a better alternative than this budget that's going to be presented this week.

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in strong support of the Melanie Blocker Stokes Mom's Opportunity to Access Health, Education, Research, and Support for Postpartum Depression Act of 2009.

I would like to thank Chairman WAXMAN, Ranking Member BARTON, my colleague Congressman FRANK PALLONE, and the Members of the Energy and Commerce Committee who unanimously supported this legislation's passage out of the committee.

After eight long years, today marks an important step forward in the journey for Congress to fully recognize postpartum depression as a national women's health priority. This bill comes to the floor today with strong, bipartisan support. No longer will postpartum depression be dismissed as mere ''baby blues.''

Mr. Speaker, today, 60 to 80 percent of new mothers experience symptoms of postpartum depression while the more serious condition, postpartum psychosis, affects up to 20 percent of women who have recently given birth. Experts in the field of women's health like Susan

Stone, Chair of the President's Advisory Council of Postpartum Support International, says that these statistics do not include mothers whose babies are stillborn, who miscarry, or who are vulnerable to these devastating disorders which raises those at risk into the millions. The most extreme form, postpartum psychosis, is exhibited in about one percent of all new mothers.

At what should be the happiest time in a woman's life these mood disorders result in feelings of despondency, tearfulness, inadequacy, guilt and fatigue. In the worst case scenario, if left untreated or not treated properly, postpartum depression and postpartum psychosis has resulted in suicide and infanticide. The consequences of untreated maternal depression in the mother range from chronic disability to death of the infant as well as learning and behavioral disabilities that can negatively impact a child's development.

In light of all these sobering facts, sadly, I was finally compelled to author H.R. 20 in December 2007 after watching the news accounts of the missing Melanie Blocker Stokes. This bright, vibrant woman who loved life was a first time mother, a successful business woman and my constituent. Despite her family's valiant interventions, Melanie's psychosis was so severe that she slipped away and ended her life in solitary agony.

As news of her death swept throughout Chicago, I reached out to Melanie's mother, Carol Blocker, who told me her daughter's diagnosis and suicide was the result of postpartum psychosis.

And, sometime later, Dr. Nada Stotland of the American Psychiatric Association, also a constituent of mine, also reached out to me. Dr. Stotland detailed the value of additional research and discussed the under-reporting and misdiagnosis of postpartum depression and psychosis in our country.

There is no denying the fact that the need for resources to combat postpartum depression grows more and more each and every year. Here are the facts: H.R. 20 will finally put significant money and attention into research, screening, treatment and education for mothers suffering from this disease. Research indicates that some form of postpartum depression affects approximately 1 in 1,000 new mothers, or up to 800,000 new cases annually. This data does not include the additional cases of women who may be vulnerable to these illnesses even after they've miscarried or who deliver stillborn infants.

Of the new postpartum cases this year, less than 15 percent of mothers will receive treatment and even fewer will receive adequate treatment; however, with treatment over 90 percent of these mothers could overcome their depression. Every 50 seconds a new mother will begin struggling with the effects of mental illness.

Mr. Speaker, these facts are profound and, in the words of Carol Blocker, ". . . hundreds of thousands of women, who have suffered from postpartum depression and psychosis are still waiting for Congress to act eight years after legislation was first introduced." Mr. Speaker, thank you for this day because, today, Mrs. Blocker and hundreds of thousands of mothers will not have to wait any longer for Congress to act! By passage of H.R. 20, today, we will put mothers first.

When this bill becomes law, my legislation will:

Encourage the Secretary of Health and Human Services to continue: (1) activities on postpartum depression; and (2) research to expand the understanding of the causes of, and treatments for, postpartum conditions.

Express the sense of Congress that the Director of the National Institute of Mental Health may conduct a nationally representative longitudinal study of the relative mental health consequences for women of resolving a pregnancy in various ways.

Amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize the Secretary to make grants for projects for the establishment, operation, and coordination of effective and cost-efficient systems for the delivery of essential services to individuals with a postpartum condition and their families.

Direct the Secretary to ensure that such projects provide education and services with respect to the diagnosis and management of postpartum conditions.

Moreover, this bill is an affordable approach to research and services. This is good policy, good politics and a good public health bill.

Before I close, I'd like to take a moment to remember and honor the hundreds of thousands of women—women who have lost either their ability to "mother" or, in far too many cases, their lives to postpartum depression.

Mr. Speaker, this bill, this day and this moment would not be a reality had it not been for a beautiful, young Chicago native, the late Melanie Blocker Stokes, and the valiant effort her husband and her family made to save her lift but to no avail. And, even though Melanie did not survive her battle with postpartum psychosis, Melanie's battle and her ultimate sacrifice will never be forgotten because of our efforts, here, today.

I would like to thank Carol Blocker, my friend, constituent and fellow activist, who with grace and dignity found a way for her daughter's memory to live on.

I would also like to thank all the groups who support this legislation. Groups like, Postpartum Support International, the Family Mental Health Foundation, the American Psychological Association, the American Psychiatric Association and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

I'd also like to acknowledge the tremendous work of groups like the Children's Defense Fund, the Melanie Blocker Stokes Foundation, Suicide Prevention Action Network, Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance, Mental Health America, NARAL, National Alliance for Mental Illness, Community Behavioral Healthcare, the March of Dimes, The National Association of Social Workers, National Organization for Women and North American Society for Psychosocial Obstetrics and Gynecology.

I thank these groups and various activists for their relentless efforts to address this issue including calling their congressional representatives and mailing or faxing letters in support of H.R. 20. Our work will not be done until this bill is signed by the President. And, the good news is, this time we have a friend and fellow Chicagoan in the White House.

And, finally, let me once again thank the hundreds of thousands of unsung women, and their families, who have battled postpartum depression in silence or isolation, in some form, for far too long. To those women and their families I say, you will never suffer in silence again. And, with that, I proudly urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on H.R. 20.

Mr. SCALISE. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I ask that the bill be passed, 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. PALLONE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 20, 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. BROUN of Georgia. 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.

WAKEFIELD ACT

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 479) to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide a means for continued improvement in emergency medical services for children, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 479

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 "Wakefield Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

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

(1) There are 31,000,000 child and adolescent visits to the Nation's emergency departments every year.

(2) Over 90 percent of children requiring emergency care are seen in general hospitals, not in free-standing children's hospitals, with one-quarter to one-third of the patients being children in the typical general hospital emergency department.

(3) Severe asthma and respiratory distress are the most common emergencies for pediatric patients, representing nearly one-third of all hospitalizations among children under the age of 15 years, while seizures, shock, and airway obstruction are other common pediatric emergencies, followed by cardiac arrest and severe trauma.

(4) Up to 20 percent of children needing emergency care have underlying medical conditions such as asthma, diabetes, sickle-cell disease, low birth weight, and bronchopulmonary dysplasia.

(5) Significant gaps remain in emergency medical care delivered to children. Only about 6 percent of hospitals have available all the pediatric supplies deemed essential by the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American College of Emergency Physicians for managing pediatric emergencies, while about half of hospitals have at least 85 percent of those supplies.

(6) Providers must be educated and trained to manage children's unique physical and psychological needs in emergency situations, and emergency systems must be equipped with the resources needed to care for this especially vulnerable population.

(7) Systems of care must be continually maintained, updated, and improved to ensure that

research is translated into practice, best practices are adopted, training is current, and standards and protocols are appropriate.

(8) The Emergency Medical Services for Children (EMSC) Program under section 1910 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300w–9) is the only Federal program that focuses specifically on improving the pediatric components of emergency medical care.

(9) The EMSC Program promotes the nationwide exchange of pediatric emergency medical care knowledge and collaboration by those with an interest in such care and is depended upon by Federal agencies and national organizations to ensure that this exchange of knowledge and collaboration takes place.

(10) The EMSC Program also supports a multi-institutional network for research in pediatric emergency medicine, thus allowing providers to rely on evidence rather than anecdotal experience when treating ill or injured children.

(11) The Institute of Medicine stated in its 2006 report, ''Emergency Care for Children: Growing Pains'', that the EMSC Program ''boasts many accomplishments . . . and the work of the program continues to be relevant and vital''.

(12) The EMSC Program is celebrating its 25th anniversary, marking a quarter-century of driving key improvements in emergency medical services to children, and should continue its mission to reduce child and youth morbidity and mortality by supporting improvements in the quality of all emergency medical and emergency surgical care children receive.

(b) PURPOSE.—It is the purpose of this Act to reduce child and youth morbidity and mortality by supporting improvements in the quality of all emergency medical care children receive.

SEC. 3. REAUTHORIZATION OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES FOR CHILDREN PROGRAM.

Section 1910 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300w–9) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''3-year period (with an optional 4th year'' and inserting ''4-year period (with an optional 5th year'';

(2) in subsection (d)—

(A) by striking ''and such sums'' and inserting ''such sums''; and

(B) by inserting before the period the following: '', $25,000,000 for fiscal year 2010, $26,250,000 for fiscal year 2011, $27,562,500 for fiscal year 2012, $28,940,625 for fiscal year 2013, and $30,387,656 for fiscal year 2014'';

(3) by redesignating subsections (b) through (d) as subsections (c) through (e), respectively; and

(4) by inserting after subsection (a) the following:

''(b)(1) The purpose of the program established under this section is to reduce child and youth morbidity and mortality by supporting improvements in the quality of all emergency medical care children receive, through the promotion of projects focused on the expansion and improvement of such services, including those in rural areas and those for children with special health care needs. In carrying out this purpose, the Secretary shall support emergency medical services for children by supporting projects that—

''(A) develop and present scientific evidence;

''(B) promote existing and innovative technologies appropriate for the care of children; or

''(C) provide information on health outcomes and effectiveness and cost-effectiveness.

''(2) The program established under this section shall—

''(A) strive to enhance the pediatric capability of emergency medical service systems originally designed primarily for adults; and

''(B) in order to avoid duplication and ensure that Federal resources are used efficiently and effectively, be coordinated with all research, evaluations, and awards related to emergency medical services for children undertaken and supported by the Federal Government.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) and the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, again, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. PALLONE. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 479, the Wakefield Act. Every year, more children between the ages of 1 and 19 die due to injury than all other forms of illness. Though we have made huge advances in our system to provide rapid interventions and transport for adults, there has been only limited focus on the specialized needs of children.

Recognizing this gap in knowledge, Congress created the Emergency Medical Services for Children grant program in 1984, which is designed to ensure state-of-the-art emergency medical care for ill or injured children and adolescents.

The bill before us today reauthorizes this vital public health care program that covers the entire spectrum of emergency medical care. It also allows grants awarded under the EMSC program to be 4 years, with an optional fifth year, which is an increase of 1 year over current law.

□ 1545

I would like to thank my colleague from Utah, Representative MATHESON, for his hard work on this issue. We passed this bill out of the House of Representatives last Congress, and I urge us to pass it again this year.

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

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 479, the Wakefield Act.

This legislation was introduced by Representative JIM MATHESON, and was passed by the House last Congress. The bill reforms the Public Health Service Act to improve emergency medicine services for children.

The Wakefield Act would authorize grants to States and medical schools to purchase equipment for children requiring trauma or critical care. About 31 million children and adolescents visit emergency rooms every year, and more than 90 percent of them are seen in general hospitals, not in children's hospitals that are best equipped to treat them.

The bill also requires the Secretary of Health and Human Services to support projects that are based on scientific evidence, promote innovative technology, and provide information on health outcomes, including cost effectiveness. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 479.

Mr. MATHESON. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today in support of my legislation. H.R. 479, the Wakefield Act, which seeks to reauthorize the Emergency Medical Services for Children (EMSC) program.

Unfortunately, today the hospital emergency department has become the fundamental source of our health care delivery system for both primary and emergency care. Due to this trend, it's easy to forget that emergency medicine is actually a relatively new specialty. Emergency rooms were first established in the 1970s as medical personnel returning from the Vietnam War sought to put to use the battlefield medicine they had learned. Skills initially developed to save wounded soldiers were translated to saving victims of car crashes and trauma.

That genesis in battlefield medicine, however, failed to account for the very different physical, developmental, and physiological traits of children. By the early 1980s, doctors were seeing marked disparities in survival rates among adults and children with similar injuries.

Created in 1984, the EMSC program sought to address those disparities in children's emergency care. The program has driven fundamental changes in America's emergency medical system and brought vital resources and attention to a neglected population. Since it was established, child injury death rates have dropped 40 percent. With the aid of research and attention from the EMSC program and others, pediatric emergency medicine was developed, and was ultimately established as a separate medical subspecialty in 1992.

This year we are proud to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the EMSC program. The EMSC program provides seed money to every state and territory to carry out activities designed to improve children's emergency care. States may use those funds to ensure that hospitals and ambulances are stocked with appropriate equipment and supplies; to provide pediatric training to paramedics; to improve systems, such as transfer agreements among facilities; and much more. The program also supports the National EMSC Resource Center, an information clearinghouse that provides materials and technical support to states and institutions. The Pediatric Emergency Care Applied Research Network links pediatric emergency providers across the nation to perform research on injury and illness among children. The National EMSC Data Analysis Resource Center—based in my district at the University of Utah—assists states to collect, analyze, and utilize EMSC data.

The EMSC program's authorization expired in September 2005. In summer 2006, the Institutes of Medicine released a report entitled, ''Emergency Care for Children: Growing Pains,'' which documented both the value of the EMSC program and the gaps that remain in providing quality emergency care for all children. The report found that, although children represent 27 percent of all emergency department visits, only about 6 percent of emergency departments have all of the supplies deemed essential for managing pediatric emergencies, and only half of hospitals have at least 85 percent of those supplies. The report described the EMSC program as ''well positioned to assume [a] leadership role'' in addressing deficiencies in emergency care for

children and recommended funding the program at $37.5 million per year.

H.R. 479, the Wakefield Act, has bipartisan, bicameral support. The bill is also endorsed by over 50 organizations, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American College of Emergency Physicians, the American Medical Association, the Emergency Nurses Association, and many more. I would like to thank Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman WAXMAN and his staff for working with me and my staff to move this legislation forward.

Last year, the House passed this bill on a vote of 390–1. I urge every Member to support this important legislation once again—together, we can work to ensure that our nation's children have the best possible medical care during emergencies.

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in strong support of H.R. 479, the Wakefield Act, which will reauthorize the Emergency Medical Services for Children program for an additional four years.

Since its establishment in 1985, the Emergency Medical Services for Children program, also known as EMSC, has provided grants to all fifty states, the District of Columbia, and five U.S. territories to ensure that every child in America has access to quality, appropriate care in a health emergency. The EMSC program has improved the availability of child-appropriate equipment in ambulances and emergency departments, supported hundreds of programs to prevent injuries, and provided thousands of hours of training to EMTs, paramedics, and other emergency medical care providers.

In my home state, New York's EMSC program is working to provide ongoing assessment and improvement of medical care for critically ill or injured children. The state EMSC Advisory Committee continually meets to discuss plans for designating health care resources to optimally serve the needs of critically ill or injured pediatric patients. This Committee is currently designing a road map of resources, standards, and roles for hospitals within the state and for the statewide EMS system as a whole. The plan will improve the state's ability to bring children to the hospitals that are best equipped to treat them as well as establish a general set of interfacility guidelines.

Kids are not just small adults. Methods to treat children in emergencies vary greatly from methods used with adults in the same situations. The EMSC program is an integral part of preparing our nation's healthcare providers and giving them the tools they need to treat children in an emergency. This is especially significant at a time in our history that disaster preparedness, both due to natural disasters as well as potential terrorist attacks, is so important.

I would like to thank Representative MATHESON for his leadership on this issue, as well as Representatives CASTOR and REICHERT for their continued support. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this imperative bill.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I have no speakers. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and ask for passage of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 479, 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. BROUN of Georgia. 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.

DEXTROMETHORPHAN DISTRIBUTION ACT OF 2009

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1259) to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to the distribution of the drug dextromethorphan, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1259

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 ''Dextromethorphan Distribution Act of 2009''.

SEC. 2. RESTRICTIONS ON DISTRIBUTION OF BULK DEXTROMETHORPHAN.

The Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 501, by inserting at the end the following:

''(j) If it is unfinished dextromethorphan and is possessed, received, or distributed in violation of section 506D.''; and

(2) by inserting after section 506C the following:

''SEC. 506D. RESTRICTIONS ON DISTRIBUTION OF BULK DEXTROMETHORPHAN.

''(a) RESTRICTIONS.—No person shall—

''(1) possess or receive unfinished dextromethorphan, unless the person is registered under section 510 or otherwise registered, licensed, or approved pursuant to Federal or State law to engage in the practice of pharmacy, pharmaceutical production, or manufacture or distribution of drug ingredients; or

''(2) distribute unfinished dextromethorphan to any person other than a person registered under section 510 or otherwise registered, licensed, or approved pursuant to Federal or State law to engage in the practice of pharmacy, pharmaceutical production, or manufacture or distribution of drug ingredients.

''(b) EXCEPTION FOR COMMON CARRIERS.—This section does not apply to a common carrier that possesses, receives, or distributes unfinished dextromethorphan for purposes of distributing such unfinished dextromethorphan between persons described in subsection (a) as registered, licensed, or approved.

''(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) The term 'common carrier' means any person that holds itself out to the general public as a provider for hire of the transportation by water, land, or air of merchandise, whether or not the person actually operates the vessel, vehicle, or aircraft by which the transportation is provided, between a port or place and a port or place in the United States.

''(2) The term 'unfinished dextromethorphan' means dextromethorphan that is not contained in a drug that is in finished dosage form.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) and the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1259, the Dextromethorphan Distribution Act. This bill addresses the problem of abuse of this drug, particularly by teenagers and young adults.

DXM, as it is called, is an ingredient commonly found in over-the-counter cough medications. When taken as directed, there are hardly any side effects. However, this ingredient is often abused, particularly by teenagers and young adults, and can result in devastating health effects.

The bill amends the Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act to restrict the distribution, possession, and receipt of unfinished DXM to entities registered with the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

I want to thank my colleague Representative UPTON for his work on this important bill, and I urge us to pass this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in favor of H.R. 1259, and I would like to thank Mr. UPTON of Michigan and Mr. LARSEN of Washington for their work on this important legislation.

Dextromethorphan, or DXM as it is sometimes called, is an ingredient found in cough medicine. This ingredient relieves the coughing associated with a cold or the flu. Cough medicines containing this drug are common and can be obtained without a prescription.

While this drug can be safe and effective if used as directed, it can also be dangerous if taken improperly. The abuse of this drug can cause death as well as other serious adverse effects such as brain damage, seizure, loss of consciousness, and irregular heartbeat.

This legislation would allow the Secretary of Health and Human Services to prohibit the distribution of DXM that is in bulk form to any person not registered with the FDA. It is hoped that these restrictions on the distribution of DXM will lower the potential for its abuse while at the same time protecting access to these needed medications.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to my friend from Michigan (Mr. UPTON).

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I too rise in strong support of this legislation, the Dextromethorphan Distribution Act of 2009, which I introduced to restrict the distribution of this product to entities registered with the Food and Drug Administration.

I want to thank the House leadership for scheduling this bill. I particularly want to thank Mr. PALLONE, who has helped shepherd this legislation a couple of times as we have passed it in the House, and yet the other body, the Senate, has not taken it up in the same form. We hope that the third time is the charm. I also want to thank the chairman of the full committee and my good friend and colleague from Washington (Mr. LARSEN) for cosponsoring this again with me.

We know that DXM can be and is a safe and effective non-narcotic cough suppressant used in many over-the-counter cough and cold medicines. However safely and effectively that these might be used by literally millions of Americans every year, taken in extremely large quantities it does produce a hallucinogenic high and it can cause brain damage, seizures, and even death.

Currently, there are no restrictions on the distribution of this raw bulk DXM. This bill ensures that DXM is used only for legitimate purposes and stays out of the hands of drug dealers and adolescents. The FDA would have the authority to seize bulk DXM if found in the possession of anyone not authorized to have it. This measures would cut off the supply chain of unfinished DXM to those purchasing it on the Internet to get high or sell it as a street drug.

I would note that this act is endorsed by the American Pharmacists Association, the Consumers Healthcare Products Association, and the Partnership for a Drug-Free America. And, I would note that it is my understanding that the Partnership for a Drug-Free America believes that perhaps there are hundreds of thousands of young Americans misusing this DXM. So it is important that we pass this legislation.

I am the father of two. I am alarmed at the growing trend of teens abusing cough syrup, particularly this one, to get high. Our kids are engaging in a game of Russian roulette each time they get high off DXM, and sooner or later someone will die. That is why this is bipartisanship legislation to try to get it enacted, and I would urge a ''yes'' vote.

Mr. SCALISE. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I also yield back the balance of my time and urge passage of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1259.

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. BROUN of Georgia. 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.

HEALTH INSURANCE RESTRICTIONS AND LIMITATIONS CLARIFICATION ACT OF 2009

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1253) to require that limitations and restrictions on coverage under group health plans be timely disclosed to group health plan sponsors and timely communicated to participants and beneficiaries under such plans in a form that is easily understandable.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1253

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 ''Health Insurance Restrictions and Limitations Clarification Act of 2009''.

SEC. 2. DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS.

(a) ERISA.—Section 702(a)(2)(B) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1182(a)(2)(B)) is amended by inserting before the period at the end the following: ''so long as—

''(i) such limitations and restrictions are explicit and clear;

''(ii) in the case of such limitations and restrictions in health insurance coverage offered in connection with the group health plan, such limitations and restrictions have been disclosed in writing to the plan sponsor in advance of the point of sale to the plan;

''(iii) the plan sponsor of the health insurance coverage provide, to participants and beneficiaries in the plan in advance of the point of their enrollment under the plan, a description of such limitations and restrictions in a form that is easily understandable by such participants and beneficiaries; and

''(iv) the plan sponsor and the issuer of the coverage provide such description to participants and beneficiaries upon their enrollment under the plan at the earliest opportunity that other materials are provided.''.

(b) PHSA.—Section 2702(a)(2)(B) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300gg–1(a)(2)(B)) is amended by inserting before the period at the end the following: ''so long as—

''(i) such limitations and restrictions are explicit and clear;

''(ii) in the case of such limitations and restrictions in health insurance coverage offered in connection with the group health plan, such limitations and restrictions have been disclosed in writing to the plan sponsor in advance of the point of sale to the plan;

''(iii) the plan sponsor and the issuer of the group health insurance coverage make available, to participants and beneficiaries in the plan in advance of the point of their enrollment under the plan, a description of such limitations and restrictions in a form that is easily understandable by such participants and beneficiaries; and

''(iv) the plan sponsor and the issuer of the coverage provides such description to participants and beneficiaries upon their enrollment under the plan at the earliest opportunity that other materials are provided.''.

(c) INTERNAL REVENUE CODE.—Section 9802(a)(2)(B) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting before the period at the end the following: ''so long as—

''(i) such limitations and restrictions are explicit and clear;

''(ii) the group health plan makes available, to participants and beneficiaries in the plan in advance of the point of their enrollment under the plan, a description of such limitations and restrictions in a form that is easily understandable by such participants and beneficiaries; and

''(iii) the plan provides such description to participants and beneficiaries upon their enrollment under the plan at the earliest opportunity that other materials are provided.''.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to plan years beginning after 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) and the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. PALLONE. I include for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD an exchange of letters on this bill between the chairmen of the Committee on Energy and Commerce and the Committee on Education and Labor.

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 25, 2009.

Hon. HENRY A. WAXMAN,
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN WAXMAN: I am writing to confirm our mutual understanding regarding consideration of H.R. 1253, the Health Insurance Restrictions and Limitations Clarification Act of 2009. As you know, this bill was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor which has a jurisdictional interest in several provisions in the bill.

Given the importance of moving this bill forward promptly, I do not intend to exercise this Committee's jurisdiction by conducting further proceedings on H.R. 1253. I do so, however, only with the understanding that this procedural route should not be construed to prejudice this Committee's jurisdictional interests and prerogatives on this or similar legislation and will not be considered as precedent for consideration of matters of jurisdictional interest to the Committee on Education and Labor in the future. In addition, should this bill or similar legislation be considered in a conference with the Senate, I would expect members of the Committee on Education and Labor to be appointed to the conference committee.

Finally, I ask that you include a copy of our exchange of letters be included in the Congressional Record during the consideration of this bill. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate

to call me. I thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

GEORGE MILLER,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE,
Washington, DC, March 26, 2009.

Hon. GEORGE MILLER,
Chairman, House Committee on Education and Labor, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN MILLER: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 1253, the ''Health Insurance Restrictions and Limitations Clarification Act of 2009.'' The letter noted that certain provisions of the bill are within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Education and Labor under rule X of the Rules of the House.

The Committee on Energy and Commerce recognizes the jurisdictional interest of the Committee on Education and Labor in these provisions. We appreciate your agreement to forgo action on the bill, and I concur that the agreement does not in any way prejudice the Committee on Education and Labor with respect to the appointment of conferees or its jurisdictional prerogatives on this bill or similar legislation in the future.

I will include our letters in the Congressional Record during consideration of the bill on the House floor. Again I appreciate your cooperation regarding this important legislation.

Sincerely,

HENRY A. WAXMAN,
Chairman.

Mr. PALLONE. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1253, the Health Insurance Restrictions and Limitations Clarification Act.

This bill amends the Employee Retirement Income Security Act, the Public Health Services Act, and the Internal Revenue Code to require that limitations on benefits in group health plans are explicit and disclosed to the plan's sponsor, and that that plan's sponsor disclose those limitations to the plan participants and beneficiaries in a timely manner.

This legislation would ensure that plan beneficiaries who engage in activities such as riding motorcycles, horses, or snowmobiles, or any other legal activity that may result in injury, understand if their health plan won't cover those injuries. I would like to thank my colleagues, both Dr. BURGESS as well Mr. STUPAK, for their work on this issue. I ask my colleagues to support the bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1253, the Health Insurance Restrictions and Limitations Clarification Act of 2009.

This bill will allow purchasers of health insurance to better understand what they are buying. At its core, this bill is about transparency for the consumer. And that is a good thing.

This bill does not in any way alter current insurance requirements or limitations. This bill merely says that if an insurer wants to restrict or limit benefits, it must inform their enrollee prior to enrollment that it may so restrict or limit benefits.

I wish to commend Congressmen BURGESS and STUPAK for their work on this bill. Mr. Speaker, I urge Members to support this legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I have no speakers, but I believe that my colleague from Louisiana does.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to Mr. BURGESS of Texas.

Mr. BURGESS. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, in January 2001, the Department of Labor, the Internal Revenue Service, and the Health Care Finance Administration issued a rule in accordance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, better known as HIPAA, of 1996 that was designed to guard against discrimination in coverage in the group health market. While addressing the issue of discrimination based upon participation in certain activities, these rules allowed continued discrimination in the form of nonpayment based upon the source of the injury.

So, in other words, you could have an employer-sponsored health insurance, which many of us do, have your premiums deducted from your paycheck, and yet be responsible for paying your own medical treatment if you were harmed. Trip and fall at home, no problem. Trip and fall while skiing on vacation with the family, and you get the bill. This is simply unfair.

People are led to believe that care for a broken arm, for example, is the same regardless of how the injury happened, but in fact that is not the case.

The lack of clarity underlying these exclusions has created a confusing situation for individuals that may ride motorcycles, horses, snowmobiles, or participate in other activities that could result in an injury. Millions of American enjoy these activities safely every year within the framework of State laws and utilizing proper safety precautions. The bill we are voting on today will take away the ambiguity and make certain that people are aware of any such restrictions in their coverage.

Again, this is not a bill that would require anything new to be done other than people be told up front and in plain language if there are limitations on their health care policy.

We are going to stand up and shine the light on these exclusions so that Americans will not be caught off guard by exclusions buried deep within an insurance plan.

H.R. 1253, the Health Insurance Source of Injury Clarification Act, is identical to legislation passed by the House last session and will, first, require any limitations and restrictions on health plan benefits be explicit and clear; second, require that they be disclosed to the sponsor of the group health plan in advance of the sale; and, thirdly, require that the issuer in an easy-to-understand way provide participants and beneficiaries a description of the limitations and restrictions as soon as they enroll.

For those who are concerned about the potential cost of the bill, I do have a score from the Congressional Budget Office. Their cost estimate is that H.R. 1253 would have no significant impact upon the Federal budget. Further, they go on to say that making the information more easily understood would generate only negligible cost. H.R. 1253 contains no intergovernmental mandates as defined.

Mr. Speaker, I again want to thank Representative BART STUPAK from Michigan for his steadfast help in this bill. It has been a long process to get this passed. I certainly want to thank Chairman WAXMAN for his participation, and a special recognition to former Chairman JOHN DINGELL who helped us get this bill passed in the last Congress. We passed it late in the last Congress; the Senate did not get the work finished. We are passing it early in this Congress to allow the other body ample time to see this bill become law.

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

Mr. PALLONE. I yield back the balance of my time and urge passage.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1253.

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. BROUN of Georgia. 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.

□ 1600

SUPPORTING COLORECTAL CANCER AWARENESS

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 60) supporting the observance of Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 60

Whereas this year marks the 10th anniversary of the first designation of March as Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month;

Whereas colorectal cancer is the second most common cause of cancer deaths for men and women in the United States;

Whereas colorectal cancer affects men and women equally;

Whereas more than 148,810 people in the United States will be diagnosed with colon cancer this year;

Whereas over 49,960 people in the United States will die from colon cancer this year;

Whereas every 3.5 minutes, someone is diagnosed with colorectal cancer and every 10 minutes someone dies from colorectal cancer;

Whereas every 5 seconds someone who should be screened for colorectal cancer is not;

Whereas the vast majority of colon cancer deaths can be prevented through proper screening and early detection;

Whereas the survival rate of individuals who have colorectal cancer is 90 percent when detected in the early stages versus only a 10 percent survival rate when colorectal cancer is diagnosed after it has spread to distant organs;

Whereas only 39 percent of colorectal cancer patients have their cancers detected at an early stage;

Whereas uninsured Americans are more likely to be diagnosed with late stage colon cancer than patients with private insurance;

Whereas only 14.9 percent of those without health coverage in the United States have currently been properly screened for colorectal cancer;

Whereas if the majority of Americans age 50 or older were screened regularly for colorectal cancer, the death rate from this disease could plummet by up to 80 percent;

Whereas regular colorectal cancer screening has been ranked as one of the most cost effective screening interventions available, with the potential to save 40,000 lives a year;

Whereas treatment costs for colorectal cancer are extremely high, estimated at $8,400,000,000 for 2004;

Whereas colorectal cancer is preventable, treatable, and beatable in most cases;

Whereas increasing the number of people between the ages of 50 years and 64 years of age who are regularly screened in the United States, would provide significant savings in tens of billions of dollars to the Medicare program from cancer prevention and treatment costs;

Whereas the Prevent Cancer Foundation launched the National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month partnership in 1999 to raise awareness about colorectal cancer and how to prevent the disease through screening;

Whereas along with their national Super Colon and Buddy Bracelet campaign, Prevent Cancer Foundation has worked alongside their partners to improve awareness and reduce incidence and mortality from colorectal cancer;

Whereas the Blue Star, developed by the Members of the National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable, the American Cancer Society, the Colon Cancer Alliance, and C3: Colorectal Cancer Coalition represents the collective fight against colon cancer, the eternal memory of the people whose lives have already been lost to the disease, and the shining hope for a future free of colon cancer;

Whereas C3 created the Cover Your Butt campaign to build support at the grassroots level and help shape policy decisions so the most effective colorectal cancer prevention and treatment are available to all Americans;

Whereas Coaches vs. Cancer (a partnership between the American Cancer Society and the National Association of Basketball Coaches), the Colon Cancer Alliance, and Ethicon Endo-Surgery have created ''Earn a Blue Star Day'' as a means for individuals and corporations to raise awareness of the importance of screening for colon cancer;

Whereas greater awareness of this cancer and the means to prevent it could save the lives of tens of thousands of Americans each year; and

Whereas observing a Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month during the month of March would provide a special opportunity to offer education on the importance of early detection and screening: Now, therefore, be it

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

(1) supports the observance of Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month in order to provide a special opportunity to offer education on the importance of early detection and screening;

(2) recognizes and applauds the national and community organizations for their work in promoting awareness about colorectal cancer, providing information on the importance of prevention and early detection through regular screening, and facilitating access to treatment for its sufferers; and

(3) urges organizations and health practitioners to ''earn a Blue Star'' by using this opportunity to promote awareness about colorectal cancer and to support early identification and removal of pre-cancerous polyps, detectable only through colorectal cancer screenings.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) and the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. 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 New Jersey?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 60, ''Supporting the Observance of Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month''. This year marks the 10th anniversary of the designation of March as Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. Colorectal cancer is the second most common cause of cancer death in the United States and affects men and women equally. This deadly disease, however, can be prevented through early identification. When found at its early stage, colorectal cancer has a 90 percent survival rate. When detected late, that survival rate drops to only 10 percent. Unfortunately, less than 40 percent of colorectal cancers are detected at an early stage, and because of this, there is a higher mortality rate for this disease than there should be.

The resolution before us today supports education about this disease and recognizes national and community organizations for their work in promoting awareness about colorectal cancer. Hopefully, we can build on the good work currently being done to promote awareness and encourage screening to improve early detection of this disease.

I would like to thank my colleague, Representative GRANGER, for her work in raising this important issue. I know this issue is close to her heart, and I want to express my gratitude to her.

And I urge us to pass this resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in proud support of H. Con. Res. 60, sponsored by Representative GRANGER from the State of Texas. March is National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, and we need to do more and move in a direction that ends societal taboos that are associated with the screening process of a disease that is a threat to many Americans, and especially to those over the age of 50.

This is the second-to-last day for the month of March, but the need for colorectal cancer awareness and education should continue throughout the entire year. Awareness is a leading cause in the annual decline in deaths from colorectal cancer. The survival rate of individuals who have colorectal cancer is 90 percent when detected in the early stages versus only a 10 percent survival rate when colorectal cancer is diagnosed after it has spread to other organs. It is because of successful programs such as National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month that encourage early diagnosis so Americans can lead full and active lives. By supporting the observance of March as Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, we have the opportunity to encourage men and women to educate themselves about the disease and the screening methods that are used.

Mr. Speaker, I urge Members to support this resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. I have no speakers. I don't know if the gentleman does.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I would like to recognize Ms. GRANGER of Texas for as much time as she may consume.

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the resolution recognizing the 10th anniversary of the first designation of March as Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. House Concurrent Resolution 60 also recognizes the importance of celebrating March as Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. I would like to thank my colleague, PATRICK KENNEDY of Rhode Island, for his support of this resolution and for his efforts in the fight against colorectal cancer.

Ten years ago, colorectal cancer was a disease that not many people talked about. In November 1999, a resolution passed the Senate designating March as Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. The House passed a supporting resolution in March, 2000. In the years since, advocacy groups have increased awareness about colorectal cancer, and thousands of Americans have been screened. This year an estimated 149,000 new cases of colorectal cancer will be diagnosed, and an estimated 50,000 deaths will be caused by colorectal cancer. The real tragedy is that many of these cancer cases and deaths occurred needlessly because the vast majority of colorectal cancer deaths can be prevented through proper screening and early detection.

Colorectal cancer is the third most commonly diagnosed cancer and the second most common cause of cancer deaths in the United States. Every 3½ minutes, someone is diagnosed with

colorectal cancer. Every 9 minutes, someone dies from colorectal cancer. This is a disease that affects men and women equally. The more we talk about this disease and the more we encourage our family, our friends and our neighbors to get screened, the more lives we save. It is that simple.

Unfortunately, less than half of those who should be screened for colon cancer are screened. Not only do we need to increase awareness about colorectal cancer but we also need to increase Federal funding for early detection and screening. Along with my colleague from Rhode Island, PATRICK KENNEDY, I have introduced a bill that would authorize funding for early detection screenings and make preventive care a priority. Specifically, the Colorectal Cancer Detection, Early Detection, and Treatment Act, H.R. 1189, would establish a national screening program for colorectal cancer for individuals over 50 years of age or who are at high risk. It also authorizes State funding for those screenings and creates a public awareness and education campaign on colorectal cancer.

Despite scientific evidence supporting the benefits of screening, screenings for this disease in the U.S. remain low. Every 5 seconds, someone who should be screened for cancer is not. When it is diagnosed late, the survival rate for colorectal cancer is only 10 percent, but when it is diagnosed early, before it spreads to the lymph nodes and other organs, the survival rate is 90 percent.

Early detection and screening saves lives. If everyone over 50 years of age were screened regularly for colorectal cancer, the death rate for this disease could plummet by 80 percent. In addition to saving lives, early detection and screening saves money. Treatment costs for colorectal cancer are extremely high and could be greatly reduced if mass screenings occurred. Colorectal treatment costs totaled roughly $8.4 billion for new cases in 2004. The cost of two-thirds of these colorectal cancer cases are borne by the Medicare program.

The Lewin Group recently conducted a comprehensive study of the potential cost savings to Medicare and found that every 10 years, a colorectal screening program will result in savings of about 1.5 years worth of Medicare expenditures. If screenings were increased among people 50 years of age and older in the United States, it would save billions of dollars in Medicare expenditures, and it would also save thousands of lives.

The Colorectal Cancer Screening Prevention, Early Detection, and Treatment Act ensures that people who are screened will get the full continuum of cancer care, including the appropriate follow-up for abnormal tests, diagnostic and therapeutic services, and treatment for detected cancers.

If you have not already, I urge you to cosponsor the Colorectal Cancer Prevention, Early Detection, and Treatment Act, and join me in observing Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. Observing Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month provides us with the opportunity to discuss the importance of early detection screenings. And it also gives recognition to all the groups who have helped in this, groups like the American Cancer Society, the Prevent Cancer Foundation, the Colon Cancer Alliance and C3: Colorectal Cancer Coalition. These groups have created ''Earn a Blue Star Day'' as a way for individuals and corporations to raise awareness of the importance of screening.

Mr. SCALISE. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Rhode Island, who has also been a champion on this issue, Mr. KENNEDY.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Representative GRANGER for her leadership on this issue and thank her very much for her outgoing efforts to bring this issue to the floor.

This is simply a matter of public awareness. And like so many issues, it is a matter of getting the word out. Screening is what it is about. Obviously, with respect to colorectal cancer, it is the stigma. No one wants to talk about it. So as a result, no one gets screened. And when people finally get screened, it is too late and they die. That is the reason it is the second leading cause of cancer death in this country.

And while the rates of death may be about the same for men and women, there is an enormous, an enormous disparity in the rates of death between minorities and whites in this country. The reason for that is that there are huge disparities in the access to health care between minority populations and the rest of the general population. And that shows among the greatest disparities in health disparity outcomes in this country.

So for the African American community, this is an enormous issue, this is an enormous issue because it is affecting the death and mortality rates for the African American community and the Hispanic community over and above the general population by an enormous amount. So colorectal cancer is something that everybody needs to pay attention to and wake up to.

Now, why is it so important that we have the screening and we pay for the screening? Because there is no health insurance out there. That's why we need health insurance reform. And that is why KAY GRANGER is such a champion, because she stepped up to the plate and signed on to legislation saying, it is good to talk about it, but unless we start talking about paying for it, it's not going to do us a lot of good. That is what we need. We need to pay for screening. And as she pointed out, the evidence backs us up. If we screen, we save Medicare money, because you can imagine trying to take care of someone with cancer is a very costly, costly thing.

Now, first of all, we should do it because we don't want to see someone suffer. That should be good enough for all of us in Congress to want to pass this screening effort. But if it is not good enough for everybody to want to save a family the suffering of having to go through cancer treatment, then maybe we should want to do it because it saves dollars. And the Lewin group and others have said this saves dollars because when you detect it early, you don't have to spend all that money treating people for chemotherapy, radiation and all that expensive acute care treatment.

We have a sick care system, not a health care system. And we can do better in this country by taking care of people before they get sick if we screen them. And that is what we should do with colorectal cancer, screen people.

Sign on to H.R. 1189.

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

Mr. PALLONE. I yield back the balance of my time, Mr. Speaker, and urge passage of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 60.

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.

VISION CARE FOR KIDS ACT OF 2009

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 577) to establish a grant program to provide vision care to children, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 577

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 ''Vision Care for Kids Act of 2009''.

SEC. 2. GRANTS REGARDING VISION CARE FOR CHILDREN.

Part Q of title III of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 280h et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 399Z–1. GRANTS REGARDING VISION CARE FOR CHILDREN.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, may award grants to States on the basis of an established review process for the purpose of complementing existing State efforts for—

''(1) providing comprehensive eye examinations (as defined in subsection (i)) by a licensed optometrist or ophthalmologist for eligible children (as defined in subsection (b)) who have been previously identified through a vision screening or eye examination by a licensed health care provider or vision screener as needing such services, with priority given to children who are under the age of 9 years;

''(2) providing treatment or services to such children, subsequent to the examinations described in paragraph (1), that are necessary to correct vision problems; and

''(3) developing and disseminating, to parents, teachers, and health care practitioners, educational materials on recognizing signs of visual impairment in children.

''(b) ELIGIBLE CHILDREN.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this section, the term 'eligible child' means, with respect to an examination described in paragraph (1) of subsection (a) or a treatment or service described in paragraph (2) of such subsection and with respect to a State, a child who is a low-income child (as defined by the State) and who—

''(A) is not eligible for medical assistance under the State plan under title XIX of such Act;

''(B) subject to paragraph (2)(A), is not eligible for child health assistance under the State child health plan under title XXI of the Social Security Act;

''(C) subject to paragraph (2)(B), does not have health insurance coverage (as defined in section 2791) in the group market or in the individual market (as such terms are defined in such section) and is not a beneficiary or participant under a group health plan (as defined in such section); and

''(D) is not receiving assistance under any State health compensation program or under any other Federal or State health benefits program for such examination, treatment, or service, respectively.

''(2) INCLUSION OF CERTAIN LOW-INCOME CHILDREN WITH HEALTH BENEFITS.—With respect to an examination described in paragraph (1) of subsection (a) or a treatment or service described in paragraph (2) of such subsection and with respect to a State—

''(A) paragraph (1)(B) shall not apply to a child who is eligible for child health assistance under the State child health plan under title XXI of the Social Security Act (whether or not such child is enrolled under such plan), if such plan does not provide for coverage of such examination, treatment, or service, respectively; and

''(B) paragraph (1)(C) shall not apply to a child described in such paragraph if no amount is payable under the coverage or plan described in such paragraph for such examination, treatment, or service, respectively.

''(c) CRITERIA.—The Secretary, in consultation with appropriate professional and patient organizations including individuals with knowledge of age appropriate vision services, shall develop criteria—

''(1) governing the operation of the grant program under subsection (a); and

''(2) for the collection of data related to vision assessment and the utilization of follow-up services.

''(d) APPLICATION.—To be eligible to receive a grant under subsection (a), a State shall submit to the Secretary an application in such form, made in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require, including—

''(1) information on existing Federal, Federal-State, or State-funded children's vision programs;

''(2) a plan for the use of grant funds, including how funds will be used to complement existing State efforts (including possible partnerships with non-profit entities);

''(3) a plan to determine if an eligible child has been identified as provided for in subsection (a);

''(4) an assurance that funds will be used consistent with this section;

''(5) a description of how funds will be used to provide examinations, treatments, and services, consistent with this section; and

''(6) an assurance that, in providing examinations, treatments, and services through use of such grant, the State will give priority to eligible children with the lowest income.

''(e) EVALUATIONS.—To be eligible to receive a grant under subsection (a), a State shall agree that, not later than 1 year after the date on which amounts under the grant are first received by the State, and annually thereafter while receiving amounts under the grant, the State will submit to the Secretary an evaluation of the operations and activities carried out under the grant, including—

''(1) an assessment of the utilization of vision services and the status of children receiving these services as a result of the activities carried out under the grant;

''(2) the collection, analysis, and reporting of children's vision data according to guidelines prescribed by the Secretary; and

''(3) such other information as the Secretary may require.

''(f) LIMITATIONS IN EXPENDITURE OF GRANT.—A grant may be made under subsection (a) only if the State involved agrees that the State will expend amounts received under such grant as follows:

''(1) The State will expend at least 80 percent of such amounts for the purposes described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of such subsection.

''(2) The State will not expend more than 10 percent of such amounts to carry out the purpose described in paragraph (3) of such subsection.

''(3) The State will not expend more than 10 percent of such amounts for administrative purposes.

''(g) MATCHING FUNDS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—With respect to the costs of the activities to be carried out with a grant under subsection (a), a condition for the receipt of the grant is that the State involved agrees to make available (directly or through donations from public or private entities) non-Federal contributions toward such costs in an amount that is not less than 25 percent of such costs.

''(2) DETERMINATION OF AMOUNT CONTRIBUTED.—Non-Federal contributions required in paragraph (1) may be in cash or in kind, fairly evaluated, including plant, equipment, or services. Amounts provided by the Federal Government, or services assisted or subsidized to any significant extent by the Federal Government, may not be included in determining the amount of such non-Federal contributions.

''(h) SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT.—A State that receives a grant under this section shall ensure that amounts received under such grant will be used to supplement, and not supplant, any other Federal, State, or local funds available to carry out activities of the type carried out under the grant.

''(i) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section:

''(1) CHILD.—The term 'child' means an individual who—

''(A) has not attained 18 years of age; or

''(B) has not attained 19 years of age and is a full-time student in a secondary school (or in the equivalent level of vocational or technical training).

''(2) COMPREHENSIVE EYE EXAMINATION.—The term 'comprehensive eye examination' includes an assessment of a patient's history, general medical observation, external and ophthalmoscopic examination, visual acuity, ocular alignment and motility, refraction, and as appropriate, binocular vision or gross visual fields, performed by an optometrist or an ophthalmologist.

''(j) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—For the purpose of carrying out this section, there are authorized to be appropriated—

''(1) $10,000,000 for fiscal year 2010;

''(2) $13,000,000 for fiscal year 2011; and

''(3) $14,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2012 through 2014.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) and the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PALLONE. 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 New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mr. PALLONE. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 577, the Vision Care for Kids Act of 2009. Vision problems are particularly challenging for children because they can cause developmental struggles which can lead to physical, emotional and social consequences. Vision impairment can cause a child to miss learning opportunities, for example, and vision-impaired children often have an inability to understand nonverbal cues, leading to difficulties with social interactions.

Correcting vision problems at a young age, however, can improve outcomes. The Vision Care for Kids Act would address these problems by improving access to vision services for children. The bill amends the Public Health Services Act to give the Secretary of Health and Human Services the authority to award grants to States for first, comprehensive eye examinations for children previously identified as needing these services, second, treatment or services to correct vision problems, and third, development and dissemination of educational materials on recognizing signs of visual impairment.

□ 1615

I'd like to thank my colleague, Representative GREEN, for his sponsorship and again his hard work on this issue.

I ask my colleagues to support the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 577, the Vision Care for Kids Act. This bipartisan legislation provides eye examinations and follow-up care for children who have been identified as needing vision care services. This legislation builds on State programs currently in place with a focus on helping low-income children.

Undiagnosed and untreated vision problems can pose learning problems for children. Vision problems can have effects on a child's emotional, educational and physical development.

A majority of children entering school never have received a vision test and, for those who do receive a vision test and do not pass, many do not receive the recommended follow-up care. This legislation will enable more children to receive testing and the follow-up care, if necessary.

We need to continue to work towards a system by which roadblocks to a formative education for our children are eliminated. I stand in support of this legislation, and hope that my colleagues will join in.

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the sponsor, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, the Chair of our Health Subcommittee, for yielding to me.

I rise in support of H.R. 577, the Vision Care for Kids Act. The Vision Care For Kids Act creates a much needed grant program to provide follow-up vision care for children with vision disorders who do not have access to these services.

States have taken steps to identify children for potential vision disorders through mandatory vision screenings. However, most States do not mandate follow-up eye exams or treatment for children who fail these vision screenings.

Of the 36 States that require vision screenings, 26 of them do not require children who failed the screening to receive a follow-up exam. This lack of vision care jeopardizes a child's development and can, unfortunately, lead to lifelong vision impairment.

The Vision Care for Kids Act seeks to remedy this problem by authorizing a new grant program to complement State efforts to provide comprehensive eye exams for children who have been identified, through vision screenings or other eye exams, as having a potential vision disorder. The grant funding authorized under this bill can be used for specific treatments and services to correct the vision disorders identified through the eye exams.

Unless caught early and appropriately treated, vision disorders can lead to irreversible damage that can hinder a child's normal growth, development and opportunity to succeed. These children deserve a healthy start to their educational and social development. Yet the reality is that nearly two out of three children entering elementary school have never received preventive vision care.

Unfortunately, lack of health insurance presents a barrier to the delivery of appropriate vision care in this country. And for many children who are lucky to have health insurance for medical care, their policy doesn't cover vision coverage. This is precisely why this bill is necessary.

By targeting the program towards children who are school-aged, who do not have vision coverage for the services they require, and are at risk for vision disorders, the bill is designed to spend scarce health care dollars in the wisest manner.

A portion of the grant funds may also be used to increase education awareness of vision disorders, so that warning signs can be recognized and any problems can be detected in a timely fashion.

This bill has been crafted in a bipartisan manner with my colleague from Oklahoma (Mr. SULLIVAN), our leader on the Republican side. And I'd also like to thank Representative ELIOT ENGEL, Representative BILL PASCRELL and Representative ROS-LEHTINEN for their continued support of this legislation.

I'd also like to thank the Congressional Vision Caucus for their support of the legislation. In 2003 I was joined by our colleagues, Congressman PRICE, Congresswoman ROS-LEHTINEN and Congressman TIBERI, in establishing the Congressional Vision Caucus. As a founding member of the Caucus, I'm particularly pleased to see this bill on the floor today, and consider it a milestone for our young caucus.

Today the Vision Caucus is comprised of more than 100 Members of Congress, both Republicans and Democrats, House Members and Senators. While our initial goal was to raise the awareness of vision disorders in Congress, the Caucus has developed and endorsed key pieces of vision legislation, including this bill, the Vision Care for Kids Act before us today.

I'd also like to thank Chairman WAXMAN, Ranking Member BARTON of the Energy and Commerce Committee, as well as the Chair and ranking member of the Health Subcommittee, Mr. PALLONE and Mr. DEAL, for their support.

With that, I encourage my colleagues to join me in passing this important bill to improve vision care for America's children.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. SULLIVAN).

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 577, the Vision Care for Kids Act of 2009. I want to thank my colleague, Congressman GENE GREEN, the lead sponsor of this important legislation, and I am proud to be the lead Energy and Commerce Committee Republican on this bill.

This legislation will help complement existing State efforts by providing grants for eye examinations and follow-up treatment for uninsured children who fail a vision screening. It does this by authorizing $65 million over 5 years in Federal grant funds.

Millions of children in the United States suffer from vision problems, many of which go undetected because of lack of access to affordable and proper eye care. This legislation will bridge a chief gap in vision care, children who face undetected vision problems versus children who are able to receive treatment for their vision problems before it's too late.

Vision problems in children range from common conditions, such as lazy eye and cross eye, to more serious conditions such as infantile cataracts. Also, many serious eye conditions are treatable if identified in preschool and early school-aged years. Early detection provides the best opportunity for effective treatment and lower public health care costs for the future.

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, approximately 1.8 million children under the age of 18 are blind or have some form of visual impairment. Also, nearly two in three children do not receive any preventive vision care before starting elementary school. Children who have undiagnosed vision problems can have difficulties in school and be wrongly labeled with learning disorders. The Vision Care for Kids Act seeks to change that, and provide all kids the vision care they need.

Again, I encourage quick adoption of this bill today.

Mr. PALLONE. I have no additional speakers. I don't know if my colleague does.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, at this time I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY).

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I'm a very proud supporter of H.R. 577, the Vision Care for Kids Act of 2009. I want to commend Representative GREEN from Texas and Representative SULLIVAN from Oklahoma for bringing forward this bill.

The reason why I'm here, Mr. Speaker, speaking on this issue as a physician Member of the House, is because it's very personal to me.

My granddaughters, my oldest grandchildren, are now 11 years old. They are identical twin girls, Ali and Hannah Manning. And, Mr. Speaker, they were born prematurely. In fact, they were born immaturely, so premature at 26 weeks, that each of them weighed 1 pound, 12 ounces. And I thank God, Mr. Speaker, for the blessing, the double miracles of life and health. And really, they've done fine, except they had problems with vision. And that's because these young, premature, immature infants, need, Mr. Speaker, to receive so much oxygen therapy in their first weeks of life that it can damage the retina, and, in fact, that's what happened with our twin granddaughters. And they had to have multiple surgeries, laser surgeries. In fact, little Ali learned how to put a contact lens in her eye when she was only 5 years old. She could put it in and take it out.

And again, we are so blessed. Their parents are blessed. My daughter and son-in-law, and the grandparents, the Mannings, and we Gingreys are so thankful.

But we think every day about other children who cannot afford the care, maybe cannot afford to have vision screening. And if they do, Mr. Speaker, and if they're found to have limited vision, Mr. SULLIVAN talked about all the difficulties in school, both emotionally and physically and educationally that they have. If they can't afford then to have something done about their visual problem, what a shame that is.

So, for us to have a bill, a program where Federal grants are given through the CDC, working with the States to make sure that each and every child, not just those privileged few that happen to have good coverage, could get the care that they need so they could become good, strong students and

healthy and happy adults. So this is a wonderful program.

Again, I commend the committee, Energy and Commerce Committee. I commend Mr. GREEN, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. DEAL.

I recommend that all my colleagues, of course, support H.R. 577.

Mr. PASCRELL. I was pleased to introduce the Vision Care for Kids Act with my colleagues Congressmen GREEN, SULLIVAN, and ENGEL and Congresswoman ROS-LEHTINEN in both this Congress and in the previous Congress. This important legislation will establish a federal grant program to provide for timely diagnostic examination, treatment, and follow-up vision care for children, which will complement existing State programs and allow eye exams for a vulnerable pediatric population that do not qualify for Medicaid or SCHIP and do not have access to private health insurance.

This issue has long been near to my heart. In fact, in 2003, I first championed legislation to create a grant program to provide comprehensive eye exams and necessary follow-up care for children whose families do not have the resources for or access to such care. Preventive vision care is critically important to avoid vision loss, and even blindness, in our nation's children, which can affect a child's physical, emotional, and intellectual development.

The CDC states that approximately 1.8 million children under the age of 18 are blind or have some form of visual impairment. Fortunately, in most cases, vision loss can be avoided with early diagnosis and treatment. Eye health has a direct impact on learning and achievement, and unfortunately, many visual deficits are caught only after they have impaired a child's early and most critical education. Consequently, it is a national disgrace that only one in three children receive preventive vision care before they are enrolled in elementary school.

This essential legislation will provide the tools to significantly mitigate the effects of visual impairment. In fact, H.R. 577 has the potential to open up a new world of academic and social opportunity for approximately half a million of our youngest children nationwide. As Congress continues its work to improve the health care and educational opportunities available to children in this country, the need to remove outside impediments to learning must be addressed to achieve long-term success.

I would like to thank Chairman WAXMAN and Chairman PALLONE, for their thoughtful consideration and support for preventive vision care for children, and I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of the Vision Care for Kids Act. Finally, I encourage the Senate to expeditiously consider this essential legislation to provide necessary vision care to our nation's most vulnerable children.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 577 ''Vision Care for Kids Act of 2009.'' I want to thank my colleague Congressman GENE GREEN of Texas for introducing this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to tell my colleagues that our nation's children are our future. They should be the center of all of our legislative efforts to improve the lives of all Americans.

The Vision Care for Kids Act of 2009 is a necessary grant program aimed at bolstering children's vision initiatives in the states and encouraging new community-based children's vision partnerships. This legislation amends the Public Health Service Act to authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), to award matching grants to states to complement existing state efforts to: (1) provide comprehensive eye examinations from a licensed optometrist or ophthalmologist for children who have been previously identified through a vision screening or eye examination by a licensed health care provider or vision screener as needing such services, who do not otherwise have coverage for vision services, and who are low-income children, with priority given to children who are under the age of nine years; (2) provide treatment or services as necessary to correct identified vision problems; and (3) develop and disseminate to parents, teachers, and health care practitioners educational materials on recognizing signs of visual impairment in children.

We used to hold our child's hands when our child takes their first step. However, not many help our children to learn how to use their eyes properly, how to see properly, and how to relax their eyes and protect their vision. Today's education system requires our children to give close attention, read many books, add or subtract numbers or operate a computer for hours. Therefore, it is important to learn to guide our children to attain good child vision health at various stages of their development.

Ten million children suffer from vision disorders, according to the National Parent Teacher Association. Vision disorders are considered the fourth most common disability in the United States, and they are one of the most prevalent handicapping conditions in childhood. According to data from the Making the Grade: An analysis of state and federal children's vision care policy research study, 32 states require vision screenings for students, but 29 of them do not require children who fail the screening to have a comprehensive eye examination. Because up to two-thirds of children who fail vision screenings do not comply with recommended eye exams, many children enter school with uncorrected vision problems. Undetected and untreated vision deficiencies, particularly in children, can take a large toll. Studies have shown that the costs associated with adult vision problems in the U.S. are at $51.4 billion.

Undiagnosed and untreated vision problems for children are serious issues. Vision problems can affect a child's cognitive, emotional, neurological and physical development. While vision disorders are considered the fourth most common disability in the United States, two-thirds of all children entering school have never received a vision test. For the one-third of children who do receive a vision test, approximately 40–67 percent who fail the test do not receive the recommended follow-up care.

I urge my colleagues to support the Vision Care for Kids Act of 2009 so that we can protect our children of America.

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

Mr. PALLONE. I also yield back and ask for passage, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 577, 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. BROUN of Georgia. 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.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H. RES. 279, PROVIDING FOR EXPENSES OF CERTAIN COMMITTEES OF HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES IN 111TH CONGRESS

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 111–63) on the resolution (H. Res. 294) providing for consideration of the resolution (H. Res. 279) providing for the expenses of certain committees of the House of Representatives in the One Hundred Eleventh Congress, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

HIGHER EDUCATION TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1777) to make technical corrections to the Higher Education Act of 1965, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1777

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

SECTION 1. TABLE OF CONTENTS.

The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Table of contents.
Sec. 2. References.
Sec. 3. Effective date.

TITLE I—GENERAL PROVISIONS

Sec. 101. General provisions.

TITLE II—TEACHER QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

Sec. 201. Teacher quality enhancement.

TITLE III—INSTITUTIONAL AID

Sec. 301. Institutional aid.
Sec. 302. Multiagency study of minority science programs.

TITLE IV—STUDENT ASSISTANCE

Sec. 401. Grants to students in attendance at institutions of higher education.
Sec. 402. Federal Family Education Loan Program.
Sec. 403. Federal work-study programs.
Sec. 404. Federal Direct Loan Program.
Sec. 405. Federal Perkins Loans.
Sec. 406. Need analysis.
Sec. 407. General provisions of title IV.
Sec. 408. Program integrity.
Sec. 409. PLUS loan auction extension.

TITLE V—DEVELOPING INSTITUTIONS

Sec. 501. Developing institutions.

TITLE VI—INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS
Sec. 601. International education programs.
TITLE VII—GRADUATE AND POSTSECONDARY IMPROVEMENT
Sec. 701. Graduate and postsecondary improvement programs.
TITLE VIII—ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS
Sec. 801. Additional programs.
Sec. 802. Amendments to other higher education Acts.

SEC. 2. REFERENCES.

Except as otherwise expressly provided, whenever in this Act an amendment or repeal is expressed in terms of an amendment to, or repeal of, a section or other provision, the reference shall be considered to be made to a section or other provision of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.).

SEC. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE.

Except as otherwise provided in this Act, the amendments made by this Act shall take effect as if enacted on the date of the enactment of the Higher Education Opportunity Act (Public Law 110–315).

TITLE I—GENERAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 101. GENERAL PROVISIONS.

(a) HIGHER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY ACT.—Section 101(b) of Higher Education Opportunity Act (Public Law 110–315) is amended by striking ''July 1, 2010'' and inserting ''the date of the enactment of this Act''.

(b) HIGHER EDUCATION ACT OF 1965.—

(1) AMENDMENTS.—Title I (20 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.) is amended—

(A) in section 102(a)(2)(A)(iii) (20 U.S.C. 1002(a)(2)(A)(iii)), as added by section 102(a)(1)(D) of the Higher Education Opportunity Act (Public Law 110–315), in the matter preceding subclause (I), by striking ''States—'' and inserting ''States (other than a public or private nonprofit nursing school located outside of the United States that was participating in the program under part B of title IV on August 13, 2008)—'';

(B) in section 102(a)(2)(D) (20 U.S.C. 1002(a)(2)(D)), by striking ''under part B'' and inserting ''under part B of title IV'';

(C) in section 111(b) (20 U.S.C. 1011(b)), by striking ''With'' and inserting ''with'';

(D) in section 131(a)(3)(A)(iii)(I) (20 U.S.C. 1015(a)(3)(A)(iii)(I)), by striking ''section 428(a)(2)(C)(i)'' and inserting ''section 428(a)(2)(C)(ii)'';

(E) in section 136(d)(1) (20 U.S.C. 1015e(d)(1)), by striking ''(Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974)'' and inserting ''(commonly known as the 'Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974')'';

(F) in section 141 (20 U.S.C. 1018)—

(i) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A) of subsection (c)(3), by striking ''under this title'' and inserting ''under title IV''; and

(ii) in subsection (d)(3), by striking ''appropriate committees of Congress'' and inserting ''authorizing committees''; and

(G) in section 153(a)(1)(B)(iii)(V) (20 U.S.C. 1019b(a)(1)(B)(iii)(V)), by striking ''borrowers who take out loans under'' each place the term appears and inserting ''borrowers of loans made under''.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by paragraph (1)(A) of subsection (b) shall be effective as if enacted as part of the amendment in section 102(a)(1)(D) of the Higher Education Opportunity Act (Public Law 110–315), and shall take effect on July 1, 2010.

TITLE II—TEACHER QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

SEC. 201. TEACHER QUALITY ENHANCEMENT.

Title II (20 U.S.C. 1021 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 202 (20 U.S.C. 1022a)—

(A) in subsection (b)(6)(E)(ii), by striking ''section 1111(b)(2)'' and inserting ''section 1111(b)(1)''; and

(B) in subsection (i)(3), by striking ''consent of'' and inserting ''consent to''; and

(2) in section 231(a)(1) (20 U.S.C. 1032(a)(1)), by striking ''serve graduate'' and inserting ''assist in the graduation of''.

TITLE III—INSTITUTIONAL AID

SEC. 301. INSTITUTIONAL AID.

Title III (20 U.S.C. 1051 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 316 (20 U.S.C. 1059c)—

(A) in subsection (a), by striking ''Indian Tribal'' and inserting ''Tribal'';

(B) in subsection (b)—

(i) in paragraph (1), by striking ''the Tribally Controlled College or University Assistance Act of 1978'' and inserting ''the Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities Assistance Act of 1978'';

(ii) in paragraph (2), by striking ''the Tribally Controlled College or University Assistance Act of 1978'' and inserting ''the Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities Assistance Act of 1978''; and

(iii) in paragraph (3)(A), by striking ''the Navajo Community College Assistance Act of 1978'' and inserting ''the Navajo Community College Act''; and

(C) in subsection (d)(4)(A), by striking ''part B'' and inserting ''part B of this title'';

(2) in section 318 (20 U.S.C. 1059e)—

(A) by amending subsection (b)(1)(F) to read as follows:

''(F) is not receiving assistance under—

''(i) part B of this title;

''(ii) part A of title V; or

''(iii) an annual authorization of appropriations under the Act of March 2, 1867 (14 Stat. 438; 20 U.S.C. 123).''; and

(B) in subsection (i), by striking ''part B, or'' and inserting ''part B of this title, or'';

(3) in section 319(d)(3)(A) (20 U.S.C. 1059f(d)(3)(A)), by striking ''part B, or'' and inserting ''part B of this title, or'';

(4) in section 320(d)(3)(A) (20 U.S.C. 1059g(d)(3)(A)), by striking ''part B, or'' and inserting ''part B of this title, or'';

(5) in section 323(a) (20 U.S.C. 1062(a)), by striking ''in any fiscal year'' and inserting ''for any fiscal year'';

(6) in section 324(d) (20 U.S.C. 1063(d))—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2) as subparagraphs (A) and (B), respectively;

(B) by striking ''Notwithstanding subsections (a)'' and inserting ''(1) Notwithstanding subsections (a)''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(2) If the amount appropriated pursuant to section 399(a)(2)(A) for any fiscal year is not sufficient to pay the minimum allotment required by paragraph (1) of this subsection to all part B institutions, the amount of such minimum allotments shall be ratably reduced. If additional sums become available for such fiscal year, such reduced allocations shall be increased on the same basis as the basis on which they were reduced (until the amount allotted equals the minimum allotment required by paragraph (1)).'';

(7) in section 351(a) (20 U.S.C. 1067a(a))—

(A) by striking ''section 304(a)(1)'' and inserting ''section 303(a)(1)''; and

(B) by striking ''of 1979'';

(8) in section 355(a) (20 U.S.C. 1067e(a)), by striking ''302'' and inserting ''312'';

(9) in section 371(c) (20 U.S.C. 1067q(c))—

(A) in paragraph (3)(D), by striking ''402A(g)'' and inserting ''402A(h)'';

(B) in paragraph (4), by striking ''402A(g)'' and inserting ''402A(h)''; and

(C) in paragraph (9)—

(i) in subparagraph (C)(iii), by striking ''402A(g)'' and inserting ''402A(h)''; and

(ii) by amending subparagraph (F) to read as follows:

''(F) is not receiving assistance under—

''(i) part B of this title;

''(ii) part A of title V; or

''(iii) an annual authorization of appropriations under the Act of March 2, 1867 (14 Stat. 438; 20 U.S.C. 123).''; and

(10) in section 392(a)(6) (20 U.S.C. 1068a(a)(6)), by striking ''College or University'' and inserting ''Colleges and Universities''.

SEC. 302. MULTIAGENCY STUDY OF MINORITY SCIENCE PROGRAMS.

Section 1024 (20 U.S.C. 1067d) is repealed.

TITLE IV—STUDENT ASSISTANCE

SEC. 401. GRANTS TO STUDENTS IN ATTENDANCE AT INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.

(a) AMENDMENTS.—Part A of title IV (20 U.S.C. 1070 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 400(b) (20 U.S.C. 1070(b)), by striking ''1 through 8'' and inserting ''1 through 9'';

(2) in section 401 (20 U.S.C. 1070a)—

(A) in the second sentence of subsection (a)(1), by striking ''manner,,'' and inserting ''manner,'';

(B) in subsection (b)(1), by striking ''section 401'' and inserting ''this section''; and

(C) in subsection (b)(9)(A)—

(i) in clause (vi), by striking ''$105,000,000'' and inserting ''$140,000,000''; and

(ii) in clause (viii), by striking ''$4,400,000,000'' and inserting ''$4,470,000,000'';

(3) by striking paragraph (4) of section 401(f) (20 U.S.C. 1070a(f)), as added by section 401(c) of the Higher Education Opportunity Act (Public Law 110–315);

(4) in section 402A (20 U.S.C. 1070a–11)—

(A) in subsection (b)(1), by striking ''organizations including'' and inserting ''organizations, including''; and

(B) in subsection (c)(8)(C)(iv)(I), by inserting ''to be'' after ''determined'';

(5) in section 402E(d)(2)(C) (20 U.S.C. 1070a–15(d)(2)(C)), by striking ''320.'' and inserting ''320'';

(6) in section 419C(b)(1) (20 U.S.C. 1070d–33(b)(1)), by inserting ''and'' after the semicolon at the end; and

(7) in section 419D(d) (20 U.S.C. 1070d–34(d)), by striking ''1134'' and inserting ''134''.

(b) HIGHER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY ACT.—Section 404 of the Higher Education Opportunity Act (Public Law 110–315) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(i) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (e) of this section shall apply only with respect to grant awards made on or after the date of enactment of this Act.''.

SEC. 402. FEDERAL FAMILY EDUCATION LOAN PROGRAM.

(a) AMENDMENT TO PROVISION AMENDED BY THE COLLEGE COST REDUCTION AND ACCESS ACT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 428(b)(1)(G)(i) (20 U.S.C. 1078(b)(1)(G)(i)), as amended by section 303 of the College Cost Reduction and Access Act (Public Law 110–84), is amended by striking ''or 439(q)''.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by paragraph (1) shall be effective as if enacted as part of the amendment in section 303(a) of the College Cost Reduction and Access Act (Public Law 110–84), and shall take effect on October 1, 2012, and apply with respect to loans made on or after such date.

(b) ENTRANCE COUNSELING FUNCTIONS.—

(1) GUARANTY AGENCIES.—Section 428(b)(3) (20 U.S.C. 1078(b)(3)) is amended—

(A) in subparagraph (C), by inserting ''or 485(l)'' after ''section 485(b)''; and

(B) in subparagraph (D), by inserting ''or 485(l)'' after ''section 485(b)''.

(2) ELIGIBLE LENDERS.—Section 435(d)(5) (20 U.S.C. 1085(d)(5)) is amended—

(A) in subparagraph (E), by inserting ''or 485(l)'' after ''section 485(b)''; and

(B) in subparagraph (F), by inserting ''or 485(l)'' after ''section 485(b)''.

(c) AMENDMENT TO PROVISION AMENDED BY THE HIGHER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY ACT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 428C(c)(3)(A) (20 U.S.C. 1078–3(c)(3)(A)), as amended by section 425 of the Higher Education Opportunity Act (Public Law 110–315), is amended by striking ''section 493C'' and inserting ''section 493C,''.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by paragraph (1) shall be effective as if enacted as part of the amendment in section 425(d)(1) of the Higher Education Opportunity Act (Public Law 110–315), and shall take effect on July 1, 2009.

(d) REHABILITATION OF STUDENT LOANS.—

(1) Section 428F (20 U.S.C. 1078–6) is amended—

(A) in subsection (a)—

(i) by amending paragraph (1) to read as follows:

''(1) SALE OR ASSIGNMENT OF LOAN.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Each guaranty agency, upon securing 9 payments made within 20 days of the due date during 10 consecutive months of amounts owed on a loan for which the Secretary has made a payment under paragraph (1) of section 428(c), shall—

''(i) if practicable, sell the loan to an eligible lender; or

''(ii) on or before September 30, 2011, assign the loan to the Secretary if—

''(I) the Secretary has determined that market conditions unduly limit a guaranty agency's ability to sell loans under clause (i); and

''(II) the guaranty agency has been unable to sell loans under clause (i).

''(B) MONTHLY PAYMENTS.—Neither the guaranty agency nor the Secretary shall demand from a borrower as monthly payments amounts described in subparagraph (A) more than is reasonable and affordable based on the borrower's total financial circumstances.

''(C) CONSUMER REPORTING AGENCIES.—

''(i) NOTICE OF SALE OR ASSIGNMENT.—Upon the sale or assignment of a loan under this paragraph, the guaranty agency or other holder of the loan shall report that sale or assignment to any consumer reporting agency to which the guaranty agency or other holder reported the default of the loan, and request that the record of default be removed from the borrower's credit history.

''(ii) REMOVAL FROM CREDIT REPORTS.—Notwithstanding paragraphs (4) and (5) of section 605(a) of the Fair Credit Reporting Act (15 U.S.C. 1681c(a)(4) and (5)) and section 430A(f) of this Act, no consumer reporting agency shall include adverse information on any loan sold or assigned under this paragraph (or any defaulted loan held by the Secretary, on which the borrower has made 9 payments within 20 days of the due date during 10 consecutive months of amounts owed on the defaulted loan), in a report regarding a borrower whose loan is reported sold or assigned by the guaranty agency (or a borrower of a defaulted loan who is reported by the Secretary as having made such payments). The consumer reporting agency shall, within 10 days of receiving such notice from the guaranty agency (or the Secretary, as the case may be) of such sale or assignment, exclude such adverse information from any reports.

''(D) DUTIES UPON SALE.—With respect to a loan sold under subparagraph (A)(i)—

''(i) the guaranty agency—

''(I) shall repay the Secretary 81.5 percent of the amount of the principal balance outstanding at the time of such sale, multiplied by the reinsurance percentage in effect when payment under the guaranty agreement was made with respect to the loan; and

''(II) may, in order to defray collection costs—

''(aa) charge to the borrower an amount of not to exceed 18.5 percent of the outstanding principal and interest at the time of the loan sale; and

''(bb) retain such amount from the proceeds of the loan sale; and

''(ii) the Secretary shall reinstate the Secretary's obligation to—

''(I) reimburse the guaranty agency for the amount that the agency may, in the future, expend to discharge its guaranty obligation; and

''(II) pay to the holder of such loan a special allowance pursuant to section 438.

''(E) DUTIES UPON ASSIGNMENT.—With respect to a loan assigned under subparagraph (A)(ii)—

''(i) the guaranty agency shall add to the principal and interest outstanding at the time of the assignment of such loan an amount equal to the amount described in subparagraph (D)(i)(II); and

''(ii) the Secretary shall pay the guaranty agency, for deposit in the agency's Operating Fund established pursuant to section 422B, an amount equal to the amount added to the principal and interest outstanding at the time of the assignment in accordance with clause (i).

''(F) ELIGIBLE LENDER LIMITATION.—A loan shall not be sold to an eligible lender under subparagraph (A)(i) if such lender has been found by the guaranty agency or the Secretary to have substantially failed to exercise the due diligence required of lenders under this part.

''(G) DEFAULT DUE TO ERROR.—A loan that does not meet the requirements of subparagraph (A) may also be eligible for sale or assignment under this paragraph upon a determination that the loan was in default due to clerical or data processing error and would not, in the absence of such error, be in a delinquent status.'';

(ii) in paragraph (2)—

(I) by striking ''paragraph (1) of this subsection'' and inserting ''paragraph (1)(A)(i)''; and

(II) by striking ''paragraph (1)(B)(ii) of this subsection'' and inserting ''paragraph (1)(D)(ii)(I)'';

(iii) in paragraph (3)—

(I) by striking ''sold under paragraph (2)'' and inserting ''sold or assigned under paragraph (1)(A)''; and

(II) by striking ''sale.'' and inserting ''sale or assignment.'';

(iv) in paragraph (4), by striking ''which is sold under paragraph (1) of this subsection'' and inserting ''that is sold or assigned under paragraph (1)''; and

(v) in paragraph (5), by inserting ''(whether by loan sale or assignment)'' after ''rehabilitating a loan''; and

(B) in subsection (b), in the first sentence, by inserting ''or assigned to the Secretary'' after ''sold to an eligible lender''.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by paragraph (1) shall be effective on the date of enactment of this Act, and shall apply to any loan on which monthly payments described in section 428F(a)(1)(A) were paid before, on, or after such date of enactment.

(e) REPAYMENT IN FULL FOR DEATH AND DISABILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 437(a)(1) (20 U.S.C. 1087(a)(1)), as amended by section 437 of the Higher Education Opportunity Act (Public Law 110–315), is amended—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''Secretary),, or if'' and inserting ''Secretary), or if''; and

(B) in subparagraph (B), by inserting ''the reinstatement and resumption to be'' after ''determines''.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by paragraph (1) shall be effective as if enacted as part of the amendments in section 437(a) of the Higher Education Opportunity Act (Public Law 110–315), and shall take effect on July 1, 2010.

(f) OTHER AMENDMENTS.—Part B of title IV (20 U.S.C. 1071 et seq.) is further amended—

(1) in section 428 (20 U.S.C. 1078)—

(A) in subsection (a)(2)(A)(i)(II), by striking ''and'' after the semicolon at the end;

(B) in subsection (b)—

(i) in the matter following subclause (II) of paragraph (1)(M)(i), by inserting ''section'' before ''428B'';

(ii) in paragraph (3)(A)(i), by striking ''any institution of higher education or the employees of an institution of higher education'' and inserting ''any institution of higher education, any employee of an institution of higher education, or any individual or entity'';

(iii) in paragraph (4), by striking ''For the purpose of paragraph (1)(M)(i)(III) of this subsection,'' and inserting ''With respect to the graduate fellowship program referred to in paragraph (1)(M)(i)(II),''; and

(iv) in paragraph (7)—

(I) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''clause (i) or (ii) of''; and

(II) in subparagraph (D), by striking ''subparagraph (A)(i)'' and inserting ''subparagraph (A)''; and

(C) in subsection (c)(9)(K), by striking ''3 months'' and inserting ''6 months'';

(2) in section 428B(e) (20 U.S.C. 1078–2(e))—

(A) in paragraph (3)(B), by striking ''subsection (c)(5)(B)'' and inserting ''subsection (d)(5)(B)''; and

(B) by repealing paragraph (5);

(3) in section 428C (20 U.S.C. 1078–3)—

(A) in subsection (a)(4)(E), by striking ''subpart II of part B'' and inserting ''part E'';

(B) in subsection (c)(2), by striking ''subsection (b)(2)(F)'' and inserting ''subsection (b)(2)'';

(C) in subsection (d)(3)(D), by striking ''loan insurance fund'' and inserting ''loan insurance account''; and

(D) in subsection (f)(3), by striking ''subsection (a)'' and inserting ''this subsection'';

(4) in section 428G(c) (20 U.S.C. 1078–7(c))—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking ''section 428(a)(2)(A)(i)(III)'' and inserting ''section 428(a)(2)(A)(i)(II)''; and

(B) by striking paragraph (3) and inserting the following:

''(3) notwithstanding subsection (a)(2), may, with the permission of the borrower, be disbursed by the lender on a weekly or monthly basis, provided that the proceeds of the loan are disbursed by the lender in substantially equal weekly or monthly installments, as the case may be, over the period of enrollment for which the loan is made.'';

(5) in section 428H (20 U.S.C. 1078–8)—

(A) in subsection (d), by amending the text of the header of paragraph (2) to read as follows: ''LIMITS FOR GRADUATE, PROFESSIONAL, AND INDEPENDENT POSTBACCALAUREATE STUDENTS''; and

(B) by amending paragraph (6) to read as follows:

''(6) REPAYMENT PERIOD.—For purposes of calculating the repayment period under section 428(b)(9), such period shall commence at the time the first payment of principal is due from the borrower.'';

(6) in section 428J (20 U.S.C. 1078–10)—

(A) in subsection (c)(1), by adding at the end the following: ''No borrower may receive a reduction of loan obligations under both this section and section 460.''; and

(B) in subsection (g)(2)—

(i) in subparagraph (B), by inserting ''or'' after the semicolon at the end;

(ii) by striking subparagraph (C);

(iii) by redesignating subparagraph (D) as subparagraph (C); and

(iv) in subparagraph (C), as redesignated by clause (iii), by striking ''12571'' and inserting ''12601'';

(7) in section 428K(g)(9)(B) (20 U.S.C. 1078–11(g)(9)(B)), by striking ''under subsection (ll)(3) of such section (42 U.S.C. 1395x(ll)(3))'' and inserting ''under subsection (ll)(4) of such section (42 U.S.C. 1395x(ll)(4))'';

(8) in section 430A(f) (20 U.S.C. 1080A(f)), by striking ''(6)'' each place it appears and inserting ''(5)'';

(9) in section 432 (20 U.S.C. 1082)—

(A) in subsection (b), by striking ''section 1078 of this title'' and inserting ''section 428''; and

(B) in subsection (m)(1)(B)—

(i) in clause (i), by inserting ''and'' after the semicolon at the end; and

(ii) in clause (ii), by striking ''; and'' and inserting a period;

(10) in section 435 (20 U.S.C. 1085)—

(A) in subsection (a)(2)(C)(ii), by striking ''a tribally controlled community college within the meaning of section 2(a)(4) of the Tribally Controlled Community College Assistance Act of 1978'' and inserting ''a tribally controlled college or university, as defined in section 2(a)(4) of the Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities Assistance Act of 1978'';

(B) in subsection (d)—

(i) in paragraph (1)—

(I) in subparagraph (A)(ii)(III), by striking ''section 501(1) of such Code'' and inserting ''section 501(a) of such Code''; and

(II) in subparagraph (G), by striking ''sections 428A(d), 428B(d), and 428C,'' and inserting ''sections 428B(d) and 428C,'';

(ii) in paragraph (2)(A)(vi), by striking ''section 435(m)'' and inserting ''subsection (m)'';

(iii) in paragraph (3), by striking ''section 435(m)'' and inserting ''subsection (m)''; and

(iv) in paragraph (5)(A), by striking ''to any institution of higher education or any employee of an institution of higher education in order to secure applicants for loans under this part'' and inserting ''to any institution of higher education, any employee of an institution of higher education, or any individual or entity in order to secure applicants for loans under this part'';

(C) in subsection (o)(1)(A)(ii), by striking ''Service'' and inserting ''Services''; and

(D) in subsection (p)(1), by striking ''section 771'' and inserting ''section 781'';

(11) in section 438(b)(2) (20 U.S.C. 1087–1(b)(2))—

(A) in the second sentence of subparagraph (A), by striking ''427A(f)'' and inserting ''427A(i)'';

(B) in the first sentence of subparagraph (B)(i), by striking ''1954'' and inserting ''1986''; and

(C) in the second sentence of subparagraph (F), by striking ''427A(f)'' and inserting ''427A(i)''; and

(12) in section 439(r)(2)(A)(i) (20 U.S.C. 1087–2(r)(2)(A)(i)), by striking ''appoint'' and all that follows through ''to conduct'' and inserting ''appoint and fix the compensation of such auditors and examiners as may be necessary to conduct''.

SEC. 403. FEDERAL WORK-STUDY PROGRAMS.

Section 443 (42 U.S.C. 2753) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(2), by striking ''section 443'' and inserting ''this section'';

(2) in subsection (d)(1), by striking ''subsection (b)(2)(B)'' and inserting ''subsection (b)(2)(A)''; and

(3) in subsection (e)(1), by striking ''in accordance with such subsection''.

SEC. 404. FEDERAL DIRECT LOAN PROGRAM.

(a) TEMPORARY AUTHORITY TO PURCHASE LOANS.—Section 459A (20 U.S.C. 1087i-1) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (2), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''purchase of loans under this section'' and inserting ''purchase of loans under paragraph (1)''; and

(B) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following new paragraph:

''(3) TEMPORARY AUTHORITY TO PURCHASE REHABILITATED LOANS.—

''(A) AUTHORITY.—In addition to the authority described in paragraph (1), the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of the Treasury, is authorized to purchase, or enter into forward commitments to purchase, from any eligible lender (as defined in section 435(d)(1)), loans that such lender purchased under section 428F on or after October 1, 2003, and before July 1, 2010, and that are not in default, on such terms as the Secretary, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget jointly determine are in the best interest of the United States, except that any purchase under this section shall not result in any net cost to the Federal Government (including the cost of servicing the loans purchased), as determined jointly by the Secretary, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

''(B) FEDERAL REGISTER NOTICE.—The Secretary, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, shall jointly publish a notice in the Federal Register prior to any purchase of loans under this paragraph that—

''(i) establishes the terms and conditions governing the purchases authorized by this paragraph;

''(ii) includes an outline of the methodology and factors that the Secretary, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, will jointly consider in evaluating the price at which to purchase loans rehabilitated pursuant to section 428F(a); and

''(iii) describes how the use of such methodology and consideration of such factors used to determine purchase price will ensure that loan purchases do not result in any net cost to the Federal Government (including the cost of servicing the loans purchased).''; and

(2) by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:

''(b) PROCEEDS.—The Secretary shall require, as a condition of any purchase under subsection (a), that the funds paid by the Secretary to any eligible lender under this section shall be used—

''(1) to ensure continued participation of such lender in the Federal student loan programs authorized under part B of this title; and

''(2)(A) in the case of loans purchased pursuant to subsection (a)(1), to originate new Federal loans to students, as authorized under part B of this title; or

''(B) in the case of loans purchased pursuant to subsection (a)(3), to originate such new Federal loans to students, or to purchase loans in accordance with section 428F(a).''.

(b) OTHER AMENDMENTS.—Part D of title IV (20 U.S.C. 1087a et seq.) is amended—

(1) by repealing paragraph (3) of section 453(c) (20 U.S.C. 1087c(c));

(2) in section 455 (20 U.S.C. 1087e)—

(A) in subsection (d)(1)(C), by striking ''428(b)(9)(A)(v)'' and inserting ''428(b)(9)(A)(iv)'';

(B) in subsection (h), by striking ''(except as authorized under section 457(a)(1))''; and

(C) in subsection (k)(1)(B), by striking '', or in a notice under section 457(a)(1),'';

(3) by repealing section 457 (20 U.S.C. 1087g); and

(4) in section 460 (20 U.S.C. 1087j)—

(A) in subsection (c)(1), by adding at the end the following: ''No borrower may receive a reduction of loan obligations under both this section and section 428J.''; and

(B) in subsection (g)(2)—

(i) by striking subparagraph (A);

(ii) by redesignating subparagraphs (B) through (D) as subparagraphs (A) through (C), respectively; and

(iii) in subparagraph (C), as redesignated by clause (ii), by striking ''12571'' and inserting ''12601''.

SEC. 405. FEDERAL PERKINS LOANS.

Part E of title IV (20 U.S.C. 1087aa et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 462(a)(1) (20 U.S.C. 1087bb(a)(1)), by striking subparagraph (A) and inserting the following:

''(A) 100 percent of the amount received under subsections (a) and (b) of this section for fiscal year 1999 (as such subsections were in effect with respect to allocations for such fiscal year), multiplied by'';

(2) in section 463(c) (20 U.S.C. 1087cc(c))—

(A) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by moving the margins of subparagraph (A) 2 ems to the left; and

(ii) by striking subparagraph (B) and inserting the following:

''(B) information concerning the repayment and collection of any such loan, including information concerning the status of such loan; and''; and

(B) in paragraph (3), by striking ''(6)'' each place it appears and inserting ''(5)'';

(3) in the first sentence of the matter preceding paragraph (1) of section 463A(a) (20 U.S.C. 1087cc–1(a)), by striking '', in order to carry out the provisions of section 463(a)(8),'';

(4) in section 464 (20 U.S.C. 1087dd)—

(A) in subsection (c)—

(i) in paragraph (1)(D)—

(I) by striking ''(I)'' and inserting ''(i)''; and

(II) by striking ''(II)'' and inserting ''(ii)''; and

(ii) in paragraph (2)(A)(iii)—

(I) by aligning the margin of the matter preceding subclause (I) with the margins of clause (ii);

(II) by aligning the margins of subclauses (I) and (II) with the margins of clause (i)(I); and

(III) by aligning the margins of the matter following subclause (ii) with the margins of the matter following subclause (II) of clause (i); and

(B) in subsection (g)(5), by striking ''credit bureaus'' and inserting ''consumer reporting agencies'';

(5) in section 465(a)(6) (20 U.S.C. 1087ee(a)(6)), by striking ''12571'' and inserting ''12601'';

(6) in section 467(b) (20 U.S.C. 1087gg(b)), by striking ''paragraph (5)(A), (5)(B)(i), or (6)'' and inserting ''paragraph (4) or (5)''; and

(7) in section 469(c) (20 U.S.C. 1087ii(c)), by striking ''and the term'' and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting ''and the term 'early intervention services' has the meaning given the term in section 632 of such Act.''.

SEC. 406. NEED ANALYSIS.

(a) AMENDMENTS.—Part F of title IV (20 U.S.C. 1087kk et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 473 (20 U.S.C. 1087mm)—

(A) by striking ''For the purpose of this title, except subpart 2 of part A,'' and inserting ''(a) IN GENERAL.—For the purpose of this title, other than subpart 2 of part A, and except as provided in subsection (b),''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

''(b) SPECIAL RULE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this title, the family contribution of each student described in paragraph (2) shall be deemed to be zero for the academic year for which the determination is made.

''(2) APPLICABILITY.—Paragraph (1) shall apply to any dependent or independent student with respect to determinations of need for academic year 2009–2010 and succeeding academic years—

''(A) who is eligible to receive a Federal Pell Grant for the academic year for which the determination is made;

''(B) whose parent or guardian was a member of the Armed Forces of the United States and died as a result of performing military service in Iraq or Afghanistan after September 11, 2001; and

''(C) who, at the time of the parent or guardian's death, was—

''(i) less than 24 years of age; or

''(ii) was enrolled at an institution of higher education on not less than a part-time basis.

''(3) INFORMATION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Defense, as appropriate, shall provide the Secretary of Education with information necessary to determine which students meet the requirements of paragraph (2).'';

(2) in section 475(c)(5)(B) (20 U.S.C. 1087oo(c)(5)(B)), by inserting ''of 1986'' after ''Code'';

(3) in section 477(b)(5)(B) (20 U.S.C. 1087qq(b)(5)(B)), by inserting ''of 1986'' after ''Code'';

(4) in section 479 (20 U.S.C. 1087ss)—

(A) in subsection (b) (as amended by section 602 of the College Cost Reduction and Access Act (110–84))—

(i) in paragraph (1)(A)(i), by amending subclause (III) to read as follows:

''(III) include at least one parent who is a dislocated worker; or'';

(ii) in paragraph (1)(B)(i), by amending subclause (III) to read as follows:

''(III) is a dislocated worker or is married to a dislocated worker; or''; and

(B) in subsection (c) (as amended by such section 602)—

(i) in paragraph (1)(A), by amending clause (iii) to read as follows:

''(iii) include at least one parent who is a dislocated worker; or''; and

(ii) in paragraph (2)(A), by amending clause (iii) to read as follows:

''(iii) is a dislocated worker or is married to a dislocated worker; or'';

(5) in section 479C (20 U.S.C. 1087uu–1)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking ''under'' and all that follows through ''; and'' and inserting ''under Public Law 98–64 (25 U.S.C. 11a et seq.; 97 Stat. 365) (commonly known as the 'Per Capita Act ' or Public Law 93–134 (25 U.S.C. 1401 et seq.; 87 Stat. 466)(commonly known as the 'Indian Tribal Judgment Funds Use or Distribution Act'); and''; and

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by striking ''Alaskan'' and inserting ''Alaska'';

(ii) by inserting ''(43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.)'' before ''or the''; and

(iii) by inserting ''of 1980 (25 U.S.C. 1721 et seq.)'' after ''Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act'';

(6) in section 480(a)(2) (20 U.S.C. 1087vv(a)(2)), by striking ''12571'' and inserting ''12511'';

(7) in section 480(c)(2) (20 U.S.C. 1087vv(c)(2))—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''the following'' and inserting ''benefits under the following provisions of law''; and

(B) by striking subparagraphs (A) through (J) and inserting the following:

''(A) Chapter 103 of title 10, United States Code (Senior Reserve Officers' Training Corps).

''(B) Chapter 1606 of title 10, United States Code (Selected Reserve Educational Assistance Program).

''(C) Chapter 1607 of title 10, United States Code (Educational Assistance Program for Reserve Component Members Supporting Contingency Operations and Certain Other Operations).

''(D) Chapter 30 of title 38, United States Code (All-Volunteer Force Educational Assistance Program, also known as the 'Montgomery GI Bill—active duty').

''(E) Chapter 31 of title 38, United States Code (Training and Rehabilitation for Veterans with Service-Connected Disabilities).

''(F) Chapter 32 of title 38, United States Code (Post-Vietnam Era Veterans' Educational Assistance Program).

''(G) Chapter 33 of title 38, United States Code (post-9/11 educational assistance).

''(H) Chapter 35 of title 38, United States Code (Survivors' and Dependents Educational Assistance Program).

''(I) Section 903 of the Department of Defense Authorization Act, 1981 (10 U.S.C. 2141 note) (Educational Assistance Pilot Program).

''(J) Section 156(b) of the 'Joint Resolution making further continuing appropriations and providing for productive employment for the fiscal year 1983, and for other purposes' (42 U.S.C. 402 note) (Restored Entitlement Program for Survivors, also known as 'Quayle benefits').''; and

(8) in section 480(j)(1) (20 U.S.C. 1087vv(j)(1)), by striking ''12571'' and inserting ''12511''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by paragraph (1)(B) of subsection (a) shall take effect on July 1, 2009, and the amendments made by paragraph (4) of such subsection shall be effective as if enacted as part of the amendments in section 602(a) of the College Cost Reduction and Access Act (Public Law 110–84).

(c) HIGHER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY ACT.—Section 473(f) of the Higher Education Opportunity Act (Public Law 110–315) is amended by inserting '', except that the amendments made in subsection (e) shall take effect on July 1, 2009'' before the period at the end.

SEC. 407. GENERAL PROVISIONS OF TITLE IV.

(a) DELAYED IMPLEMENTATION OF EZ FAFSA.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Education shall be required to carry out the requirements under the following provisions of section 483 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1090) only for academic year 2010–2011 and subsequent academic years:

(1) In subsection (a) of such section—

(A) subparagraphs (A)(i) and (B) of paragraph (2);

(B) in paragraph (3)—

(i) the second sentence of subparagraph (A);

(ii) clauses (i) and (ii) of subparagraph (B); and

(iii) subparagraph (C);

(C) paragraph (4)(A)(iv); and

(D) paragraph (5)(E).

(2) Subsection (h) of such section.

(b) OTHER AMENDMENTS.—Part G of title IV (20 U.S.C. 1088 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1) of section 481(c) (20 U.S.C. 1088(c)), by striking ''or any State, or private, profit or nonprofit organization'' and inserting ''any State, or any private, for-profit or nonprofit organization,'';

(2) in section 482(b) (20 U.S.C. 1089(b)), by striking ''413D(e), 442(e), or 462(j)'' and inserting ''413D(d), 442(d), or 462(i)'';

(3) in section 483 (20 U.S.C. 1090)—

(A) in subsection (a)(3)(C), by inserting ''that'' after ''except''; and

(B) in subsection (e)(8)(A), by striking ''identify'' and inserting ''determine'';

(4) in section 484 (20 U.S.C. 1091)—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A) of subsection (a)(4), by striking ''certification,,'' and inserting ''certification,'';

(B) in subsection (b)(1)(B)—

(i) by striking ''have (A)'' and inserting ''have (i)''; and

(ii) by striking ''and (B)'' and inserting ''and (ii)'';

(C) in subsection (f)(1), by striking ''part B'' and all that follows through ''part E'' in each place that the phrase occurs and inserting ''part B, part D, or part E'';

(D) in subsection (h)—

(i) in paragraph (2), by striking ''(h)(4)(A)(i)'' and inserting ''(g)(4)(A)(i)''; and

(ii) in paragraph (3), by striking ''(h)(4)(B)(i)'' and inserting ''(g)(4)(B)(i)''; and

(E) in subsection (n), by striking ''section 1113 of Public Law 97–252'' and inserting ''section 12(f) of the Military Selective Service Act (50 U.S.C. App. 462(f))'';

(5) in section 485 (20 U.S.C. 1092)—

(A) in subsection (a)—

(i) in paragraph (1)—

(I) the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''also referred to as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974'' and inserting ''commonly known as the 'Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974' ''; and

(II) in subparagraph (I), by striking ''handicapped students'' and inserting ''students with disabilities'';

(ii) in paragraph (4)(B), by inserting ''during which'' after ''time period''; and

(iii) in the matter preceding subclause (I) of paragraph (7)(B)(iv), by inserting ''education'' after ''higher'';

(B) in subsection (e)(3)(B), by inserting ''during which'' after ''time period'';

(C) in subsection (f)—

(i) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A) of paragraph (1), by inserting ''of'' after ''foreign institution''; and

(ii) in paragraphs (3), (4)(A), (5), and (8)(A), by striking ''under this title'' each place it appears and inserting ''under this title, other than a foreign institution of higher education,'';

(D) in subsection (g)(2), by striking ''subparagraph (G)'' and inserting ''paragraph (1)(G)'';

(E) in subsection (i)—

(i) in paragraph (2), by striking ''eligible institution participating in any program under this title'' and inserting ''institution described in paragraph (1)'';

(ii) in paragraph (3), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''eligible institution participating in any program under this title'' and inserting ''institution described in paragraph (1)''; and

(iii) in paragraph (5)(B), by striking ''the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974'' and inserting ''commonly known as the 'Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974' '';

(F) in subsection (k)(2), by inserting ''section'' before ''484(r)(1)''; and

(G) in the matter preceding clause (i) of subsection (l)(1)(A), by striking ''subparagraph (B)'' and inserting ''paragraph (2)'';

(6) in section 485A (20 U.S.C. 1092a)—

(A) in subsection (a)—

(i) by striking ''or defined in subpart I of part C of title VII of the Public Health Service Act'' and inserting ''or an eligible lender as defined in section 719 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 292o)''; and

(ii) by striking ''under subpart I of part C of title VII of the Public Health Service Act (known as Health Education Assistance Loans)'' and inserting ''under part A of title

VII of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 292 et seq.)'';

(B) in subsection (b), by striking ''subpart I of part C of title VII of the Public Health Service Act'' and inserting ''part A of title VII of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 292 et seq.)'';

(C) in subsection (e)—

(i) by striking ''Health Education Assistance Loan'' and inserting ''loan under part A of title VII of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 292 et seq.)''; and

(ii) in paragraph (2), by striking ''733(e)(3)'' and inserting ''707(e)(3)''; and

(D) in subsection (f)—

(i) in paragraph (1)—

(I) in the second sentence, by striking ''subpart I of part C of title VII of the Public Health Service Act'' and inserting ''part A of title VII of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 292 et seq.)''; and

(II) in the fourth sentence, by striking ''728(a)'' and inserting ''710''; and

(ii) in paragraph (2), by striking ''subpart I of part C of title VII of the Public Health Service Act'' and inserting ''part A of title VII of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 292 et seq.)'';

(7) in section 485B (20 U.S.C. 1092b)—

(A) in subsection (a)(5), by striking ''))'' and inserting ''))''; and

(B) in subsection (d)(3)(D), by striking ''the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974'' and inserting ''commonly known as the 'Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974' '';

(8) in section 487 (20 U.S.C. 1094)—

(A) in subsection (a)(23)(A), by inserting ''of 1993'' after ''Registration Act'';

(B) in subsection (c)(1)—

(i) in subparagraph (A)(i), by striking ''students receives'' and inserting ''students receive'';

(ii) in subparagraph (F), by striking ''paragraph (2)(B)'' and inserting ''paragraph (3)(B)''; and

(iii) in subparagraph (H), by striking ''paragraph (2)(B)'' and inserting ''paragraph (3)(B)'';

(C) in subsection (f)(1), by striking ''496(c)(4)'' and inserting ''496(c)(6)''; and

(D) in subsection (g)(1), by striking ''subsection (f)(2)'' and inserting ''subsection (e)(2)'';

(9) in section 489(a) (20 U.S.C. 1096(a))—

(A) in the third sentence, by striking ''has agreed to assign under section 463(a)(6)(B)'' and inserting ''has referred under section 463(a)(4)(B)''; and

(B) in the fourth sentence, by striking ''484(h)'' and inserting ''484(g)'';

(10) in section 491(l)(2)(A) (20 U.S.C. 1098(l)(2)(A)), by inserting ''the'' after ''enactment of''; and

(11) in section 492(a) (20 U.S.C. 1098a(a))—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking ''regulations'' and all that follows through ''The'' and inserting ''regulations for this title. The''; and

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking ''ISSUES'' and all that follows through ''provide'' and inserting ''ISSUES.—The Secretary shall provide''.

SEC. 408. PROGRAM INTEGRITY.

Part H of title IV (20 U.S.C. 1099a et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 496(a)(6)(G) (20 U.S.C. 1099b(a)(6)(G)), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(2) in section 498(c)(2) (20 U.S.C. 1099c(c)(2)), by striking ''for profit'' and inserting ''for-profit''.

SEC. 409. PLUS LOAN AUCTION EXTENSION.

(a) EXTENSION.—Section 499 (20 U.S.C. 1099d) is amended by striking ''2009'' each place it appears and inserting ''2010''.

(b) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—Section 499(b)(1) (20 U.S.C. 1099d(b)(1)) is amended by striking ''Communication'' and inserting ''Communications''.

(c) TIMING OF REPORTS.—Section 499(d)(1) (20 U.S.C. 1099d(d)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''2010'' and inserting ''2011'';

(2) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''2012'' and inserting ''2013''; and

(3) in subparagraph (C), by striking ''2013'' and inserting ''2014''.

TITLE V—DEVELOPING INSTITUTIONS

SEC. 501. DEVELOPING INSTITUTIONS.

Section 502(b)(2) (20 U.S.C. 1101a(b)(2)) is amended by striking ''which determination'' and inserting ''which the determination''.

TITLE VI—INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

SEC. 601. INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS.

(a) HIGHER EDUCATION ACT OF 1965.—Title VI (20 U.S.C. 1121 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 604(a) (20 U.S.C. 1124(a))—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A) of paragraph (2), by inserting ''the'' before ''Federal''; and

(B) in paragraph (7)(D), by striking ''institution, combination'' and inserting ''applicant, consortium,''; and

(2) in section 622(a) (20 U.S.C. 1131–1(a)), by inserting a period after ''title''.

(b) HIGHER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY ACT.—The matter preceding paragraph (1) of section 621 of the Higher Education Opportunity Act (Public Law 110–315) is amended by striking ''Section 631 (20 U.S.C. 1132)'' and inserting ''Section 631(a) (20 U.S.C. 1132(a))''.

TITLE VII—GRADUATE AND POSTSECONDARY IMPROVEMENT

SEC. 701. GRADUATE AND POSTSECONDARY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS.

Title VII (20 U.S.C. 1133 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1) of section 721(d) (20 U.S.C. 1136(d)), by striking ''services through'' and all that follows through ''resource centers'' and inserting ''services through pre-college programs, undergraduate prelaw information resource centers'';

(2) in section 723(b)(1)(P) (20 U.S.C. 1136a(b)(1)(P)), by striking ''Sate'' and inserting ''State'';

(3) in section 744(c)(6)(C) (20 U.S.C. 1138c(c)(6)(C)), by inserting ''of the National Academies'' after ''Institute of Medicine'';

(4) in section 760(1)(D) (20 U.S.C. 1140(1)(D)), by inserting ''with nondisabled students'' after ''disabilities to participate'';

(5) in section 772 (20 U.S.C. 11401)—

(A) in subsection (a)(2)(A), by striking ''with in'' and inserting ''with''; and

(B) in the matter preceding subclause (I) of subsection (b)(1)(C)(ii), by striking ''subparagraph (C)'' and inserting ''clause (i)'';

(6) in section 781 (20 U.S.C. 1141)—

(A) in subsection (c)(1), by striking ''Service'' each place the term appears and inserting ''Services'';

(B) in the matter preceding paragraph (1) of subsection (e)—

(i) by striking ''(as defined'' and all that follows through ''this Act)'' and inserting ''(as described in section 435(p))''; and

(ii) by striking ''435(j)'' and inserting ''428(b)'';

(C) in subsection (g)(2), by striking ''Service'' and inserting ''Services''; and

(D) in subsection (i)—

(i) in paragraph (1)(D), by striking ''consortia'' and inserting ''consortium''; and

(ii) in paragraph (2)—

(I) in the paragraph heading, by striking ''CONSORTIA'' and inserting ''CONSORTIUM''; and

(II) by striking ''consortia'' each place the term appears and inserting ''consortium''.

TITLE VIII—ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS

SEC. 801. ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS.

Title VIII (20 U.S.C. 1161a et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 802(d)(2)(D) (20 U.S.C. 1161b(d)(2)(D)), by striking ''regulation'' and inserting ''regulations'';

(2) in section 804(d) (20 U.S.C. 1161d(d)(2))—

(A) in the heading, by striking ''DEFINITION'' and inserting ''DEFINITIONS''; and

(B) by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

''(2) PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE ACT.—The terms 'accredited' and 'school of nursing' have the meanings given those terms in section 801 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 296).'';

(3) in section 808(a)(1) (20 U.S.C. 1161h(a)(1)), by striking ''the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974'' and inserting ''section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (commonly known as the 'Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974')'';

(4) in section 819(b)(3) (20 U.S.C. 1161j(b)(3)), by inserting a period after ''101(a)'';

(5) in section 820 (20 U.S.C. 1161k)—

(A) in subsection (d)(5), by inserting ''the'' before ''grant'';

(B) in subsection (f)(2), by striking ''subpart'' each place the term appears and inserting ''section''; and

(C) in subsection (h), by striking ''use'' and inserting ''used'';

(6) in section 821 (20 U.S.C. 1161l)—

(A) in subsection (a)(1), by striking ''subsection (g)'' and inserting ''subsection (f)''; and

(B) in subsection (c)(1)(B), by striking ''within'' and inserting ''in'';

(7) in section 824(f)(3) (20 U.S.C. 1161l–3(f)(3))—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by inserting ''a'' after ''submitting''; and

(B) in subparagraph (C), by striking ''pursing'' and inserting ''pursuing'';

(8) in section 825(a) (20 U.S.C. 1161l-4(a)), by striking ''the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974'' and inserting ''commonly known as the 'Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974' '';

(9) in section 826(3) (20 U.S.C. 1161l-5(3)), by striking ''the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974'' and inserting ''commonly known as the 'Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974' '';

(10) in section 830(a)(1)(B) (20 U.S.C. 1161m(a)(1)(B)), by striking ''of for'' and inserting ''of'';

(11) in section 833(e)(1) (20 U.S.C. 1161n–2(e)(1))—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''because of'' and inserting ''based on''; and

(B) in subparagraph (D), by striking ''section'' and inserting ''part'';

(12) in section 841(c)(1) (20 U.S.C. 1161o(c)(1)), by striking ''486A(d)'' and inserting ''486A(b)(1)'';

(13) in section 851(j) (20 U.S.C. 1161p(j)), by inserting ''to be appropriated'' after ''authorized''; and

(14) in section 894(b)(2) (20 U.S.C. 1161y(b)(2)), by striking ''the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974'' and inserting ''commonly known as the 'Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974' '''.

SEC. 802. AMENDMENTS TO OTHER HIGHER EDUCATION ACTS.

(a) HIGHER EDUCATION AMENDMENTS OF 1998.—Section 841(c) of the Higher Education Amendments of 1998 (20 U.S.C. 1153(c)) is amended by inserting ''this section'' after ''to carry out''.

(b) EDUCATION OF THE DEAF ACT OF 1986.—Section 203(b)(2) of the Education of the Deaf

Act of 1986 (20 U.S.C. 4353(b)(2)) is amended by striking ''and subsections (b) and (c) of section 209.'' and inserting ''and subsections (a), (b), and (c) of section 209.''.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days during which Members may revise and extend and insert extraneous material on H.R. 1777 into the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise today in support of H.R. 1777, a bill to make technical corrections to the Higher Education Act.

Last year we enacted the first reauthorization of the Higher Education Act in 10 years. As the administration has moved swiftly to implement the new law, embarking on a new round of negotiated rulemaking, we have identified areas of the law needing technical corrections or clarifications that require our action today.

While many of the provisions of this bill make minor corrections, there are several amendments included in H.R. 1777 that are of particular importance because of the profound impact that they will have on students and families.

□ 1630

I would like to highlight three areas that deserve special attention, Mr. Speaker.

First, H.R. 1777 will head off a looming logjam in the PLUS Loan Program for parents. The College Cost Reduction and Access Act included a program to pilot using an auction mechanism for setting the rate of return for lenders in the PLUS Loan Program for parents. The auction is scheduled to go into effect this year. Given our fiscal climate, there is concern that there will not be enough bidders to hold the auction. This means that families accepting parent loans in their financial aid packages cannot complete the applications until the lenders are identified through the auction process. H.R. 1777 will delay the auction for another year, thereby ensuring that parents face no delay in the application process for PLUS Loans due to the uncertainty surrounding bids.

H.R. 1777 also makes two important changes to ensure that veterans get the full amount of educational assistance that Congress intended. This legislation clarifies that GI Bill benefits are to be exempted for consideration in calculating eligibility for student financial aid. Additionally, it ensures that this exemption is in place for the upcoming academic year.

Finally, H.R. 1777 will ensure that the Federal Government keeps its promise to borrowers who seek to rehabilitate their student loans. In the Higher Education Act, Congress provided an avenue for borrowers who have defaulted on their student loans to restore their credit and to rehabilitate their defaulted loans.

After nine on-time payments, a borrower in default may rehabilitate the loan and may clean up his credit rating. This policy is a win-win. It helps borrowers establish regular payment histories, and it restores their credit while helping the Federal Government collect unpaid student loans.

Guaranty agencies, such as the Texas Guaranty Student Loan Corporation in my own home State of Texas, have been working diligently with defaulted borrowers to help them restore their credit and to return their loans to good standing. Unfortunately, the last step in the rehabilitation process occurs when the guaranty agency sells the rehabilitated loan to a lender. Because of our financial crisis, there are no buyers for these loans. This means that, despite doing everything that was required of them, borrowers cannot get the benefit of rehabilitating their loans.

This legislation will fix that problem by allowing guaranty agencies to assign or to sell loans that meet the rehabilitation requirements to the Department of Education. This bill also ensures that the record of default is removed from the borrower's credit rating.

According to the Department of Education, without this change this year, approximately 160,000 borrowers will be denied the rehabilitation benefits that they have earned. Last month alone, Texas estimates that over 4,500 borrowers met the rehabilitation requirements but could not complete the process because of the lack of a lender. Today, 19 of the 35 guaranty agencies report having no lender willing or able to buy rehabilitation loans. These include our largest agencies that serve Texas, that serve California, New York, Florida, Illinois, and many other States.

We made a commitment to these borrowers, telling them that, if they stepped up and made the on-time payments, the Federal Government would help them restore their credit. We must keep that commitment by passing H.R. 1777.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank our committee chairman, Representative GEORGE MILLER, and our good friend and colleague, Ranking Member BUCK MCKEON, along with our ranking member on the subcommittee, my friend and colleague, Representative BRETT GUTHRIE of Kentucky, for expediting this legislation and for helping us make these needed corrections in a bipartisan manner. I urge all of my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on H.R. 1777.

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

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this legislation, and I yield to the gentleman from California as much time as he may consume.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this legislation, and I thank Ranking Member GUTHRIE for yielding the time.

Last August, President Bush signed into law the first comprehensive renewal in a decade of the Federal higher education programs. That legislation was a product of years of effort by both Republicans and Democrats. It was and is a good product, but as the implementation of the law has gone forward, it has become clear that minor technical changes are needed to ensure a smooth transition process. We are making those changes today. As we address these minor changes, we also need to act quickly to correct two major challenges in the Federal student loan programs.

The first challenge is a byproduct of the global credit crisis. Student loan borrowers, like many Americans in this struggling economy, can sometimes fall behind on their bills. Before they fall behind, the Higher Education Act helps borrowers through loan deferments, forbearances and income-contingent or income-based repayment. For those borrowers who have defaulted, it provides a process for loan rehabilitation. Student loan borrowers who have defaulted can rebuild their credit and can get their loans back in good standing by making nine on-time payments. At the end of the process, the loan is sold to a lender, and a borrower's credit is wiped clean. Unfortunately, the global credit crunch has prevented many student loan lenders from being able to repurchase these rehabilitated loans, and when these loans are not purchased, the borrower's credit is not restored.

With this legislation, we are incorporating rehabilitated loans into the emergency student loan liquidity measures enacted last year. It is a simple fix that will get credit flowing and that will help borrowers who are doing their best to get their credit back in good standing and make good on the loans they owe. These borrowers have done the right thing by getting themselves back on track. They should not be denied an opportunity to clean up their credit simply because of the current economic situation.

The second change we are making is just as urgent, and truth be told, it is one that could have been avoided. I am speaking not of a byproduct of a short-circuited credit market but, rather, of the inevitable product of shortsighted policy. Two-and-half years ago, the majority wrung billions from the Federal student loan program in order to make good on a campaign promise of higher Pell Grant funding and of lower student loan interest rates. These were laudable goals, to be sure, but those of us who have been here for a long time

know that a good sound bite does not always make for good policy. Such is the case here.

In order to pay for these particular campaign promises, at least temporarily, for parents of college students, the majority replaced a functioning lending system with an untested, highly controversial auction scheme. At the time, we warned that an auction would undercut loan accessibility for parents. We warned that the U.S. Department of Education was ill-equipped to implement such a complex and convoluted system. We warned that lenders were unlikely to participate in such a system and that, if they did, only a few were likely to bid, giving them near-monopoly control of the market. I wish it were not the case, but unfortunately, our worst predictions are coming true.

Several large lenders are choosing not to participate in this troubled initiative. The National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators has weighed in with serious concerns. Financial aid administrators will soon be assembling financial aid packages for the coming academic year, and NASFAA warns that current economic conditions could cause the pilot program to harm parent borrowers.

If the Department were to move forward, the few willing participants would be a virtual monopoly, and with so few participants, they may not be able to handle all of the loan volume necessary to ensure that all parents who are eligible for loans actually receive them. We cannot allow this to happen, so we are postponing the auction for 1 year in order to ensure that parents will not fall victim to the shortsighted policy that was enacted just 2½ years ago.

I support this legislation because the changes are necessary, but I hope this will serve as a lesson in going forward. Undercutting a successful, longstanding student loan program in order to achieve political goals was not a good idea in 2006, and it is not a good idea today.

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the gentleman from Kentucky if he has any further speakers.

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I do not have any further speakers.

Mr. HINOJOSA. In that case, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I support this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to do the same. We have worked with the majority to address pressing matters that impact students and families. This bill will ensure the smooth implementation of the bipartisan higher education reforms enacted last year. It will help student loan borrowers who have fallen behind to rebuild their damaged credit, and it will postpone a student loan auction that, whether or not it was a good idea 2½ years ago, simply does not make sense in the current economic climate.

I thank the majority for working with us. I have particularly enjoyed working with my colleague, Mr. HINOJOSA from Texas, and I appreciate him for working on these important matters and timely changes. I urge my colleagues to join me in voting ''yes.''

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1777.

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.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 42 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 1845

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. ROSS) at 6 o'clock and 45 minutes p.m.

RAISING A QUESTION OF THE PRIVILEGES OF THE HOUSE

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to a question of the privileges of the House and offer the resolution previously noticed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the resolution.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 295

Whereas, The Hill reported that a prominent lobbying firm specializing in obtaining defense earmarks for its clients, the subject of a ''federal investigation into potentially corrupt political contributions,'' has given $3.4 million in political donations to no less than 284 members of Congress.

Whereas, multiple press reports have noted questions related to campaign contributions made by or on behalf of the firm; including questions related to ''straw man'' contributions, the reimbursement of employees for political giving, pressure on clients to give, a suspicious pattern of giving, and the timing of donations relative to legislative activity.

Whereas, Roll Call has taken note of the timing of contributions from employees the firm and its clients when it reported that they ''have provided thousands of dollars worth of campaign contributions to key Members in close proximity to legislative activity, such as the deadline for earmark request letters or passage of a spending bill.''

Whereas, CQ Today specifically noted a Member getting ''$25,000 in campaign contribution money from [the founder of the firm] and his relatives right after his subcommittee approved its spending bill in 2005.''

Whereas, the Associated Press noted that Members received campaign contributions from employees of the firm ''around the time they requested'' earmarks for companies represented by the firm.

Whereas, the Associated Press highlighted the ''huge amounts of political donations'' from the firm and its clients to select members and noted that ''those political donations have followed a distinct pattern: The giving is especially heavy in March, which is prime time for submitting written earmark requests.''

Whereas, clients of the firm received at least three hundred million dollars worth of earmarks in fiscal year 2009 appropriations legislation, including several that were approved even after news of the FBI raid of the firm's offices and Justice Department investigation into the firm was well known.

Whereas, the Associated Press reported that ''the FBI says the investigation is continuing, highlighting the close ties between special-interest spending provisions known as earmarks and the raising of campaign cash.''

Whereas, the persistent media attention focused on questions about the nature and timing of campaign contributions related to the firm, as well as reports of the Justice Department conducting research on earmarks and campaign contributions, raise concern about the integrity of Congressional proceedings and the dignity of the institution.

Now, therefore, be it: *Resolved*, that (a) the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, or a subcommittee of the committee designated by the committee and its members appointed by the chairman and ranking member, shall immediately begin an investigation into the relationship between the source and timing of past campaign contributions to Members of the House related to the raided firm and earmark requests made by Members of the House on behalf of clients of the raided firm.

(b) The Committee on Standards of Official Conduct shall submit a report of its findings to the House of Representatives within 2 months after the date of adoption of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The resolution qualifies.

MOTION TO TABLE

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to lay the resolution on the table.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to table.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on laying House Resolution 295 on the table will be followed by 5-minute votes on suspending the rules and passing H.R. 20 and H.R. 479.

Remaining postponed votes will be taken later in the week.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 210, nays 173, answered ''present'' 13, not voting 35, as follows:

[Roll No. 163]

YEAS—210

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Adler (NJ)
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Baird
Baldwin
Barrow
Becerra
Berman
Berry
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson (IN)
Childers
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly (VA)
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Dahlkemper
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (TN)
DeFazio
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Driehaus
Edwards (MD)
Edwards (TX)
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Fudge
Gonzalez
Gordon (TN)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hare
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Heinrich
Higgins
Hinojosa
Hirono
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick (MI)
Kilroy
Kissell
Klein (FL)
Kratovil
Kucinich
Langevin
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Lowey
Luján
Lynch
Maffei
Markey (CO)
Markey (MA)
Marshall
Massa
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McDermott
McGovern
McMahon
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Michaud
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Murtha
Nadler (NY)
Napolitano
Nye
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pastor (AZ)
Payne
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree (ME)
Polis (CO)
Price (NC)
Rahall
Rangel
Richardson
Rodriguez
Rohrabacher
Ross
Rothman (NJ)
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schauer
Schiff
Schrader
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sestak
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shuler
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Snyder
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stupak
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Towns
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Wexler
Wilson (OH)
Woolsey
Wu
Yarmuth
Young (AK)

NAYS—173

Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Austria
Bachmann
Bachus
Bartlett
Barton (TX)
Bean
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Boccieri
Boehner
Bono Mack
Boozman
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Bright
Broun (GA)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Calvert
Camp
Cantor
Cao
Capito
Cassidy
Castle
Chaffetz
Coble
Coffman (CO)
Cole
Crenshaw
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Deal (GA)
Diaz-Balart, M.
Donnelly (IN)
Dreier
Duncan
Ehlers
Ellsworth
Emerson
Fallin
Flake
Fleming
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Giffords
Gingrey (GA)
Goodlatte
Granger
Graves
Guthrie
Hall (TX)
Halvorson
Harper
Herger
Herseth Sandlin
Hill
Himes
Hodes
Hunter
Inglis
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson, Sam
Jordan (OH)
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kirk
Kirkpatrick (AZ)
Kosmas
Lamborn
Lance
LaTourette
Latta
Lee (NY)
Lewis (CA)
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Lungren, Daniel E.
Mack
Manzullo
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McCotter
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Minnick
Mitchell
Neugebauer
Nunes
Olson
Paul
Paulsen
Pence
Perriello
Petri
Pitts
Platts
Posey
Price (GA)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rehberg
Reichert
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Scalise
Schmidt
Schock
Sensenbrenner
Shadegg
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Souder
Stearns
Sullivan
Teague
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Turner
Upton
Visclosky
Walz
Wamp
Whitfield
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Young (FL)

ANSWERED ''PRESENT''—13

Bonner
Castor (FL)
Chandler
Conaway
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Kline (MN)
Latham
Lofgren, Zoe
Myrick
Poe (TX)
Walden
Welch

NOT VOTING—35

Barrett (SC)
Berkley
Blunt
Brown, Corrine
Butterfield
Campbell
Carter
DeGette
Frank (MA)
Gohmert
Grayson
Hastings (WA)
Heller
Hensarling
Hinchey
Hoekstra
Johnson (IL)
Kingston
Larsen (WA)
Linder
Maloney
Marchant
McCollum
Melancon
Miller, Gary
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Neal (MA)
Pascrell
Pomeroy
Reyes
Ryan (OH)
Sessions
Speier
Westmoreland

□ 1911

Mr. COOPER changed his vote from ''nay'' to yea.''

So the motion to table was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MELANIE BLOCKER STOKES MOM'S OPPORTUNITY TO ACCESS HEALTH, EDUCATION, RESEARCH, AND SUPPORT FOR POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 20, 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 New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 20, as amended.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 391, nays 8, not voting 32, as follows:

[Roll No. 164]

YEAS—391

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Adler (NJ)
Akin
Alexander
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Austria
Baca
Bachmann
Bachus
Baird
Baldwin
Barrow
Bartlett
Barton (TX)
Bean
Becerra
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Boccieri
Boehner
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Bright
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Calvert
Camp
Cantor
Cao
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cassidy
Castle
Castor (FL)
Chaffetz
Chandler
Childers
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Coffman (CO)
Cohen
Cole
Conaway
Connolly (VA)
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Dahlkemper
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis (TN)
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly (IN)
Doyle
Dreier
Driehaus
Duncan
Edwards (MD)
Edwards (TX)
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emerson
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Fallin
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Fleming
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Giffords
Gingrey (GA)
Gonzalez
Goodlatte
Gordon (TN)
Granger
Graves
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grijalva
Guthrie
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hall (TX)
Halvorson
Hare
Harman
Harper
Hastings (FL)
Heinrich
Herger
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Himes
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hodes
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hoyer
Hunter
Inglis
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jenkins
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan (OH)
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick (MI)
Kilroy
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kirk
Kirkpatrick (AZ)
Kissell
Klein (FL)
Kline (MN)
Kosmas
Kratovil
Kucinich
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Latta
Lee (CA)
Lee (NY)
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Luján
Lummis
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Maffei
Manzullo
Markey (CO)
Markey (MA)
Marshall
Massa
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul
McCollum
McCotter
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McMahon
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Minnick
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Murtha
Myrick
Nadler (NY)
Napolitano
Neugebauer
Nunes
Nye
Oberstar
Obey
Olson
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pastor (AZ)
Paulsen
Payne
Pence
Perlmutter
Perriello
Peters
Peterson
Petri
Pingree (ME)
Pitts
Platts
Polis (CO)

Posey
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Rangel
Rehberg
Reichert
Richardson
Rodriguez
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothman (NJ)
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schauer
Schiff
Schmidt
Schock
Schrader
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sestak
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuler
Shuster
Simpson
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Souder
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stearns
Stupak
Sullivan
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Teague
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Towns
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walden
Walz
Wamp
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch
Wexler
Whitfield
Wilson (OH)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Yarmuth
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—8

Broun (GA)
Culberson
Flake
McClintock
Paul
Poe (TX)
Sensenbrenner
Shadegg

NOT VOTING—32

Barrett (SC)
Berkley
Blunt
Brown, Corrine
Butterfield
Campbell
Carter
DeGette
Gohmert
Grayson
Hastings (WA)
Heller
Hensarling
Hinchey
Hoekstra
Johnson (IL)
Kingston
Larsen (WA)
Linder
Maloney
Marchant
Melancon
Miller, Gary
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Neal (MA)
Pascrell
Pomeroy
Reyes
Sessions
Speier
Westmoreland

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. TITUS) (during the vote). Members are advised that there are less than 2 minutes remaining in this vote.

□ 1920

Mr. CULBERSON changed his vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

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.

WAKEFIELD ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 479, 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 New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 479, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 390, nays 6, not voting 35, as follows:

[Roll No. 165]

YEAS—390

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Adler (NJ)
Akin
Alexander
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Austria
Baca
Bachmann
Bachus
Baird
Baldwin
Barrow
Bartlett
Barton (TX)
Bean
Becerra
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Boccieri
Boehner
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Bright
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Calvert
Camp
Cantor
Cao
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cassidy
Castle
Castor (FL)
Chaffetz
Childers
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Coffman (CO)
Cohen
Cole
Conaway
Connolly (VA)
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Dahlkemper
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis (TN)
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly (IN)
Doyle
Dreier
Driehaus
Duncan
Edwards (MD)
Edwards (TX)
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emerson
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Fallin
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Fleming
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Giffords
Gingrey (GA)
Gonzalez
Goodlatte
Granger
Graves
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Guthrie
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hall (TX)
Halvorson
Hare
Harman
Harper
Hastings (FL)
Heinrich
Herger
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Himes
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hodes
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hoyer
Hunter
Inglis
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jenkins
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan (OH)
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick (MI)
Kilroy
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kirk
Kirkpatrick (AZ)
Kissell
Klein (FL)
Kline (MN)
Kosmas
Kratovil
Kucinich
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Latta
Lee (CA)
Lee (NY)
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Luján
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Maffei
Manzullo
Markey (CO)
Markey (MA)
Marshall
Massa
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul
McCollum
McCotter
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McMahon
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Minnick
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Murtha
Myrick
Nadler (NY)
Napolitano
Neugebauer
Nunes
Nye
Oberstar
Obey
Olson
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pastor (AZ)
Paulsen
Payne
Pence
Perlmutter
Perriello
Peters
Peterson
Petri
Pingree (ME)
Pitts
Platts
Poe (TX)
Polis (CO)
Posey
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Rangel
Rehberg
Reichert
Richardson
Rodriguez
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothman (NJ)
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schauer
Schiff
Schmidt
Schock
Schrader
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sestak
Shadegg
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuler
Shuster
Simpson
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Souder
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stearns
Stupak
Sullivan
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Teague
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Towns
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walden
Walz
Wamp
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch
Wexler
Whitfield
Wilson (OH)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Yarmuth
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—6

Broun (GA)
Flake
Lummis
McClintock
Paul
Sensenbrenner

NOT VOTING—35

Barrett (SC)
Berkley
Blunt
Brown, Corrine
Butterfield
Campbell
Carter
Chandler
DeGette
Gohmert
Gordon (TN)
Grayson
Grijalva
Hastings (WA)
Heller
Hensarling
Hinchey
Hoekstra
Johnson (IL)
Kingston
Larsen (WA)
Linder
Maloney
Marchant
Melancon
Miller, Gary
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Neal (MA)
Pascrell
Pomeroy
Reyes
Sessions
Speier
Westmoreland

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining in this vote.

□ 1928

Mr. ROHRABACHER changed his vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

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.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H. RES. 111

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to have my name removed as a cosponsor of H. Res. 111.

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

There was no objection.

□ 1930

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO OFFER RESOLUTION RAISING A QUESTION OF THE PRIVILEGES OF THE HOUSE

Mr. FLAKE. Madam Speaker, pursuant to clause 2(a)(1) of rule IX, I hereby

notify the House of my intention to offer a resolution as a question of the privileges of the House.

The form of my resolution is as follows:

Whereas, The Hill reported that a prominent lobbying firm, founded by Mr. Paul Magliocchetti and the subject of a ''federal investigation into potentially corrupt political contributions,'' has given $3.4 million in political donations to no less than 284 members of Congress.

Whereas, the New York Times noted that Mr. Magliocchetti ''set up shop at the busy intersection between political fund-raising and taxpayer spending, directing tens of millions of dollars in contributions to lawmakers while steering hundreds of millions of dollars in earmark contracts back to his clients.''

Whereas, a guest columnist recently highlighted in Roll Call that ''. . . what [the firm's] example reveals most clearly is the potentially corrupting link between campaign contributions and earmarks. Even the most ardent earmarkers should want to avoid the appearance of such a pay-to-play system.''

Whereas, multiple press reports have noted questions related to campaign contributions made by or on behalf of the firm; including questions related to ''straw man'' contributions, the reimbursement of employees for political giving, pressure on clients to give, a suspicious pattern of giving, and the timing of donations relative to legislative activity.

Whereas, Roll Call has taken note of the timing of contributions from employees of the firm and its clients when it reported that they ''have provided thousands of dollars worth of campaign contributions to key Members in close proximity to legislative activity, such as the deadline for earmark request letters or passage of a spending bill.''

Whereas, the Associated Press highlighted the ''huge amounts of political donations'' from the firm and its clients to select members and noted that ''those political donations have followed a distinct pattern: The giving is especially heavy in March, which is prime time for submitting written earmark requests.''

Whereas, clients of the firm received at least $300 million worth of earmarks in fiscal year 2009 appropriations legislation, including several that were approved even after news of the FBI raid of the firm's offices and Justice Department investigation into the firm was well known.

Whereas, the Associated Press reported that ''the FBI says the investigation is continuing, highlighting the close ties between special-interest spending provisions known as earmarks and the raising of campaign cash.''

Whereas, the persistent media attention focused on questions about the nature and timing of campaign contributions related to the firm, as well as reports of the Justice Department conducting research on earmarks and campaign contributions, raise concern about the integrity of Congressional proceedings and the dignity of the institution.

Now, therefore, be it: *Resolved*, that (a) the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, or a subcommittee of the committee designated by the committee and its members appointed by the chairman and ranking member, shall immediately begin an investigation into the relationship between the source and timing of past campaign contributions to Members of the House related to the raided firm and earmark requests made by Members of the House on behalf of clients of the raided firm.

(b) The Committee on Standards of Official Conduct shall submit a report of its findings to the House of Representatives within 2 months after the date of adoption of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under rule IX, a resolution offered from the floor by a Member other than the majority leader or the minority leader as a question of the privileges of the House has immediate precedence only at a time designated by the Chair within 2 legislative days after the resolution is properly noticed.

Pending that designation, the form of the resolution noticed by the gentleman from Arizona will appear in the RECORD at this point.

The Chair will not at this point determine whether the resolution constitutes a question of privilege. That determination will be made at the time designated for consideration of the resolution.

HONORING JOHN HOPE FRANKLIN, A WARRIOR, A HERO, A STORYTELLER

(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. Madam Speaker, thank you very much for your leadership. I would like to associate myself with the 1 hour of the Congressional Black Caucus in honoring John Hope Franklin, and I want to thank the leadership of the gentlelady from Ohio and the chairwoman of the Congressional Black Caucus.

John Hope Franklin was, in essence, a storyteller that was long awaited for by the United States of America. His ''From Slavery to Freedom'' indicated the broadness of the history of African Americans in the United States. It was a singular treatise that everyone had to read to find out about themselves, about America, and about the question of race and racism. His work on the President's Race Commission was without comparison. And he was the only one, I believe, that could have taken the helm with the President's appointment, appointed by President William Jefferson Clinton.

His easy hand, his comfort level with race and racism, of where we had come from and where we were going, helped us tell the story and balanced the role and responsibility of this commission. We lost a warrior, a hero, a storyteller, one that could only be told by him, a scholar.

We thank you. And may you rest in peace.

REPUBLICAN BUDGET RESPECTS SMALL BUSINESSES

(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, our Democrat colleagues have a budget which borrows too much, spends too much, and taxes too much. The Republican budget will do the opposite. It will curb government spending, create jobs, and control debt.

Our Republican budget sends a clear message to the American people that we understand the concerns with jobs we are all facing. We will share in those challenges and take responsibility for how we spend their tax dollars. When we find ourselves in a time of fiscal crisis, we are looking for ways to cut wasteful spending, pay off debt and secure future fiscal sanity.

Republicans are offering a budget that reflects, respects and supports the small businesses of America, one that makes the tough choices and keeps more tax dollars in the pockets of American families.

The Democrat budget is the philosophy of massive borrowing and spending that threatens inflation and devaluation of Social Security.

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

NATIONALIZATION OF THE AUTO INDUSTRY

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, the nationalization of the auto industry continues. The President has announced the Federal Government is going to exercise more forced control over American car companies. The President fired the CEO of General Motors and wants more automotive restructuring the Federal way.

General Motors and Chrysler have already received billions in taxpayer bailout money and are poised to win favor with the White House for even more money.

Madam Speaker, unfortunately, General Motors and Chrysler have already failed. Why should taxpayers continue to subsidize these failures? Why? Because the almighty Federal Government forces taxpayers to pay off these special interest groups. The government ought not to pick who wins and

who loses in the business world. The free market should decide.

General Motors and Chrysler should not receive any taxpayer money and should restructure under bankruptcy like other failed businesses do. But the socialization of the American economy continues.

By the way, Madam Speaker, if you like the way the Federal Government runs other government businesses like the post office, Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, FEMA and the IRS, you will love the new federalized auto industry.

And that's just the way it is.

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY RESTS WITH THE MAJORITY

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

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, I applaud the President of the United States for making his priorities health care, education, and energy, and putting them right in his budget.

I listened to my friends on the other side of the aisle, and I think that they are in no position to lecture us about fiscal responsibility given the fact that this President inherited trillions of dollars of debt. In the last 8 years we were going way beyond our means in our budget. We were spending and spending. So give me a break about fiscal responsibility.

I think the fiscal responsibility rests with the majority here and the President, who is trying to do something, trying to make his needs the American people's needs and making his budget shape the American people's budget.

So I want to applaud the President and our majority because we want to help with education, we want to help with health care, and we want to make America energy independent. That is what we are doing. I'm glad we are not the Party of No. I'm glad we are the Party of Yes and the future.

HONORING THE WHITEFIELD ACADEMY BOYS BASKETBALL TEAM ON WINNING THE GHSA STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

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

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Madam Speaker, with the NCAA Basketball Tournament now down to the Final Four, I want to recognize a very talented group of high school student athletes from Smyrna, Georgia, near my home in Cobb County. In this year's Georgia High School Association State final, the Whitefield Academy Boys Basketball team, or the Wolf Pack, upset number one ranked Turner County 69–53 to claim the class A State title.

The game was all tied up at the half, but Whitefield opened the second half with a 16–2 run, and they never looked back. Madam Speaker, in the end it was discipline and determination that allowed Coach Tyrone Johnson and the Whitefield Academy Wolf Pack to hand Turner County their very first loss of 2009 and claim the school's second class A boys' State Championship.

Madam Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating Whitefield Academy on their State championship as well as all of the hard work that got them there.

APPOINTMENT AS MEMBER TO HIT POLICY COMMITTEE

Pursuant to section 13101 of the HITECH Act (P.L. 111–5), and the order of the House of January 6, 2009, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following member to the HIT Policy Committee for a term of 3 years:

Mr. Paul Egerman, Weston, Massachusetts

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

THE PRESIDENT IS RIGHT TO EMPHASIZE ECONOMIC AID IN AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, President Obama announced his strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan on Friday. I personally am encouraged by much of what he had to say, but I remain concerned by other parts of his approach to the problems in that region.

The President said that ''a campaign against extremism will not succeed with bullets and bombs alone'' and that a big change from the last administration's approach is absolutely necessary. And I will tell you it is a very welcome change. President Obama called for a package of assistance that will help Pakistan to build schools, roads and hospitals. He also called for a ''civilian surge'' in Afghanistan. He wants to send agricultural specialists, educators and engineers to help develop the Afghan economy.

The President said that ''these foreign assistance programs relieve the burden on our troops. It is better to help a farmer seed a crop than it is to send our troops to fight tour after tour with no transition to Afghan responsibility.''

Madam Speaker, I wholeheartedly support these economic assistance efforts. I have said for a long time that the best way to fight terrorism is to give people real hope for a better future so that they don't become terrorists in the first place.

□ 1945

I'm also heartened by the President's clarification of the roles of NATO, the U.N. and other international partners. He is asking them to help with the civilian effort, and he's asking the United Nations to bring all the nations of the region together, including Iran, to help stabilize the region.

I recently joined my colleagues, Congresswoman Barbara Lee and Congresswoman MAXINE WATERS, in sending a letter to the President asking him for such clarification because I remain concerned about other parts of the administration's approach, including the decision to send 17,000 more combat troops to Afghanistan.

Madam Speaker, history makes it clear that the Afghan people do not look kindly on foreign armies. The press is already reporting that the decision to send more troops is encouraging Taliban leaders in Afghanistan and Pakistan to unite to fight us.

I'm also concerned about the cost of sending more troops, the cost in both lives and treasure. It will require a 60 percent increase in military spending at a time when our economy right here at home is suffering so badly.

That's why, Madam Speaker, now is the time to take a deep breath. Now is the time to pause to consider whether there are other alternatives to sending our troops to Afghanistan. To help with this, the Congressional Progressive Caucus has put together a series of forums on Afghanistan and Pakistan. The purpose of these forums is to engage Members of the House in discussions about our policy options. The forums feature leading experts on Central Asia. In fact, the first forum was last week, and it examined the history and cultures of the Afghan people.

The upcoming forums will examine American strategic interests in Afghanistan and the northwest border of Pakistan, the role and goals of our military in that region, the problems that a comprehensive strategy of Afghanistan should address, our policies toward Afghanistan in the context of Pakistan, and the development of an international diplomatic strategy for the region.

I invite all Members of the House to attend these forums. They are nonpartisan. They're nonideological, and they offer different perspectives and different ideas, because now is the time to explore our choices in Central Asia and to work with the administration to develop the most effective policies. That is what the American people expect us to do, and that is what we must do in the days ahead.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF SENATE AMENDMENTS TO H.R. 1388, SERVE AMERICA ACT

Mr. POLIS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 111–67) on the resolution (H.

Res. 296) providing for consideration of the Senate amendments to the bill (H.R. 1388) to reauthorize and reform the national service laws, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

HOPE FOR ENERGY INDEPENDENCE

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

Mr. INGLIS. Madam Speaker, today I read another one of these hopeful statements. It's the hope from some folks that say we want energy independence with increased development of all of our natural resources, including renewable energy sources such as wind and solar.

What I trust my colleagues here are beginning to notice is that hope is not a strategy. And when you hear somebody, or a group of us, or outside group saying that we hope we can get to renewable energy resources, what we really need to say to them is, so how do you get there? What is the strategy? What is the strategy beyond just hope?

Well, for me, the path is laid out in sound economic principles. If you have a price signal that causes entrepreneurs and investors to see how they might get married along some point of a projection of cost, such that they could see where it is that they could take out the incumbent technology, then you have a strategy. Up until then, you just have some hope.

So, Madam Speaker, the thing that I hope we see is that, if we take the incumbent technology, in the case of transportation, which is gasoline, and start attaching its externalities to it, basically internalizing the externals and saying, okay, gasoline, bear the full weight of your cost; in other words, bear the weight of the national security risks that we're running by being dependent on a region of the world that doesn't like us very much. Bear the environmental consequences, and then let's compare to some other possibilities.

Today I had the opportunity to meet with some folks that are looking at electric vehicles. Those are fairly attractive in today's market, but not as attractive as they were at $4 a gallon. Today gas is somewhere around two. But I'm here to predict for my colleagues that we will be dealing with $4 a gallon gasoline before too much longer. Within the next couple of years, as the economy takes off, I think we can expect to be back at $4 a gallon. At that point, of course, this electric car company will be far more competitive.

So we could just wait and be jerked around, essentially, by OPEC and the problems of a constrained supply and an increasing demand, which means that the price may gyrate very rapidly. Or we can plan our way toward energy security with a solid plan that's an actual strategy rather than just a hope. And that hope, that strategy that I hope we will pursue to basically say, get something better than cap-and-trade. Cap-and-trade, by itself, is an enormous tax increase in the midst of a recession. It's also trusting Wall Street to do maybe derivatives in carbon credits when they didn't do so well with derivatives in home mortgages.

So, rather than doing that, what if we reduce taxes somewhere else, say, in payroll, and then increase taxes or, for the first time, placed a tax on carbon dioxide?

The result would be no net increase to government, no increase in taxation but, rather, a swap of taxation, moving from one source of taxes, payroll, to another, carbon dioxide. If we do that, and lay it out on a curve where entrepreneurs and investors can see the price signals that are being sent, then we can have a real strategy, one that's not based on hope, but one that's based on sound economics.

Madam Speaker, I hope that's what we get to in this debate.

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.)

INCIDENT IN THE WEST BANK INVOLVING TRISTAN ANDERSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. LEE of California. Madam Speaker, I rise to express my sympathies, first of all, for one of my constituents, Tristan Anderson of Oakland, California who lies gravely injured in a Tel Aviv hospital, and to express my concern regarding the incident that put him there.

On Friday, March 13, Mr. Tristan Anderson, an American citizen and resident of the 9th Congressional District of California, was critically injured when he was hit in the head by a tear gas canister fired by Israeli troops during a rally protesting the extension of Israel's separation barrier in the West bank village of Ni'ilin. Media accounts indicate that Israeli troops may have intentionally fired tear gas canisters at the protesters like the one that struck Mr. Anderson, who was apparently engaging in nonviolent, peaceful protest and was an innocent victim.

Clearly, something went horribly wrong in the village of Ni'ilin, and I am determined to get to the bottom of it. To this end, I have asked the State Department to report back to me on the status of any investigations into this tragic incident, and to advise me as to when the investigation will be completed, and also, that the report be made public.

The report should also document the actions that were taken to determine culpability, if any, and to take appropriate corrective actions against those responsible for Mr. Anderson's injuries. Those responsible for this tragedy, whether through negligence or intentional misconduct, must be held accountable.

Lastly, I have asked the State Department to advise me of the actions, if any, which it has taken to ensure that Mr. Anderson is provided relief for the injuries that he has sustained.

But most of all, Madam Speaker, I wish Tristan Anderson a speedy and full recovery, and for his family and loved ones to know that he is in the thoughts and prayers of the people of the 9th Congressional District of California.

CAP-AND-TAX ON AMERICANS

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, even though the alarmist global warming crowd claim humans are the evil CO_2 pollutants of earth, the jury is still out on the theory of global warming.

At a recent meeting of the International Conference on Climate Change, as reported by the Heritage Foundation, 31,072 American scientists subscribe to this statement: ''There is no convincing scientific evidence that human release of carbon dioxide, methane, or other greenhouse gases is causing or will, in the foreseeable future, cause catastrophic heating of the earth's atmosphere and disruption of the earth's climate.''

Madam Speaker, how can this be? We're all told that global warming is a fact, and don't even argue this issue.

Even though global warming is still a theory, it hasn't stopped the Federal Government from presuming it to be an absolute fact, and it now has an energy policy based upon the global warming theory. It proposes an energy consumption tax called the cap-and-trade, or the cap and tax on all Americans and all businesses that use any form of energy.

Here's the plan. Every person and business that uses energy will be taxed for the use of that energy. For example, if a homeowner turns on the lights in their home, they will be taxed for the use of the electricity in that house.

If a person wants hot water in their house and they turn on the hot water, coming from the hot water heater that's usually heated by natural gas, they'll be taxed for that use of that hot water because they're using the energy of natural gas.

If you turn on the furnace in the winter in the Northeast, you'll be taxed because you're using home heating oil. All of these taxes are called the cap-and-trade, or cap-and-tax, as I call them.

What this means is that it will increase the taxes of individual homeowners in this country, about 50 percent a year. And of course, it will raise

taxes on businesses. Businesses, as they normally do, will send that tax on down to the consumer, and the consumer will have to pay for that tax.

How much are we talking about? Individuals will have to pay an additional $1,800 a year for this new energy tax, this new cap-and-tax that will be placed on Americans.

Madam Speaker, Americans don't need or want any more taxes for any reason. Supposedly, this money's going to be used to subsidize green energy products. Now we're learning that so-called renewable energy may be more expensive than the use of nuclear power and fossil energy.

Madam Speaker, remember how we were all told that ethanol was going to save us all; how it's not going to pollute like crude oil; how it's going to be cheap renewable energy? Now we're learning something opposite.

We learned that it costs too much to produce ethanol without a Federal subsidy. It caused a food shortage not only in the United States but throughout the world, because we had the idea that we should burn corn for energy.

And we also learned that ethanol was, in fact, a pollutant. Now people don't talk so much about the benefits of ethanol, although the Federal Government has spent millions and millions of dollars with the ethanol program.

Madam Speaker, no question about it. We need to explore all types of energy, solar, hydrogen, wind and nuclear. But we should also use the resources we have, like clean coal and crude. We need them to provide energy for Americans.

Madam Speaker, America's the only country that doesn't use its own natural resources for its energy, and that includes the fact that we should drill offshore because that will bring jobs to America. It will keep money in America, instead of going overseas. And that lease revenue that the oil companies pay will go to the Federal Treasury. We need to do all of the above until we can move to alternative energy.

And that's just the way it is.

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

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

H.R. 1701: PTSD/TBI GUARANTEED REVIEW FOR HEROES ACT

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. Madam Speaker, almost 2 million American servicemembers have served our Nation in Iraq and Afghanistan. Unfortunately, many of these men and women are returning home with symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, PTSD, and other mental health challenges.

In April of 2008, a study by the RAND Corporation found that nearly 20 percent of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans have symptoms of PTSD or major depression. The study also found that many servicemembers do not seek treatment for psychological illnesses because they fear it will harm their careers. Of those who do seek help for PTSD or for major depression, the study found that only about half receive treatment that research has considered minimally adequate for their illnesses. If our government and the military fail to address problems associated with PTSD, the situation will only grow worse in future years.

A sad reality is that, in many cases, these servicemembers self-medicate with drugs or alcohol, and they get into trouble. One marine stationed at Camp Lejeune, in my district, has unfortunately fallen victim to this problem, and he is pending involuntary administrative separation due to misconduct. The fitness reports for this lance corporal prove that he was an outstanding marine prior to his deployments—two tours in Iraq and one in Afghanistan.

His medical board report states, ''His service in the Marine Corps caused his PTSD and, indirectly, his incidents/legal problems. The Marine Corps' failure to treat him in the past and treat him appropriately . . . has done nothing but worsen the problem.'' That is a quote from the medical review board.

Madam Speaker, it will be difficult for this marine to succeed in life if he is administratively separated from service. One, he will not be eligible for TRICARE benefits. Two, he will have difficulties obtaining a job. Thirdly, it is unlikely that a university will accept him as a student. This is a story of one marine, but this is not an isolated problem.

As part of addressing this problem associated with PTSD, I have introduced H.R. 1701, the PTSD/TBI Guaranteed Review for Heroes Act. The legislation creates a special review board at the Department of Defense level for servicemembers who were less than honorably discharged. Separated servicemembers would be permitted to seek a review of their discharge if their PTSD/TBI were not taken into consideration. The board would then have the authority to change the characterization of their discharge to ''honorable.''

For active duty servicemembers, the legislation would mandate a physical examination board before an administrative separation proceeding if the servicemember has been diagnosed with PTSD or TBI by a medical authority. If the servicemember is found unfit for duty, then the servicemember would be retired and given a disability rating. Otherwise, the separation board must consider the effects of PTSD and TBI on the servicemember's conduct.

Madam Speaker, too many times, the same men and women who left this country as good soldiers and marines return with serious wounds, both physical and mental, and their lives are not the same. The culture within our branches of Service must change to recognize that PTSD is a real concern that must be addressed.

I am grateful to have Representative GENE TAYLOR as an original cosponsor of H.R. 1701, and I hope that many of my colleagues will join us in supporting this bill and this legislation.

Madam Speaker, before I close, I ask God to please bless our men and women in uniform and their families. I ask God to please bless the wounded and their families and to bless the families who have given a child who has died for freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq, and three times, God, I ask God to please bless our men and women in uniform, and please, God, continue to bless America.

HONORING THE GALBUT FAMILY AND THE HEBREW ACADEMY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, it is with great pride that I stand here tonight in honor of Bessie, Ronalee and Russell Galbut, an institution in South Florida. I want to recognize them for their work on behalf of the Hebrew Academy of Miami Beach and for all that they have done to promote the Jewish heritage in my area of South Florida.

The Hebrew Academy of Miami Beach is among the finest institutions, both academically and in terms of philanthropy as well. It is dedicated to educating children regardless of their financial means and to instilling in them the timeless values of Judaism so that they may remain steadfast in their faith.

The Hebrew Academy and the Galbut family have been intertwined for many years. At the young age of 17, Bessie met Hymie, a 19-year-old student at Tulane. Hymie had enlisted in the Navy and would not return for 7 years.

The newly wed Galbuts then moved to Miami Beach, and immediately became active in the Jewish community in our area. They devoted their time to the Jewish Learning Center and to the Jewish Community Center, and played integral roles in the building of the mikvah in the community. Hymie checked the lighting and planted the trees and the flowers with his own hands.

Their home quickly filled with four beautiful children—Robert, David, Aib, and Russell—challenging Bessie to keep the family's roots firmly planted in the principles of the Torah. She and Hymie worked tirelessly to send their four children to the Hebrew Academy.

Years later at the Hebrew Academy, the youngest Galbut, Russell, was educated alongside a young lady named Ronalee Eisenberg. During and after

her time at the academy, Ronalee traveled the world, spending a year in Israel and earning a degree from Boston University, not realizing that what she had been looking for all of her life was right in her own backyard. Shortly after her return to Miami Beach, she married Russell Galbut.

Ronalee and Russell have continued in these time-honored family traditions by assuming roles of leadership in the Jewish community of Miami Beach and by sending their own two children, Marisa and Jenna, to the Hebrew Academy. Both have taken it upon themselves to give of the many blessings that have been bestowed upon them. They have consistently supported various charities and organizations, including the Hebrew homes, the Greater Miami Jewish Federation, the Jewish Community Center, and the Simon Wiesenthal Center.

Three generations later, the Galbut family legacy endures as children, grandchildren and great grandchildren become graduates of the Hebrew Academy. Even the greatest of success cannot compare to the joy and pride of the many fruits produced from the dedication, from the service and from the giving spirit of this loving family. The laborer is worthy of his wages, and the fortuitous life of the Galbut family acts as a testimony of the treasures that abound from a life dedicated toward giving.

The Galbut family, on behalf of all South Floridians and the United States Congress, thank you very much for your life of selfless giving.

AMERICA'S PATH TO SOCIALISM

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. Madam Speaker, my good friend Mr. POE of Texas and I are down here almost every night, talking about our concerns about the country, and tonight is no exception. I want to compliment my colleague for his learned comments. I really appreciate his being down here with me. Sometimes it gets lonely.

I think the thing that concerns me the most, which is the reason I am here tonight, is that I think America is heading toward a socialist-type government, and it really worries me because, throughout our history, we have been a free enterprise government, a free enterprise society, and we have done very, very well. This country has been the greatest economic country in the history of the world because of free enterprise, and now we see, day in and day out, a movement toward more and more government control over the private sector.

We have seen the huge bailout of AIG and of other financial institutions. Trillions of dollars are being put into these institutions along with government control, and that is not what this country is all about. These companies that are failing should go through the bankruptcy procedure, as has been the case throughout history, and because of this procedure, this legal procedure, the free enterprise system has had its ups and downs, but it has flourished year in and year out, decade in and decade out because the system works.

Now we see they are moving toward the control of the health industry. In the budget that we are going to be discussing this week, we are going to have about $680 billion as a down payment on a socialized medicine system, and that, once again, is government control over the health care of this country. Government control over, as my colleague said tonight, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac and other institutions, really has not proven to be too successful, and yet we are going to have the government taking over and socializing medicine in this country. It has not worked in Europe. It has not worked in other parts of the world. It is not going to work here. It is going to end up rationing health care, and the people who are going to be hurt the most are senior citizens in this country, who will be put at the back of the line.

So it has not worked in the private sector as far as financial institutions are concerned. It has not worked throughout the world when we have socialized medicine, and now we see that the government is moving toward control over the automobile industry. They are forcing the people out of leadership positions, like the president of General Motors. Now, maybe he should have been replaced, but we certainly do not need the government coming in and telling the private sector, the automobile industry, how to run itself. They should have gone through Chapter 11 in the first place, General Motors and Chrysler, instead of the government of this country and the administration putting $14 billion to $15 billion into those companies which were failing. If they had gone through the bankruptcy procedure, we would not be facing right now another $20 billion or $30 billion of taxpayers' money that is going to have to be put into those institutions.

So, tonight, I would just like to protest once again, one Member of Congress talking about the movement toward government control over every part of our lives. Socialism does not work. It is a repressive form of government, and it is something that is going to hurt everybody in this country, that plus the inflation that is going to be caused by these trillions of dollars that we are printing, these moneys that we are printing. It is going to hurt the future generations of this country.

I listen to Sean Hannity and I listen to Rush Limbaugh and I listen to Mr. Beck, the so-called conservative right-wing radicals. In my opinion, they are the ones who really understand the direction this country is heading.

I just hope the American people, Madam Speaker, would listen and pay attention, because I think they don't realize how quickly we are moving toward complete government control over our lives. It is something that we ought to all be concerned about. I am concerned about it, and I hope my colleagues who may be paying attention back in their offices are concerned about it as well.

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

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

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF PROFESSOR JOHN HOPE FRANKLIN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. FUDGE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Ms. FUDGE. Madam Speaker, good evening.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. FUDGE. I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to insert supplementary materials on the topic of my Special Order this evening.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

Ms. FUDGE. The Congressional Black Caucus, the CBC, is proud to anchor this hour. Currently, the CBC is chaired by the Honorable BARBARA LEE from the 9th Congressional District of California. My name is Congresswoman MARCIA FUDGE, and I represent the 11th Congressional District of Ohio.

CBC members are advocates for families nationally and internationally, and we have played a significant role as local and regional activists. We continue to work diligently to be the conscience of the Congress, but understanding that all politics are not local, we provide dedicated and focused service to the citizens and to the congressional districts we serve.

During this Special Order, we have the honor of speaking about the life and legacy of a great man—Professor John Hope Franklin. It is with sadness and pride that the CBC members are here this evening to commemorate the passing of Professor Franklin, who was a great historian and a true conscience of the Nation.

During this month of March, we are also privileged to celebrate Women's History Month. Members of the CBC will join with me on the floor and will offer their reflections on women trailblazers and the impact women have had on this Nation as a whole.

Madam Speaker, I would now like to yield to our Chair, the Honorable BARBARA LEE.

Ms. LEE of California. First, let me, as always, thank Congresswoman MARCIA FUDGE and also Congresswoman DONNA CHRISTENSEN and their staffs for working with the staff of the Congressional Black Caucus to organize the Congressional Black Caucus Special Orders every Monday night.

□ 2015

You provide such a valuable service not only to members of the Congressional Black Caucus but to the entire Nation as a whole. Each Monday, when we're in session, we take our positions very seriously here and Congresswoman FUDGE is here each and every Monday night to make sure that we have the opportunity to express our views on issues before this body or issues that we believe ought to be brought before this body.

Tonight, of course, as Congresswoman FUDGE indicated, we're here to honor a great American who died last week but whose contributions to our Nation will live on for many, many years to come. When noted historian Dr. John Hope Franklin died, our Nation lost a mighty scholar and a soldier for justice. We mourn the loss and we celebrate his life as we remember Dr. Franklin's trailblazing achievements in a variety of fields.

A native of Oklahoma, Dr. Franklin received his undergraduate degree from one of the finest black colleges and universities, Fisk University, in Nashville, Tennessee. He received his doctorate in history from Harvard University. His distinguished academic career we could talk about all night, actually, but let me talk a little bit about part of his career.

He actually began his career at Howard University, and then he would go on to teach at Fisk University at St. Augustine's College and at North Carolina Central University. In 1956, Dr. Franklin became chairman of the department of history at Brooklyn College, the first African American to lead a department at a predominately white institution.

Eight years later in 1964, Dr. Franklin joined the faculty of the University of Chicago serving as Chair of the department of history from 1967 to 1970. At Chicago, he was the John Matthews Manly Distinguished Service Professor from 1969 to 1982 when he became professor emeritus.

Dr. Franklin is perhaps best known for his prolific writings including ''The Emancipation Proclamation,'' ''The Militant South,'' ''The Free Negro in North Carolina,'' ''Reconstruction After the Civil War,'' and ''A Southern Odyssey: Travelers in the Antebellum North.'' For many African Americans and I, our first introduction to black history was through Dr. Franklin's book ''From Slavery to Freedom.'' In its pages we found—and some of us for the very first time—found an account of American history that really did affirm the dignity of black people and nobility of our struggle.

Dr. Franklin was not only a noted historian but also living history himself. His accomplishments are as many as they are great. He was active in numerous professor and educational organizations including serving as President of the following organizations: The American Studies Association, the Southern Historical Association, The United Chapters of Phi Beta Kappa and the American Historical Association.

One of Dr. Franklin's earliest and most important contributions was as a member of the team of scholars who worked with Thurgood Marshall to win the landmark school desegregation case Brown v. Board of Education.

Madam Speaker, also just let me just say as I close, Dr. Franklin served recently as Chair of President Clinton's Race Initiative Advisory Board. And while we have made many, many strides and many accomplishments, as we witness the great historic election of President Obama, we still know, and Dr. Franklin reminded us, that race is still a factor. And he brought his intelligence, his wisdom, and his commitment to make America the place that we all know it should be as a result of his work on President Clinton's Race Initiative Advisory Board.

So as we mourn his passing and we really—the loss of his wise counsel is something that we will greatly miss, but we will forever thank him and be grateful. And really, we do owe him a debt of gratitude for his lasting contributions which give us really a richer understanding of who we are as a people as African Americans, but also who we are as Americans and our journey as a people.

Thank you, Congresswoman FUDGE, for, once again, leading the Special Order.

Ms. FUDGE. I would again like to thank the gentlewoman from California for her leadership and for her vision for the Congressional Black Caucus.

Madam Speaker, I would now like to yield to the gentleman from North Carolina, Mr. WATT.

Mr. WATT. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the gentlelady from Ohio for organizing this Special Order for an extremely special person who actually spent most of his time in North Carolina even though he was born in Ohio. So we all claim ownership of John Hope Franklin.

I will be brief because we have other colleagues here who are anxious to express themselves about their memories and our memories of John Hope Franklin. And because the Congressional Black Caucus will be introducing a resolution, which I hope to have the opportunity to speak on, and because in conjunction with the Senator from North Carolina, Senator HAGAN, who has dropped a resolution on the Senate side, and Representative DAVID PRICE on the House side, we have dropped or are in the process of introducing another resolution to honor John Hope Franklin.

It, perhaps, would be best stated in this way, my reaction, when on Friday of last week, a proposed wording of a resolution that was planning to be introduced by my colleague, Representative DAVID PRICE of North Carolina, honoring the life of John Hope Franklin, was forwarded to me in North Carolina for my review and approval. And I wrote back this to the person who sent it to me on my staff: I said, ''No words could ever do justice to the greatness of this man.'' And that's kind of the way we all feel about John Hope Franklin.

Among all of his wonderful accomplishments and his education and mentorship of all of us in our community—not only African Americans but for the Nation as a whole—to make them understand that the history of African Americans is an integral part of the American history that we should honor and cherish.

Among all of those accolades, he was first and foremost a wonderful, wonderful friend to me and to my wife and family. And we had the wonderful pleasure of spending time with him and just sitting and talking to him on occasion. You could get mesmerized in those conversations because there was not a single thing in history that he didn't already understand all of the historical trappings and connections that went with it. But then he would break it down and give you his own personal relationships to it and how he interpreted it in today's modern times, the implications that it had, the significance for young people, the significance for older people. He would just mesmerize you with his conversation.

No words could ever do justice to the greatness of this man.

We will miss him. We honor his memory. And the thing that I am constantly consoled of is that he died at age 94 and there was not a single day that he cheated life. I mean, he used every single day of it contributing wonderful things to our history, to our humanity, to others, and to me to a friendship that I will always cherish.

I thank the gentlelady for reserving this time and for yielding me the time to express my sentiments this evening.

Ms. FUDGE. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from North Carolina for his remarks.

At this time, I would like to yield to the gentleman from Virginia, Mr. SCOTT.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Thank you.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to join in the tributes of a truly great American. Dr. John Hope Franklin lived an extraordinary life. Throughout his 94 years, he was both a trailblazer in the history of black America, but at the same time he was the preeminent chronicler of that history. His groundbreaking work as an historian had influences on the academic world and the Nation as a whole.

John Hope Franklin was born on January 2, 1915, in Oklahoma, the son of a successful attorney father and a school

teacher mother. Despite being raised by two professionals, John's life was not immune from the pervasive racism of the time. His family lost everything in the Tulsa race riot of 1921 when the black section of Tulsa was burned and over 30 people murdered after a young black man was wrongfully accused of assaulting a white woman. There has been a campaign to provide reparations to the survivors of that riot. And tomorrow in the Judiciary Committee, we will be marking up a bill on this very issue that now bears the name of John Hope Franklin.

Despite the hardships of his youth, Dr. Franklin excelled in school and after graduating valedictorian of his high school class, he attended Fisk University. At Fisk, he was a student leader and was also president of the campus chapter of both his and my fraternity, Alpha Phi Alpha. While at Fisk, he originally intended to study law, but at the suggestion of one of his professors, he took up history as his concentration. The suggestion took root and Dr. Franklin graduated from Fisk with a bachelor's degree in history in 1935. He then attended Harvard University where he received his master's in 1936 and Ph.D. in 1941.

Dr. Franklin was first and foremost a teacher. He began his academic career with instruction duties at Fisk, St. Augustine's College, and North Carolina Central College. In 1945, he was asked to write a book on black history, and that book was published in 1947. His signature book ''From Slavery to Freedom: A history of American Negroes.'' It has been reissued eight times, translated into five languages and still is considered the cornerstone work on black history used in colleges and universities today.

That same year, Dr. Franklin accepted a teaching position at Howard University. It was there that his work as a scholar and his interest in law intersected. Dr. Franklin provided research that Thurgood Marshall and the lawyers of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund used in the crafting of their legal arguments in the case of Brown v. Board of Education. He would later lend his scholarly weight to the civil rights movement, even marching with Martin Luther King in Montgomery, Alabama, in 1965.

Dr. Franklin was among the first black scholars in America to earn a prominent post at a predominantly white college or university. In 1956, he broke the color barrier at Brooklyn College where he was the first black man appointed to chair a history department at a predominately white institution. Dr. Franklin's accomplishment was tinged with the acknowledgment of how far race relations still needed to come in America because despite his credentials, he was denied service by banks and realtors in his quest to purchase a home near Brooklyn College. Real estate officials tried to redline him into African American-only neighborhoods. It took him nearly as long to find a home near his school as it did to write ''From Slavery to Freedom.''

Dr. Franklin continued his teaching career at other prestigious schools—Harvard, the University of Chicago—and finally settling at Duke University as the James B. Duke Professor Emeritus of History, the first African American to hold an endowed chair at that institution.

The title of his autobiography, ''Mirror to America,'' is a perfect description of his life and work. With deep knowledge of American history, Dr. Franklin was able to reflect on the root causes of many of the problems of the day. In 1997, there was national recognition of Dr. Franklin's knowledge of race when Bill Clinton tapped him to chair the President's Initiative on Race in America.

Dr. Franklin received over 100 honorary degrees, the NAACP's Spingarn Award and the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the Nation's highest civilian award.

□ 2030

On a personal note, Madam Speaker, my parents were long-time friends of Dr. Franklin. In fact, he participated in their wedding in 1942.

Madam Speaker, America has lost a truly great thinker, a preeminent scholar, a dear friend of liberty and freedom. I know we will continue to learn from his work for years to come. I thank you.

Ms. FUDGE. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Virginia for his remarks and would now like to yield to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE).

Mr. PAYNE. Let me thank the gentlelady from Ohio for her continued leadership in the Congressional Black Caucus' weekly address to the Nation.

As you may recall, last week we talked about the activities in Africa and problems in our Caribbean neighborhood of Haiti, the problems in Darfur and Sudan and the Congo to show that the Congressional Black Caucus is universal. We are the conscience of the Congress, not only for domestic issues but issues worldwide where people are in need.

And so this evening, Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to a great historian, and let me thank, as I mentioned before, Representative FUDGE for her consistent support for our debates and discussions on Monday, but let me just speak about Dr. John Hope Franklin.

As you've heard several of our previous speakers, he was just a great American. As a former teacher and a strong advocate for the inclusion of African American history in the school curriculum for all students, I place enormous value on the work of Dr. Franklin, the extraordinary man whose loss we mourn and whose life we celebrate.

As a professional historian, he worked tirelessly to ensure the accurate sharing of American history—of course, as we know, history was distorted, and it took Dr. Franklin to lay it out properly—with its tragedies, as well as its triumphs, at a time when there were few voices willing to listen, to explore the painful legacy of enslaved people.

In forging the inclusion of the African American experience, Dr. John Hope Franklin was instrumental in championing civil rights issues and breaking color barriers. He was engaged in the most pressing issues of the past and present.

As the Chair of President Clinton's Initiative on Race, which he served with the former Governor of New Jersey, Tom Kean, who talked about how great Dr. Franklin was and how difficult it really was to get Americans to speak about race. People just wanted to avoid it, but it's something that Dr. Franklin and Tom Kean, in their responsibilities on the commission, attempted to have an honest dialogue.

Dr. Franklin offered recommendations on ways to eliminate racial disparities. Dr. Franklin was quoted in the Emerge Magazine in 1994 as saying, ''I think knowing one's history leads one to act in a more enlightened fashion. I cannot imagine how knowing one's history would not urge one to be an activist,'' John Hope Franklin said. And he lived for nearly a century, and during that time, his scholarship inspired many activists.

The permanent impact of Dr. John Hope Franklin's public service has cultivated a richer understanding and greater appreciation of African American history. He was a man of immense strength, courage and wisdom, and his contributions to American society are invaluable.

As we celebrate the life of this great historian, we also mark this evening the important contributions of women of our Nation's rich history. As we are commemorating Women's History Month, we pause to remember the women who laid the groundwork, often at great personal risk, for rewards that future generations would reap.

We remember a great woman in history, Harriet Tubman, who secretly guided 300 enslaved people to freedom on the Underground Railroad, the network of safe houses that enslaved people followed during the Civil War era. Many records still exist which document the dangerous journeys to freedom. Interestingly, because enslaved people were forbidden to read or write, many created quilts in order to leave messages and pass down stories about their lives.

During Women's History Month, we also recall the great debt of gratitude we owe to strong women of the past like Sojourner Truth, the abolitionist and orator who risked her life to speak out against slavery. She even refused to sit in the back of a trolley car way back when she lived here in Washington, D.C. She defied the law.

In most recent times, we have seen women trailblazers in all professions.

The first African woman to join a space mission, Dr. Mae Jemison, traveled aboard the space shuttle *Endeavor* on September 12, 1992. Dr. Jemison is a chemical engineer, scientist, physician, and astronaut who worked as a Peace Corps medical officer in Sierra Leone and in Liberia in West Africa.

Of course, we now have a wonderful role model in the White House for our daughters and our granddaughters in Michelle Obama, our First Lady, who graduated cum laude from Princeton University in my State of New Jersey and went on to earn her law degree from Harvard before taking a position at a Chicago law firm.

I would also like to remember a good friend and colleague, one that our Representative has replaced, a wonderful woman whom we lost last year, Representative Stephanie Tubbs Jones, a true pioneer who was the first African American woman elected to Congress from Ohio. A former county prosecutor and a former judge in the Cleveland municipal court, she went on to break another glass ceiling when she successfully sought and won a seat on the powerful Ways and Means Committee, which no other African American woman had ever achieved before that time.

In my congressional district, we are fortunate to have many accomplished women who are working actively every day for the betterment of their communities. The executive director of the Newark Day Center, Trish Morris-Yamba of South Orange, has worked tirelessly to provide services for local seniors and to send young children to summer camps through the Greater Newark Fresh Air Fund. She has been active in many organizations, including the Newark Public Library, where she served as board president. Prior to that, she ran an organization called CHEN, which was one of the very innovative day care centers in our City of Newark.

Another dedicated community volunteer, a woman I have known and admired for many years, is Blanche Hooper, who has given generously of her time to serve as a senior citizen's commissioner and, up until 2007, served as the director of the Nellie Grier Senior Citizen Center in the south ward of Newark. In addition, she is active in Mt. Zion Baptist Church, vice chairman of the South Ward Democratic Committee, and has been the recipient of an award for living the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King.

Barbara Bell Coleman has given her considerable energy and intelligence to a number of important causes in New Jersey. Barbara Bell Coleman, during the 1990s, served as the president of the Amelior Foundation, established by Newark philanthropist Ray Chambers to support urban education and other programs. As chairman of the board of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Newark, she helped to coordinate youth development programs for thousands of young people in the City of Newark. She is the recipient of a United Way award for her outstanding work with youth.

And last week, I had the pleasure of attending a retirement ceremony for a woman who has touched many, many lives in the course of her career, Dorothy Knauer, executive director of the Community Agencies Corporation of New Jersey. Over the past three decades, this remarkable woman has devoted her life to community service, notably through programs like Project Babies, the James Street Neighborhood House, Reading is Fundamental, and Community Partners for Youth. She has been honored by New Jersey's Office of Volunteerism and was recognized as a woman of distinction by the United Nations League.

Madam Speaker, I know that my colleagues here in the United States House of Representatives join me in expressing gratitude to these women and the countless others who are contributing their time and talents each and every day towards making our communities a better place for all of us to live and to work.

Ms. FUDGE. Thank you. Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from New Jersey for his continued participation in our CBC hours, our Special Orders on Mondays, and I would now like to yield to the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN).

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. I thank Congresswoman FUDGE and thank you again for hosting this very special hour this evening.

Madam Speaker, tonight I'm pleased to join my colleagues to pay tribute to a highly esteemed American, who was both a historian and a history maker. Dr. John Hope Franklin passed away last week but left us with a rich legacy of scholarship that has strengthened generations of people, young and old, who have sought to understand race and racism, our country and our place in the world.

A prolific and important writer, as you have heard, Dr. Franklin was most well-known for his landmark 1947 publication, ''From Slavery to Freedom: A History of American Negroes,'' which has been credited with ''altering the ways in which the American narrative was studied.'' In a New York Times article yesterday, one of his colleagues pointed out that the book ''empowered a whole new field of study'' as the story of the marginalized became part of the mainstream.

The article also pointed out that Dr. Franklin and his scholarship became an important part of the movement for civil rights as he advised Thurgood Marshall and his team of lawyers during the Brown v. Board of Education case. In this, as well as his participation in the march on Selma led by the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the writer pointedly notes that he was a part of the history he so effectively brought to the forefront, and in doing so, he changed it as well.

It was one of the highest privileges afforded me since coming to Congress to meet and be able to converse with Dr. Franklin at a small dinner hosted by Congresswoman MAXINE WATERS in my early years in Congress and when he was chairing President Clinton's Initiative on Race. I was also privileged to be present as he was honored by the Library of Congress a few years ago, one of many, many deserved honors. Dr. Franklin was a historian in the tradition of the African griot, the memory keepers who captured the important moments of time that contribute to the identity and culture of a people and the advancement of a country.

In my district of the U.S. Virgin Islands, our historians, such as Dr. Gilbert Sprauve, Dr. Patricia Murphy, Dr. Gene Emanuel, Gerard Emanuel, Richard Shrader, Robert Johnson, Bill Cissell, George Tyson, Karen Thurland, Myron Jackson, Dr. Charles Turnbull, Ruth Moolenaar, Edgar Lake and many, many more work to preserve and retell our part of the Caribbean American story.

Dr. John Hope Franklin left us with a rich legacy of writings which continue to inform our journey in these United States of America. We thank him for his scholarship and his dedication to truth telling and extend our condolences to his family and friends.

Madam Speaker, as you have heard, March has also been designated as Women's History Month, and the Congressional Black Caucus is pleased to salute the role that women have played throughout our history in all endeavors, many of whom have never been recognized.

Tonight, I would like to say a few words about two women with Virgin Islands ties who made valuable contributions to the historic tapestry that is the U.S. Virgin Islands, as well as the United States, but who are little known to current generations.

The first is Rebecca Protten, whose life has been documented in the book ''Rebecca's Revival: Creating Black Christianity in the Atlantic World.'' She was born a slave, the child of European and African parentage. She lived in the 18th century and, remarkably for a black woman of that time, traveled between Europe, the Caribbean and Africa bringing the word of God to enslaved Africans and Europeans alike. She spent a lot of time in St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, gathering the enslaved to the faith and was even imprisoned for her work in assisting them in their needs.

According to historian and biographer Jon Sensbach, ''She was a preacher and a mentor, a provocateur and a profit, determined to take what she regarded as the Bible's liberating grace to people of African descent.''

□ 2045

A member of the Moravian faith, a church to which I also belong, which is credited with creating an educational

system for enslaved Africans and their children in my home district, which was then the Danish West Indies, Rebecca may have been one of the first ordained black women and, according to her biographer, she ''stood where the three currents of the 18th century black Atlantic world flowed together: The dramatic expansion of the slave trade, the Afro-Atlantic freedom struggle, and the rise of black Christianity.''

Another Virgin Islands woman, Nella Larsen Imes, is known as the ''mystery woman'' of the Harlem Renaissance and wrote two novels, Quicksand and Passing, which explored the difficulty of being a black woman in a society that marginalized both African Americans and women.

While details about her life are vague, according to biographer Thadious M. Davis, Larsen, according to her own admission, was the ''daughter of a Danish lady and a Negro from the Virgin Islands, formerly the Danish West Indies.''

Madam Speaker and colleagues, both of these women defied the odds and expressed the causes dear to their souls, despite the difficulties of being black women in harrowing times. Their lives and history are worth further exploration by students of history as we take a fresh look at Women's History Month.

I thank you again for yielding this time to me and for allowing me to share in this Special Hour this evening.

Ms. FUDGE. I'd like to again thank the gentlelady from the Virgin Islands, who has really been of such help to me as I continue to anchor these hours. I thank you again.

I would like to close, Madam Speaker, by talking about some special women to me as we celebrate Women's History Month. I would talk about those who are on the rolls of this very House, people that I have followed over the years. I'd like to begin with the Honorable Shirley Chisholm.

Shirley Chisholm was the first African American woman elected to Congress. She was the first African American and the first female to run as a major party candidate for President of the United States in 1972.

Chisholm was born in Brooklyn, New York, of immigrant parents in 1924. She earned her BA from Brooklyn College in 1946 and later earned her master's from Columbia University in elementary education in 1952.

From 1953 to 1959, she was director of the Hamilton-Madison Child Care Center. From 1959 to 1964, she was an educational consultant for the Division of Day Care.

In 1964, Chisholm ran for and was elected to the New York State legislature. In 1968, she ran as the Democratic candidate for New York's 12th District congressional seat and was elected to the House of Representatives. Defeating Republican candidate James Farmer, Chisholm became the first black woman elected to the Congress of the United States. Chisholm joined the Congressional Black Caucus in 1969 as one of its founding members.

As a freshman, Chisholm was assigned to the House Agricultural Committee. Given her urban district, she felt the placement was irrelevant to her constituents, and shocked many by asking for reassignment. She was then placed on the Veterans' Affairs Committee. Soon after, she was assigned to the Education and Labor Committee, which was her preferred committee. She was the third highest ranking member of this committee when she retired from Congress.

All those Chisholm hired for her office were women—half of them black. Chisholm said that during her New York legislative career she had faced much more discrimination because she was a woman than because she was black.

In the 1972 U.S. Presidential election, she made a bid for the Democratic Party's Presidential nomination. Chisholm's base of support was ethnically diverse and included the National Organization for Women. Chisholm said she ran for the office ''in spite of hopeless odds to demonstrate the sheer will and refusal to accept the status quo.''

Among the volunteers who were inspired by her campaign was BARBARA LEE, chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, who continued to be politically active and was elected as a Congresswoman 25 years later. Betty Friedan and Gloria Steinem attempted to run as Chisholm delegates in New York.

From 1977 to 1981, during the 95th Congress and 96th Congress, Chisholm was elected to a position in the House Democratic leadership as Secretary of the House Democratic caucus.

Throughout her tenure in Congress, Chisholm worked to improve opportunity for inner-city children. She was a vocal opponent of the draft and supported spending increases for education, health care and other social services, and reductions in military spending.

She announced her retirement from Congress in 1982. After leaving Congress, Chisholm was named as the Purington Chair at Mount Holyoke College. Today, her portrait hangs in a very prominent place—a place of honor in the U.S. Capitol.

Barbara Jordan. Barbara Jordan was a congressional Member from Texas's 18th Congressional District from 1973 to 1979. Jordan campaigned for the Texas House of Representatives in 1962 and 1964. Her persistence won her a seat in the Texas Senate in 1966, becoming the first African American State Senator since 1883, and the first black woman to serve in that body. She served until 1972.

She was the first African American female to serve as president pro tem of the Senate, and served for 1 day as acting Governor of Texas in 1972.

In 1972, she was elected to the United States House of Representatives, becoming the first black woman from a southern State to serve in the House. She received extensive support from former President Lyndon Johnson, who helped her secure a position on the House Judiciary Committee.

In 1974, she made an influential televised speech before the House Judiciary Committee supporting the impeachment of President Richard Nixon.

Jordan was mentioned as a possible running mate to Jimmy Carter in 1976, and that year she became the first African American woman to deliver the keynote address at the Democratic National Convention. Her speech in New York that summer was ranked fifth in a list of Top 100 American Speeches of the 20th Century.

Jordan retired from politics in 1979 and became an adjunct professor at the University of Texas at Austin's Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs. She again was a keynote speaker at the Democratic National Convention in 1992.

In 1995, Jordan chaired a congressional commission that advocated increased restriction of immigration and increased penalties on employers that violated U.S. immigration regulations. President Clinton endorsed the Jordan Commission's proposals.

She supported the Community Reinvestment Act of 1977, legislation that required banks to lend and make services available to underserved poor and minority communities. She supported the renewal of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and expansion of that act to cover other ethnic minorities.

Jordan was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1994. It was only one of many honors given to her, including election into both the Texas and National Women's Hall of Fame. In 1995, she was awarded the prestigious United States Military Academy's Sylvanus Thayer Award, becoming only the second female awardee.

Upon her death on January 17, 1996, Jordan lay in state at the LBJ Library on the campus of the University of Texas at Austin. She was buried in the Texas State Cemetery in Austin, and was the first black woman interred there.

The main terminal at Austin-Bergstrom International Airport is named after her, as are a middle school in Texas and a high school in Houston.

The Kaiser Family Foundation currently operates the Barbara Jordan Health Policy Scholars. This fellowship is for people of color who are college juniors, seniors, and recent graduates, and it is designed to provide them with a summer experience working in a congressional office.

Carrie Meek. She is a former U.S. Congresswoman from Florida's 17th Congressional District from 1993 to 2003. She was the first African American elected to Congress from Florida since Reconstruction. Meek was born on April 29, 1926, in Tallahassee, Florida. The granddaughter of a slave and the daughter of a former sharecropper, she spent her childhood in segregated Tallahassee.

Meek graduated from Florida A&M University in 1946. At this time, African Americans could not attend graduate school in Florida, so Meek traveled north to continue her studies, and graduated from the University of Michigan with an MS in 1948.

After graduation, Meek was hired as a teacher at Bethune Cookman College in Daytona Beach, Florida, and then at her alma mater, Florida A&M University.

Meek moved to Miami in 1961 to serve as special assistant to the vice president of Miami-Dade Community College. The school was desegregated in 1963 and Meek played a central role in pushing for integration. Throughout her years as an educator, Meek was also active in community projects in the Miami area.

Elected as Florida State representative in 1969, Meek was the first African American female elected to the Florida State Senate in 1982. As a State Senator, Meek served on the Education Appropriations Subcommittee. Her efforts in the legislature led to the construction of thousands of affordable rental housing units.

In 1992, Meek was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from Florida's 17th Congressional District. This made her the first black lawmaker elected to represent Florida in Congress since Reconstruction.

Meek has received numerous awards and honors. She is the recipient of honorary doctor of law degrees from the University of Miami, Florida A&M University, Barry University, Florida Atlantic University, and Rollins University.

Meek was a member of the powerful House Appropriations Committee, in addition to serving on the Subcommittee of Treasury, Postal Service, and General Government and the Subcommittee on VA, HUD, and independent agencies.

Stephanie Tubbs Jones. She was a U.S. congressional Member from Ohio's 11th Congressional District; the first black woman to represent Ohio in the House; former chairman of the House Ethics Committee since 2007; first black woman to serve on the House Ways and Means Committee.

Born in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1949, Tubbs Jones graduated from the city's public schools. She earned a degree in social work from Flora Stone Mather College of Case Western Reserve University in 1971. In 1974, she earned a JD from the Case Western Reserve University School of Law.

Tubbs Jones was elected a judge of the Cleveland Municipal Court in 1981, and subsequently served on the Court of Common Pleas of Cuyahoga County from 1983 to 1991. She then served as the Cuyahoga County prosecutor from 1991 until resigning early in 1999 to take her seat in Congress.

In 1998, Tubbs Jones won the Democratic nomination for the 11th District after 30-year incumbent Louis Stokes announced his retirement. She was reelected four times.

Tubbs Jones was a cochairman of the Democratic National Committee. She opposed the Iraq war, voting in 2002 against the use of military force. Despite representing a heavily unionized district, she was a strong proponent of free trade. Tubbs Jones most recently took a lead role in the fight to pass the U.S.-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement in November, 2007.

In 2004, she served as the chairwoman of the platform committee at the Democratic National Convention and as a member of the Ohio delegation. She strongly supported Senator JOHN KERRY in his campaign to become President of the United States.

On January 6, 2005, she joined U.S. Senator BARBARA BOXER in objecting to the certification of the 2004 U.S. Presidential election results for Ohio. As the sponsor, she was one of 31 House Members who refused to count the electoral votes from the Ohio House in the 2004 election.

She was selected by Speaker NANCY PELOSI as chairperson of the House Ethics Committee to watch over the standards of ethical conduct for Members of the House.

Tubbs Jones was popular in her district and was routinely reelected against nominal Republican opposition.

□ 2100

She received 83 percent of the vote in her final general election in 2006 against Republican Lindsey String. She faced no opposition in the 2008 Ohio Democratic primary.

I want to say that all the women I have recognized today are certainly people that I have a great deal of respect for. I have followed them to this House. And I want you also to know that they are all my sorority sisters.

With that, Mr. Speaker, that would close this hour of the CBC Special Order, and we hope to see you again on next Monday as we continue our work in being the conscience of the Congress.

Mr. MEEKS of New York. Mr. Speaker, Dr. John Hope Franklin was one of the most important Americans of the 20th century. He was a citizen of the world, a towering intellectual giant and scholar who ceaselessly endeavored, as one of the preeminent historians in our nation's history, to ensure that the contributions of African-Americans would not be relegated to the status of a footnote. Rather, through dedicated scholarship, he brought to light the rich contributions African-Americans have made to the United States of America.

As he once said so eloquently, "My challenge was to weave into the fabric of American history enough of the presence of blacks so that the story of the United States could be told adequately and fairly." He understood intimately that the story of the greatest country on earth, the United States of America cannot be told without telling the story of African-American history and that in fact, they are one and the same.

Dr. John Hope Franklin was considered the Dean of African American historians. John Hope Franklin was born on January 2, 1915 in Rentriesville, Oklahoma. His family relocated to Tulsa, Oklahoma shortly after the Tulsa Disaster of 1921. Franklin's mother, Mollie, was a teacher and his father, B.C. Franklin, was an attorney who handled lawsuits precipitated by the famous Tulsa Race Riot. Graduating from Booker T. Washington High School in 1931, Franklin received an A.B. degree from Fisk University in 1935 and went on to attend Harvard University, where he received his A.M. and Ph.D. degrees in history.

Franklin began his teaching career at Fisk University before moving on to St. Augustine's College. It was at North Carolina Central University, in 1945, with a $500 advance from Alfred A. Knopf, and help from his wife, Aurelia, that Franklin began writing the classic African American history text, From Slavery to Freedom. The book, co-authored by Alfred A. Moss, Jr., has been published in several different languages.

In the early 1950s, Franklin served on the NAACP Legal Defense Fund team led by Thurgood Marshall that helped develop the sociological case for Brown v. Board of Education. This led to the 1954 United States Supreme Court decision ending the legal segregation of black and white children in public schools.

Dr. Franklin taught at Howard University for nine years, before becoming the first black to chair the History Department at Brooklyn College in 1956. He was then hired by the University of Chicago in 1964 and chaired the History Department from 1967 to 1970. There, he served as the John Matthews Manly Distinguished Service Professor from 1969 to 1982, when he was made Professor Emeritus. In 1982, Franklin joined the faculty at Duke University as the James B. Duke Professor Emeritus of History.

Dr. Franklin was a member of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated, the first intercollegiate Greek-letter fraternity established for African Americans. He was an early beneficiary of the fraternity's Foundation Publishers, which provides financial support and fellowship for writers addressing African-American issues.

Active in professional organizations, Franklin served as president of the Southern Historical Society, the Organization of American Historians and the American Historical Association. He was a life-long member of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, where he served on the editorial board of the Journal of Negro History. In 1997, he was appointed by Former President Bill Clinton as chairman of the advisory board for One America, the President's Initiative on Race.

Dr. Franklin wrote hundreds of articles and at least 15 books. His recent works include Runaway Slaves: Rebels on the Plantations with Loren Schweninger, George Washington Williams: A Biography and a book about his father My Life and an Era: the Autobiography of Buck Colbert Franklin as well as his own autobiography, The Vintage Years. In 1978 Who's Who in America selected Franklin as one of eight Americans who have made significant contributions to society. Among his many other awards are the Organization of American Historians Award for Outstanding Achievement and the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor.

Dr. Franklin was the personification of academic excellence, dignity, self empowerment and faith. He was the scribe of a generation

of African-Americans who advocated, persevered, and helped to uplift our country to live up to its creed as the land of equal opportunity. On March 25, 2009, the world lost the beacon of light that was Dr. John Hope Franklin. To his family, I offer my deepest sympathies and condolences for their loss. And while our nation has lost one of its best and brightest, I know that his legacy is one that will surely endure.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to first thank my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus for organizing tonight's Special Order to recognize the contributions of Dr. John Hope Franklin. CBC Chairwoman BARBARA LEE appointed Congresswoman MARCIA FUDGE and Delegate DONNA CHRISTIAN-CHRISTENSEN to lead our CBC message team and they have done an outstanding job of helping to inform our colleagues in Congress and our constituents at home about some of the important work being done by the Congressional Black Caucus.

Throughout his long life, John Hope Franklin wrote prolifically about history—more than 60 years after its publication, one of his books, From Slavery to Freedom, is considered a core text on the African-American experience. Dr. Franklin not only wrote about history, he lived it. Franklin worked on the Brown v. Board of Education case in 1954, he joined protestors in a 1965 march led by Martin Luther King, Jr. in Montgomery, Alabama and he headed President Clinton's 1997 national advisory board on race. Franklin accumulated many honors during his long career, including the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor. He shared the John W. Kluge Award for lifetime achievement in the humanities and a similar honor from the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the American Philosophical Society, the nation's two oldest learned societies. He also was revered as a ''moral leader'' of the historical profession for his engagement in the pressing issues of the day, his unflagging advocacy of civil rights, and his gracious and courtly demeanor.

Dr. John Hope Franklin was described in the Washington Post recently as a man who ''lived what he taught.'' I don't think there are many higher accolades. For those of us who knew him and called him friend, it feels as though collectively we've lost a grandfather—a very wise and generous teacher and mentor. For those who don't know about the contributions of Dr. John Hope Franklin, I wanted to come to the floor tonight to add my voice of appreciation and to highlight some of his contributions that I believe are important.

John Hope Franklin, the grandson of a slave, was born on January 2, 1915, in Rentiesville, Oklahoma, a small black community. His parents, Buck Colbert Franklin and Mollie Parker Franklin named their son after John Hope, the President of Atlanta University. His mother was a school teacher and his father was a community leader and they recognized the importance of education.

The realities of racism hit Franklin at an early age. He said he vividly remembered the humiliating experience of being put off the train with his mother because she refused to move to a segregated compartment for a six-mile trip to the next town. He was six years old. With his parents, he lived through the Tulsa Race Riots in 1921, believed to be the single worst incident of racial violence in American history. Later, although an academic star at Booker T. Washington High School and valedictorian of his class, the state would not allow him to study at the University of Oklahoma because he was black. So instead, in 1931 Franklin enrolled at Fisk University, a historically black college in Nashville, Tennessee, intending to study law.

However, a history professor, Theodore Currier, persuaded him to change his mind and his major and he received his bachelor's degree in history in 1935. Currier, who was white, became a close friend and mentor, and when Franklin's money ran out, Currier loaned the young student $500 to attend graduate school at Harvard University, where he received his master's in 1936 and doctorate five years later. He began his career as an instructor at Fisk in 1936 and taught at St. Augustine's and North Carolina College for Negroes (now North Carolina Central University), both historically black colleges.

In 1945, Alfred A. Knopf approached him about writing a book on African-American history—originally titled From Slavery to Freedom: A History of American Negroes—and he spent 13 months writing it. Then in 1947, he took a post as professor at Howard University in Washington, DC, where, in the early 1950s, he traveled from campus to Thurgood Marshall's law office to help prepare the brief that led to the historic Brown v. Board of Education decision.

In 1956 he became chairman of the previously all-white history department at Brooklyn College. Despite his position, he had to visit 35 real estate agents before he was able to buy a house for his young family and no New York bank would lend him the money.

Later, while at the University of Chicago, he accompanied the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. on the march from Selma to Montgomery, Ala. in 1965. He spent 16 years at the University of Chicago and then joined the faculty of Duke University in 1982. He retired from Duke's history department in 1985, then spent seven years as professor of legal history at the Duke Law School. Franklin will be honored with a newly endowed chair at Duke Law School.

Franklin was a prolific writer, with books including The Emancipation Proclamation, The Militant South, The Free Negro in North Carolina, George Washington Williams: A Biography and A Southern Odyssey: Travelers in the Antebellum North. He also edited many works, including a book about his father called My Life and an Era: The Autobiography of Buck Colbert Franklin, with his son, John Whittington Franklin. Franklin completed his autobiography in 2005, which was reviewed favorably in many media outlets across the country.

He received more than 130 honorary degrees and served as president of the Phi Beta Kappa Society, the American Studies Association, the Southern Historical Association, the Organization of American Historians and the American Historical Association.

Franklin's best-known accomplishment in his later years was in 1997, when he was appointed chairman of the advisory board for President Clinton's One America: The President's Initiative on Race. The seven-member panel was charged with directing a national conversation on race relations. When he was named to the post, Franklin remarked, ''I am not sure this is an honor. It may be a burden.'' The panel did provoke criticism, both from conservatives who pressured the panel to hear from opponents of racial preference and others who said it did not make enough progress. Franklin himself acknowledged in an interview with USA Today in 1997 that the group could not solve the nation's racial problems. But Franklin said the effort was still worth it.

And, in 2001, Duke University opened the John Hope Franklin Center for Interdisciplinary and International Studies, where scholars, artists and members of the community have the opportunity to engage in public discourse on a variety of issues, including race, social equity and globalization. At the heart of its mission is the Franklin Humanities Institute, which sponsors public events and hosts the Franklin Seminar, a residential fellowship program for Duke faculty and graduate students.

In a statement to the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 2002, Franklin summed up his own career:

''More than 60 years ago, I began the task of trying to write a new kind of Southern History. It would be broad in its reach, tolerant in its judgments of Southerners, and comprehensive in its inclusion of everyone who lived in the region . . . the long, tragic history of the continuing black-white conflict compelled me to focus on the struggle that has affected the lives of the vast majority of people in the United States. . . . Looking back, I can plead guilty of having provided only a sketch of the work I laid out for myself.''

In 2007, John Hope Franklin lent his formidable effort to the issue of reparations for African Americans. Franklin returned to Oklahoma to testify in a hearing urging Congress to pass legislation that would clear the way for survivors of the Tulsa Race Riots of 1921, one of the nation's worst race riots, to sue for reparations.

For Franklin, who continued his scholarly work and public appearances well into his 90s, the work he began in the 1940s still was not finished. He was interviewed earlier this year, when President Barack Obama was inaugurated, and he noted that he never thought he would live to see the first African American President of the United States, but he was so very glad that he did.

Mr. Speaker, I am so very glad that John Hope Franklin shared his life and his work so generously. He taught us about our lost history, and in the process, he set a sterling example of living what he tried to teach that will inspire many generations to come.

Ms. FUDGE. I yield back the balance of my time.

PRESIDENT OBAMA'S BUDGET SPENDS TOO MUCH, TAXES TOO MUCH, AND BORROWS TOO MUCH

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HEINRICH). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Mrs. BACHMANN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mrs. BACHMANN. Mr. Speaker, I thank you for that privilege. Thank you for the opportunity to be able to be here this evening and the opportunity to be able to address the American people.

We had a rather extraordinary day yesterday and today with what we have

seen happening in our Nation that has really been extraordinary throughout 2009. We have seen such tremendous differences take place.

The American people are very concerned, and rightly so, about our economy. They are wondering how the economy will turn around, when it will turn around, when their own personal fortunes will change; and they have seen some extraordinary things take place, Mr. Speaker.

The American people have seen the stimulus plan that came through, which was about $1.1 trillion in spending that was passed by this body, signed by the President of the United States, an extraordinary historic level of spending that we have never seen before just to goose our economy, get it going so that we can get back to where we need to be, to get job creation. That is what people want to see. We all the want to see that. But we all held our breath.

I voted against the stimulus bill. We held our breath thinking, how in the world would we ever begin to replace all of that money that we are about to spend? Because, as everyone knows, there is no vault here in Washington, D.C., that holds $1.1 trillion that we can just send out to the American people. There is no money there. We have to go somewhere to get that money. We either have to tax it from the American people and bring it to Washington, D.C., and then spread it around so that other people can have it, or we have to borrow it from other countries like China, for instance, who, quite recently, has said to our President that China is very concerned.

The specter of the Chinese communists lecturing the United States on whether or not they feel comfortable about their investment here in the United States is really quite a first. And now, we have seen the European socialists also lecture the United States saying they are worried. As a matter of fact, we saw the Premier from Czechoslovakia say that the road the United States is taking, in his words, is the road to hell. He doesn't want to see the European socialists go down that road as well.

So as the G–20 is about to come together in London to meet and talk about this global economic meltdown, we have seen quite a specter occur. We have seen the Prime Minister from England come here to the United States, as a matter of fact, stand here in this body and address a joint session of Congress and essentially call for a global cooperation to have a global answer to this stimulus. That makes a lot of Americans quite nervous when we hear that kind of rhetoric.

Then, just recently we heard also from a leader down in the Latin American countries say that it is people with blonde hair and blue eyes that have caused this economic meltdown. Of course, that is an outrage to make a statement like that.

All of these things the American people have been seeing, and they have been thinking about them, wondering, what does all of this mean? And they saw again this body spend $1.1 trillion, and then shortly after that spend $410 billion in a budget spending bill that will just spend through this year of 2009. But in that bill, they saw almost 9,000 earmarks in that bill.

And the American people said: Now, wait a minute. I can't spend that kind of money. As a matter of fact, the American people said: Look, I saved 5 percent of my income in January, a historic high of savings for Americans.

Just a year ago or so, Americans had a negative savings rate of .1 percent. Now, Americans have been doing just the reverse. They have been doing what most normal people do when they are in an economic situation of fear. They decide to pull back on their spending, they pull in, and they say, I had better think twice before I buy that fancy cup of coffee. I had better think twice before I decide to plunk down money and buy a new car. They think twice about what they are going to do about changing their home environment and their situation, because they are worried. They are worried about whether they will have a job next week or next month or next year.

So it is very difficult right now, Mr. Speaker, for the American people to make financial commitments when they look at the level of spending that is going on around them. So what are they doing? They are saving.

Just this last month we saw that the American people in the month of February were saving at a rate of 4.5 percent. That is a good thing. I think it is a good thing the American people are showing the example for the United States Congress and for the President to say, this is what we need to do.

Instead of spending money we don't have on a personal level, on a Federal level, on a State level, on a local level, the American people are living through their own lifestyles and their own choices what they wish their government would replicate, and that is this: Start pulling back on the spending.

And what has this government done? What has the Obama presidency done, Mr. Speaker? What has this body done, Mr. Speaker, the House and the Senate? We have done just the opposite of what the American people are doing. The Democrat-controlled Congress and the President have made an unprecedented decision to spend money hand over fist, $1.1 trillion on stimulus spending money, $410 billion on budget spending for the rest of the year, along with all of the other money that has been going out the door.

Now, this week we have the President asking the House of Representatives, led by Speaker NANCY PELOSI, to spend, get this, $4 trillion; commit the American people to spending $4 trillion in the upcoming budget. This is almost beyond comprehension, $4 trillion.

What does that work out to? For 300 million Americans, that is an immediate debt burden of $13,000 per American. Every man, woman, and child in America would have that immediate debt burden placed on their shoulders when they can't begin to afford what the Congress has already been spending, historic levels of spending. $4 trillion?

And it isn't just the spending alone; it is what is being spent on. We are looking at socialized medicine for the first time in the United States, socialized medicine coming in through this bill. And in one vote, the Speaker of the House and the President are asking this body, the people's House, the United States House of Representatives to spend $4 trillion of their money for socialized medicine. So serious is socialized medicine that we need to spend some time on that issue, we need to spend some serious time.

Mr. Speaker, I just downloaded off of the Internet today stories about just two countries where socialized medicine was passed into the law and implemented, in the United Kingdom in England and Scotland and Wales, and also in Canada. I have just this many stories chronicling just the last year or so of headlines of what socialized medicine has looked like in those English-speaking neighbors of ours, in Canada to the north and in the United Kingdom.

I think it is instructive for the United States Congress to take a look at what the experience has been of other countries, and I hope we have time to get into some of these stories about what socialized medicine has looked like in these other English-speaking Nations.

Well, that isn't all, Mr. Speaker, socialized medicine and the grand leap forward into socialism. We are also looking at the specter of tremendous new taxes, punishing new taxes, not just for some, not just for 5 percent as President Obama had promised, but for 100 percent of the American people.

When the President of the United States stood here in this body, stood right there at the lectern looking out at the joint session of Congress where Cabinet members were present and where the American people watched in a historic number, 40 million Americans watched, heard the President of the United States say quite clearly to them in a straightforward manner he would not increase taxes on 95 percent of the American people. And in the same evening and in the same address to the American people, the President contradicted himself, Mr. Speaker, with these words when he said he was committed to putting into place the cap-and-trade system, the new global warming energy tax, which will now be a tax on 100 percent of all Americans.

And how is that? It will be felt in the form of our energy bills. Whether we have electric bills every month that we pay or whether we have gas bills that we pay every month, those bills in many parts of the country will in fact double.

I come from the State of Minnesota. Tonight, Mr. Speaker, we are expected

to have 12 inches of snow in Minnesota. We have had quite a week. We had a horrible flood situation up in the Fargo-Moorhead region. Thank God, we saw that recede a little bit. It wasn't as bad as we thought it was going to be. People's prayers were answered. On the front page this morning of the Twin Cities newspaper we saw a beautiful picture of the Assemblies of God Church up in the Fargo-Moorhead region; they had been praying all weekend that God would withhold the waters. And God clearly answered those prayers, Mr. Speaker. Those cities have not been devastated as much was we once thought they would be.

But the devastation that we are looking at now again is in this area of taxing. And in Minnesota, as I said, we are seeing 12 inches of snow in the Twin Cities area and in southern Minnesota in particular, maybe 10 inches in northern Minnesota.

But in Minnesota, Mr. Speaker, the people don't have a choice. Just like in many regions across the United States, the people don't have a choice. They have to turn on their air conditioning in the summer and they have to turn on their furnaces in the winter; otherwise, life is simply unbearable. And what will President Obama and the Democrat's budget look like here in this Chamber?

Well, this week, Mr. Speaker, President Obama and the Democrats that control the House and the Senate are forcing a vote on this body that would mandate that we would have increases in everyone's electric bills. And whether it comes in this budget bill or in a separate bill, President Obama made it clear; he made it very clear last week when he had his press conference, Mr. Speaker, when he said this: It is not negotiable to leave out this energy tax. He is insisting that the American people pay the energy tax. And in Minnesota, we are calculated to see a doubling in our energy bills. A doubling, Mr. Speaker. This is unheard of.

I don't know where people in Minnesota will go. We are experiencing very high, unusual rates of unemployment. Minnesota is a diversified economy. We are such a great State with awesome employers, but for the first time in perhaps 25 years we have seen unemployment in a State as diverse as Minnesota spike.

In one of my largest cities, Mr. Speaker, I was told last week by one of my constituents that, in my largest city, that we are seeing unemployment now at 9.8 percent. In one of my counties, Mr. Speaker, I was told that one of my counties has unemployment now reaching 10 percent.

Where are these people going to go, Mr. Speaker, when this body decides to pass a budget that will tax them $4 trillion, that will impose out a doubling on their energy bills? What are families going to do?

My husband and I are in a couple's Bible study, Mr. Speaker. And I was so sad to learn this winter in this couple's Bible study that another couple in one of the family members' churches was turning their heat down to 55 degrees. That is cold, Mr. Speaker. They have little children in their home. And this couple told us their daughter didn't want to go over after school and play in this family's home because it was going to be too cold for her. The last time she had been there visiting her girlfriend, the house was set so cold she was uncomfortable. But this family didn't know what to do. They were worried, they were afraid, they were scared because the husband had lost his job and the wife had lost their job, and they were trying to keep their kids warm. But they had a very difficult time doing it, so they were turning their heat down.

Can you imagine, Mr. Speaker, if I have to go back to the sixth district of Minnesota and tell the people in my district that President Obama and the Democrats that run this Chamber have asked me to vote on a bill that would double their energy tax bill? They are at home now, Mr. Speaker, with 55 degrees just trying to keep their kids warm, figuring out some way to get through this very long winter, and now I have to go home and tell them that this body wants to impose a burden on them that would double their tax bill? I can't do that.

□ 2115

And I won't do that. I won't vote for a measure like that. It won't happen. And my bet is that a lot of other Members are going to see it that way too. My bet is, Mr. Speaker, that when we go home after this week and talk to our constituents, they are going to look at us, Mr. Speaker, and they are going to say, are you crazy? Were you crazy in this economic climate to heap yet one more burden on me?

It reminds me of that Biblical story, Mr. Speaker, where Pharaoh said to the Hebrew children, who were slaves in Egypt, when he said to them, tell them to make bricks, but don't give them straw. Let them find their own straw to make bricks. That's what it seems like President Obama and the Democrats that are running the House and the Senate are doing to the American people right now, heaping burdens on them to such an extent that now they are being told that they must find their own straw to make their bricks, when they already are turning their thermostats down so that they can just survive and get through the winter. This is not the United States of America that we grew up in. We don't do this, Mr. Speaker, to our people.

I see that I have two colleagues that have joined me this evening. I would like to defer now to my marvelous colleague from New Jersey, Mr. SCOTT GARRETT. He serves with me, Mr. Speaker, on the Financial Services Committee. He hails from New Jersey and he is doing a wonderful job on behalf of his constituents working so hard to ensure that this Congress doesn't spend too much, doesn't tax too much and certainly doesn't borrow too much so that those who are yet unborn and without jobs will have to be laboring away to be able to pay for these profligate spending bills.

I defer now to the gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. SCOTT GARRETT .

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. And I thank the gentlelady for allowing me to say a few words. And I see also that we are joined on the floor by the gentleman from Georgia as well. And so maybe I will go back and forth and just make some points.

I come to the floor because I heard your remarks just a few moments ago, and I thought they were quite eloquent in trying to put in perspective exactly what is occurring here on the floor of the House and what is occurring here in Washington, D.C., our Nation's capital, as Congress goes about its business of formulating and passing a budget and how we can talk sometimes here in Washington in these global terms and esoteric terms, but at the end of the day it is the American public who actually has to foot the bill. They have to reach into their proverbial pocket and see if—oh, there is a couple bucks here—they can pull dollars out and send them to Washington.

Mrs. BACHMANN. The gentleman may want to hide those couple of dollars. Uncle Sam is looking for a few more.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Since I'm in Washington, there may be a hand out trying to reach into my pocket to try and grab those dollars. Absolutely. But you make the point that we are, in this country right now, and globally as well, in difficult economic times. Whether you are trying to put a few bucks away for your kid's education and now you realize, gee, at the end of the week when you write your checks, you just don't have that money to put aside, or if your kids are already in college and you say, how am going to make this month's or this quarter's college bill that is due? You just don't know how you're going to do it.

I was just talking on the phone before I came here to the floor, honestly, to folks in Upstate New York. And I said, how is the weather up there? They said, it is cold. And you're thinking, well, they have their heat ratcheted up and they are trying to warm their homes and they are paying the fuel costs. Thank goodness that rates have come down a little bit, but not by that much. But the young lady that I was talking to, she was concerned about how she is going to pay her heating bill for the house or the gas to cook the food or the other things they need for her kids around the house. And so we talk about things in global terms, in large terms. And as you know, I serve on the Budget Committee. I have had the honor now to serve on that committee for all 6 years that I have been in Congress. This year, when I served on the committee, this past week we had markup, which as you well know is

the process where the Democrats present their budget to us, give us the opportunity to make some amendments to it, make some improvements, and have some give and take.

I have to tell you that both the time when I was in the majority and the time that now I'm in the minority as well, this was the most distressing, this was the most frustrating, most unfulfilling process that we had in that committee ever. I recall in both scenarios in the past years that there was a give and take, there was an ability to have some discussion on it. Somebody would say, well, you might have an idea on this area and we have an idea on this area, let's come together and try to reach some accommodation on that. Let's see where there is some agreement where we can work together for the American public.

You just didn't see that at all. The meeting started I think around a little after 9 in the morning. We were done there around midnight. So you can count up the number of hours that we were there. We started with somewhere up to 30-some-odd amendments I believe that we had, that Republicans were presenting to the Democrats. And we would say, here is our little slice of our suggestions. And it is not just coming from me. And it is not just coming from the staff. These ideas are coming from our constituents, from Americans across all 50 States, on how to make this budget, this Obama budget, a better budget for America. But not one of those substantive amendments passed. They would not vote for a single amendment that we proposed. They would not vote for a single change, a single alteration, a single—what is that expression, changing a jot or a tittle—they would not allow ne'er a one of those.

Mrs. BACHMANN. What happened to the era of bipartisanship, if I can ask the gentleman?

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Well, there's the rub, isn't it? So many people went into this past election this past November and said we want a new era of bipartisanship. We want to work together. And my gosh, so do I. I want to be able to extend my hand across the aisle and say, here are our ideas. What are your ideas?

You didn't see it at all. And it was very frustrating. But larger than that, larger than the frustration is the irony of it all. The Office of Management and Budget from this administration puts out this blue book. And you have to scratch your head and laugh because if you didn't laugh you would be upset. It's called, this is looking at the budget and what have you, it is called ''A New Era of Responsibility.'' ''A New Era of Responsibility.'' And as I looked at that multitrillion dollar——

Mrs. BACHMANN. How big was that budget deficit, did you say, Mr. GARRETT?

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. That multitrillion-dollar budget.

Mrs. BACHMANN. And this was responsibility, that new era of responsibility?

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. You don't see it in Washington. And the reason I came to the floor is because you were making the point just as I left the office, the administration is asking it from the American people. The American people have to be responsible in trying to figure out how are they going to live within their means? You were citing the examples of cutting back in various facets of a life. And you were also pointing out the fact that the American people are actually doing a very good thing, and that is increasing their rate of savings. Boy, you don't see that aspect of responsibility here in this budget.

And my last point, and then I will yield the floor back to you or to the gentleman from Georgia, is my first point, is that we here in Washington sometimes get into Washington and speak on these things and the global sort of terms on it. And if you're watching that budget meeting, you sort of get the same sense of it. We talk about the fact that now as you look at all the wealth of this country, the GDP, the gross domestic product of this country, you can see the numbers in this budget, meaning that over a quarter of it, up to around 27 percent is basically being sucked throughout all 50 States and sent here right to Washington, D.C., as the GDP, the amount of government spending will be equated to around 27 percent of the gross domestic product.

Mrs. BACHMANN. So that means out of a dollar, Mr. GARRETT, that 27 cents of every dollar that is spent in the United States is spent by government?

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Yes. And that is a historically high figure. And this is the other funny—I say ''funny,'' but it is not funny. This new administration was always rife for criticizing our past administration for spending too much money, too high of a percentage. But historically, we have been around the 20, 22-some odd percent. And we were around that number in this past administration.

Now we are going through the roof on this. But those are esoteric numbers. Those are larger numbers. You can't get your arms around that. But it is the numbers when you talk about your family, when you talk about the cap and tax, $634 billion roughly of that amount, what does that relate to me or to you, your average family?

Mrs. BACHMANN. And now that has been amended to $2 trillion because the President's chief deputy on this issue, Jason, I can't remember his last name, his senior aide on the issue of the new global warming energy tax, cap and tax, made the statement last week that it isn't $646 billion that the place marker is at. It is actually $2 trillion in new taxes.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. And it is from $634 of the $2 trillion in taxes, which is hard enough because that is money out of your pocket. But we also heard the reports today that it could be even more difficult for the American family, the American worker. It could mean American jobs. And they were talking about the fact that one of two things are going to happen here. The first is that the energy secretary made this first observation was something to the effect of this cap and tax will have the effect of having jobs leave this country because the jobs will go to where the manufacturing and the cost of doing business is cheaper. That makes sense. That means your constituents and mine who have a job right now tomorrow will find out that their job just went overseas as well. And later on this week the secretary made the observation, well, one of the responses that we could do, and not that he was suggesting it I don't believe, was new tariffs.

Mrs. BACHMANN. Actually, that was in the Wall Street Journal today and also in Investor's Business Daily, the Energy Secretary, Mr. Chu, had made that comment about tariffs.

Now this is incredible, because if you look back in history to the time of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, one of the biggest problems that led to prolonged depression was the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act. Now this is something that is being suggested by our Energy Secretary, Mr. Chu, new tariffs. And what he is suggesting is that if other countries don't participate in this new cap-and-tax system, then the United States would charge tariffs equal to what those countries would have to pay in cap-and-tax systems. So we are looking at erecting profound new tariffs that will completely change the United States economy.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. And what will that do in the short term and the long term? Well, in the short term they will say, don't worry. That means that you will keep the jobs here in the United States because they won't go overseas because of the tariffs that we created. That is the short term.

Obviously, the long-term effect is, as you indicate, barriers will be made in all the other countries, as well, which means when you and I go down to the store and buy products which are imported into this country, manufactured from other places, what is going to happen to the price? It is going to go through the roof.

Mrs. BACHMANN. They will jack up.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. How are we going to be hit here? Several ways. First, we are going to be hit potentially by losing our jobs. Secondly, we are going to be hit with the new taxes, several thousand dollars on the families for new taxes, if you have a job. And thirdly, the expenses at the store, if you do have a job, and you still have some money in your pocket after your taxes and you're able to go to the store and do some shopping, what are you going to find? You will find that prices are going to be going through the roof. So one, two, three,

we are going to be hit in three separate ways because of this budget. Those are the practical aspects.

I see the gentleman from Georgia here is nodding.

Mrs. BACHMANN. I appreciate the gentleman's remarks from New Jersey (Mr. GARRETT) because in Investor's Business Daily today, they had a chart that perfectly illustrated what you were saying with the Great Depression. If you look at the skyrocketing prices that we will see under a tariff-based system and the skyrocketing taxes and the job losses, those three together are the great indicators of another Great Depression.

We are not here fear-mongering. That is not what we are interested in doing. But what we are doing is laying the table for the Obama administration's budget. The Democrats control the House and Senate. They are laying out the budget this week for this body to take a vote on. And the specter of having leakage, which is massive outsourcing of jobs, high taxes and high prices, that is not what the American people are asking for.

We are joined this evening by Dr. PHIL GINGREY, a gentleman from Georgia who is a tremendous advocate for free markets and for free markets and health care who is down here on the floor helping us frequently on these measures.

And Dr. GINGREY, I now yield to you so we can go back and forth. We would love to hear what you have to say on this subject of the budget.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlelady from Minnesota for yielding and also my colleague from New Jersey, my classmate, Representative SCOTT GARRETT. This is the week that we take up the budget, Mr. Speaker, as all of our colleagues know, and we are going to have, we have the Obama version that came over from OMB, the Office of Management and Budget, which crunched the numbers for the President. And it is a budget that calls for, well, I have the numbers right here, Mr. Speaker. And it sort of has a side-by-side comparison of the Obama budget, the House version, which we will take up in this Chamber, and the Senate version.

□ 2130

I just noticed, I can't help but just be absolutely astounded, Mr. Speaker, by these numbers. But in the President's budget, he calls for spending $3.67 trillion, $3.67 trillion. That's the 2010 Fiscal Year budget.

Now, when the Congressional Budget Office, the bipartisan number crunchers for the Congress, for the House and the Senate, when they looked at the Obama budget, they said, you know, instead of creating something like $7 trillion worth of debt over 10 years, it's going to be $9 trillion worth of debt over 10 years.

And we heard on television, Mr. Speaker, immediately, the concern expressed by the Democratic chairman of the Budget Committee, Senator KENT CONRAD from North Dakota and also the concern, even, you could see it in his face, the concerned expression on the face of the chairman of the House Budget Committee, JOHN SPRATT, our friend from South Carolina, that, goodness gracious, based on these Congressional Budget Office estimates, nonpartisan, that this presidential budget of $3.67 trillion was not sustainable.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that's what the Congressional Budget Office said. This level of spending is not sustainable.

So I really expected some significant cuts in the budget proposed by the House and proposed by the Senate. And yet, when you look at these side by side, as I said at the outset, the President Obama budget $3.67 trillion, the House budget which Mr. SPRATT will present to us in the next couple of 3 days, $3.55 trillion, the Senate version, $3.53 trillion. Well, to my surprise, there is not much cutting here. 3.67 trillion versus 3.55, the House version, or 3.53, the Senate version, my colleagues, that is a lot of spending and very little cut.

I have to do the quick math, and I would say that we're talking about one one-hundredth of a percent, or maybe it's close to one one-thousandth of a percent of cut. So you can posture, you can use a lot of rhetoric about what you're doing in regard to being fiscally responsible. But you'd have to say, and hearing those numbers, well, gee, I guess what the Democratic Congress, who enjoys the majority, the majority party, basically makes some tweaking around the edges posturing, I think, to some extent, but there's no significant difference in the President's budget and what we're going to have to vote on here in the House and also over in the Senate.

So I think, to suggest is very, very misleading to suggest that this body, or this Congress, both chambers, is exercising fiscal responsibility. I think these budgets are not sustainable, just as the President's budget is not sustainable.

And if my colleague from Minnesota will continue to yield, I've got a slide or two that I want to show, because, Mr. Speaker, I hear so much, and I watched some of the Sunday morning cable programs and network news, where most of the time it's the Senators that are getting interviewed, or the administration. Of course, Geithner was on this weekend, as he's been on a lot with this, what he's doing with the Treasury Department and the recommendations for getting us back on the road to fiscal recovery.

But I heard him say, the Treasury Secretary, ''well, you know, we inherited a bad situation.''

Mr. Speaker, I know you've heard it. My colleagues, Mrs. BACHMANN, I know you've heard it, you know, this creating a straw man and saying, you know, well, we inherited this mess, talking about the budget or indeed talking about the situation in Afghanistan or Iraq. We inherited this bad policy.

But, in regard to the budget, that's where I really wanted to focus my attention. They keep saying that this deficit for the Fiscal Year 2009, which now is approaching 1.8, 1.7, $1.8 trillion, I mean, that's four times as large as any deficit under the Bush administration. Go back and look at 2004 or 2005, 2006. Our deficits were coming down.

And the Democrats have been in control, Mr. Speaker, since January of 2007. So you know, when you say that you inherited, well, what party was it that refused to pass nine spending bills in the Fiscal Year 2009? Which party was that? Well, it was the majority party. And the reason that they did not want to pass those bills is because the President, the former President simply said, this is too much spending, and if you send those to my desk, I will veto them.

So the Democratic majority, Mr. Speaker, just held back on those spending bills, and we had these continuing resolutions to fund the government because they knew when they got the presidency, which most polls suggested at that point, that they would, and they did, and then brought forward, in the first part of this year, those nine bills that increased spending by 8 percent.

If you add the money that was put in the so-called economic recovery spendulus package to the 8 percent, it turns out that on those nine bills we increased the spending by 80 percent. Eighty percent. And so, you can't blame the previous administration for a $1.7 trillion deficit. You know, you can say, well, some of that we voted on in regard to the TARP money, the $700 billion, that vote occurring in October/November time frame of 2008. And you say, well, yes, that added to this deficit.

But who was it that voted for that and approved that in the House and the Senate? The Democratic majority. They're the ones that voted for it. A few Republicans, sure. But it was the Democrats that—they could have stopped it. They could have stopped every dime of that $700 billion TARP, Toxic Asset Relief Program which, as it turned out, was never even spent for that.

So as we look at what's going on in the future, just as the Congressional Budget Office did, over the next 10 years, you see what we're talking about, these deficits that go out into the future as far as the eye can see. And so at the end of 10 years, our debt is increased—well, real quickly, just another slide to show that. In 2019, that 10-year budget window, we're going from something like almost $6 trillion of debt to 14, almost $15 trillion of public debt by the year 2019. Man, if anything is unsustainable, that is unsustainable.

And to show it in a pictorial form, and I think we can bring this home to our colleagues so much with this next

poster, Mr. Speaker. President Obama would more than double the Federal debt to $14.5 trillion, with a T. It took 43 presidents, here's their pictures, 43 presidents, 232 years to build up $5.8 trillion in publicly held Federal debt. Under President Obama's proposed budget, over the next 6 years, we're going to add $8.7 trillion to that.

These are staggering numbers and, as the CBO says, Mr. Speaker, unsustainable. I just wanted to make sure my colleagues understood what we're talking about here and the magnitude and the significance of this.

I'm going to yield back to the gentlelady from Minnesota who controls the time. I know we have other colleagues here that want to speak. And I will enjoy continuing the colloquy during this hour.

Mrs. BACHMANN. Thank you so much, Mr. GINGREY.

We have several other things to talk about that occurred today, one of which was talked about, I think, in almost every paper across the United States, as well as every media outlet. On the Wall Street Journal today the headline today was ''Government Forces Out Wagoner at GM.'' This really is unprecedented.

And Mr. Speaker, I just need to read the first opening paragraph. It says, ''The Obama administration used the threat of withholding more bailout money to force out General Motors Corporation chief executives, which marked one of the most dramatic government interventions in private industry since the economic crisis began last year.''

Now, this is in the United States. We have the presidency, under some authority, pushing out a CEO, the head of the largest car manufacturer in the United States.

This goes on to say, ''The government has demanded the ouster of the head of AIG, American International Group, but only as it took a majority shareholder position.'' In this case, in GM, the administration has ousted a major CEO as part of an ongoing restructuring.

When we thought we couldn't be outraged any more, when we thought we wouldn't see anything more audacious, we see it yet again. Here is a company, Mr. Speaker, where we have the President deciding who's going to lead the company and who isn't going to lead the company.

And I was so curious today, I listened to President Obama's remarks that he made. This is from the White House. I encourage all Americans to go and read these remarks for themselves. It's remarks by the President on the American automotive industry. I don't think we've ever seen anything quite like this. It's emblematic of where this administration is taking the American taxpayer in this budget.

Now we're seeing the President and the Democrat-controlled Congress wanting to run virtually every aspect of American's lives, from health care, every aspect of health care, which is 18 percent of our economy, to running the banking system, to running the largest insurance company in the United States, to running the secondary mortgage market, and now to running the largest automobile company in America and the second largest automobile company in America.

Today, President Obama said, ''We cannot and must not, we will not let our auto industry vanish,'' which is great. And I'm wondering how he'll do it. With cutting taxes? I've read his speech. There's nothing here about cutting taxes. With cutting regulations maybe. That might help Detroit. There's nothing in here about cutting regulations.

How about cheaper energy? Wasn't that a big problem last July when gas prices were soaring over $4 a gallon on their way to 6, 8, who knows what? Maybe cheaper energy. Maybe we'll be able to start getting that oil, the shale oil out of the Western Rocky area. Maybe cheaper oil. No, there's nothing in these remarks about cheaper American oil. Nothing at all. In fact, what we see is just the opposite.

We see the President of the United States intervening personally to topple the head of GM. And then we see the President intervening personally to take a hand at rewriting the restructuring of these two once great American car companies.

And as a matter of fact, he goes on to say that he's made a decision to have these car companies become, telling them what they're going to produce with their products with the new clean car companies. And, in fact, he goes on to say that the car industry isn't moving in the right direction. He's going to decide what that direction is. And it's not moving fast enough. The President is going to decide how fast it's going to move. He goes on to say, the United States government has no interest in running GM. But then in the next line he says, but we're going to give GM an opportunity to finally make those much-needed changes.

He goes on to say that General Motors, which I think now we'll have to call Government Motors after this move, that the new General Motors is going to have to work together with the Obama administration to clean up their balance sheets, consolidate unprofitable brands, and figure out what future investments they're going to make.

But then he goes on to Chrysler, and the President says this. ''The situation at Chrysler is more challenging. It's with deep reluctance that we've determined, after careful review, that Chrysler needs a partner to remain viable.'' And we find out that the President has already worked with an international car manufacturer, Fiat Motors, and he wants Fiat Motors to come in, merge with Chrysler. And then, upon a successful merger, under President Obama's plan, then the American taxpayer will be good enough, Mr. Speaker, to come in with $6 billion. And now the company will be owned by Fiat, a foreign company, located in the United States, but with $6 billion in American taxpayer money.

□ 2145

Mr. Speaker, the President's remarks today are nothing more than industrial policy that you would see in Eastern bloc nations. I urge every American to download the President's comments that he made today. This is the future that we are looking at in the United States. It is not good enough to have the Federal Government just take over banks, to just take over insurance companies, to just take over secondary mortgage markets, to just bankrupt our country, and to punish with new energy tax increases.

Now the American Government is thinking it is smarter than car companies, and they are going to approve plans, decide which product, and then the American people are going to come in and buy the cars—buy fleets for bureaucrats. That is in President Obama's remarks. American people will be buying new cars for bureaucrats. That is how we are going to bail out Detroit. Now, this would be humorous if it were not so serious. This is all part of President Obama's plan.

Mr. Speaker, make no mistake: this has absolutely nothing to do with free markets. Nothing. That is why the Chinese Communists are very nervous right now about the American economy, because they kind of like the way our free markets work. Otherwise, they would have invested in Communist countries; they would have invested in socialist countries, but they chose to invest in a free market country, but now the Chinese Communists are nervous, and they are telling President Obama, we're not too sure about your investments, and European socialists are saying the same thing: We're not too sure about your investments, because what is it that the President now, Mr. Speaker, is embracing? He is embarking upon an industrial policy that this country was smart enough to have nothing to do with.

I encourage the American people: you need to download President Obama's remarks today that he made from the White House on the United States essentially taking over and running roughshod over GM and Chrysler.

With that, I would like to hand it back to my colleague from Georgia.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. I thank my colleague for yielding. She brings up such a good point.

Mr. Speaker, I don't stand here and say that President Obama is deliberately trying to destroy markets, but as my colleague points out, this, in effect, is exactly what is happening. What will be the result? I hasten to say that what we are talking about here in regard to General Motors and Chrysler and the speech that the President made in regard to what he is doing sounds so much like what was done in this body

last week in regard to these bonuses that were paid legally and legitimately. Although, public outrage suggests that the recipients of those bonuses from AIG—because we, the taxpayers, had bailed them out to the tune of $170 trillion—clearly, should voluntarily give those bonuses back.

It isn't for us to trample all over the Constitution and to have a trial by legislation of these recipients of the bonuses. A bill of attainment is what article I of the Constitution calls it, or violating the takings clause of the fifth amendment, and we knew that. Every Member of this body, I think, knew exactly that they were voting for something that was unconstitutional, just to sort of show, oh, gosh, you know, we are the fiscally responsible ones. The bonuses amounted to 1/1,000th of the amount of money that this Democratic majority and that even the previous administration had bestowed on this company like it was the only insurance company that existed in the United States of America.

I don't get my life insurance from AIG, and here we come along with this plan of telling the CEO of General Motors that he has got to step down. Do you know what I fear, Mr. Speaker? I fear that, once again, this is just posturing to set us up for another bailout. They want more money. General Motors wants more money. I am sure Chrysler does, too. So we hear this plan of, Oh, we're going to really crack the whip and crack down on these egregious folks, like the chairman and CEO of General Motors, and make him step down. I would really like to know—and hopefully, some good investigative reporter, Mr. Speaker, will find out—what kind of golden parachute he gets as he steps down.

Mrs. BACHMANN. If the gentleman would yield, I think it is even more than just taking a look at another bailout. There is certainly another bailout on the horizon. The President even indicated as much in his remarks today. He has already told these companies what it is going to be. Chrysler would get $6 billion if Chrysler, essentially, goes away and lets Fiat buy them out. That is what is going to happen. The American people need to realize this. Under President Obama's plan, Chrysler will be history, and Fiat will come in. A foreign company will come into the United States, will purchase Chrysler, and then we taxpayers are expected to pony up $6 billion to a foreign company to give them the capital that they need. Just so the American people know, these are President Obama's words today:

He said, ''But just in case there's still nagging doubts, let me say it as plainly as I can. If you buy a car from Chrysler or General Motors, you'll be able to get your car serviced and repaired just like always. Your warranty will be safe. In fact, it will be safer than it has ever been because, starting today, the United States Government will stand behind your warranty.''

So how do you like them apples? Here we have, Mr. Speaker, the United States of America standing up almost like a used car dealer, saying, ''Don't you worry. The United States Government is going to back the car warranty on your car. So go down to the GM. Buy yourself an Impala because the United States Government is going to stand by your 3-year warranty, and if you're really good, maybe it will be a 5-year warranty.''

So here you have the United States Government intervening, not only like the Wall Street Journal said—by lopping off the head of the CEO of General Motors, now called Government Motors—but now we have the Federal Government deciding it's going to be the pitchman, and it's going to back your warranty.

In fact, not only that, but President Obama said, ''We recognize there's a weakness in our economy.'' He said, ''To support demand for car sales in this period, I am directing my team to take several steps. Here is the first one: We're going to take money from the stimulus to purchase government cars as quick as we can for Federal bureaucrats.'' So this is going to give a lot of aid and comfort to the American people in knowing that their bureaucrat is going to be driving a brand new car, purchased at government expense. So their taxes are going to have to go up to buy cars for bureaucrats.

''Number 2: We're going to accelerate our efforts through the Treasury Department.'' Now, I thought the Treasury Department had quite a bit on its plate right now. They're not even able to fill positions in their office, but now they're going to open up a brand new consumer lending department rather than have the car companies', like GM's auto finance. They are gone. The Treasury Department, which is the new investment bank in the United States, is now the new consumer and business lending initiative. Our Treasury Secretary, who, apparently, doesn't have enough to do is now going to be the new loan officer for the cars in the United States, but it gets better.

Third, the IRS, which is now our new friend under President Obama, will be the new marketing arm of the Federal Government because they are going to launch a campaign to alert consumers of a new tax benefit for car purchases made between February 16 and the end of this year. If this doesn't sound like an ad you would see on late night TV: If you buy a car this year, we will deduct the cost of sales and excise taxes. In fact, we think we will sell 100,000 new cars.

Mr. Speaker, Detroit sells millions of cars every year. So we are going to have the Federal Government take over these two car manufacturers so they can sell 100,000 new cars? That would be a bad day for Detroit if that's what they would all sell, but that's not the end of it.

Then the President went on to say today, ''Several Members of Congress have proposed an even more ambitious incentive program to increase car sales while modernizing our fleet.'' That is really going to comfort the American people in knowing that Congress has come up with a plan to sell cars to the American people, and such fleet modernization programs will provide generous credit to consumers who turn in old, less fuel-efficient cars and who purchase cleaner cars.

Again, I say to you, Mr. Speaker, this is so pathetic to think that now Congress is going to come up with a way to sell cars better than the private markets and that we are going to have bureaucrats driving new cars while the American people are limping along in their old cars. They cannot afford to buy cars. This is unbelievable.

I urge the American people to download the President's remarks from today. This has very little to do with the free market. It has everything to do with failed Eastern European industrialized policy. This is not what the American people want. They want their taxes cut. They want jobs in the United States, and they want to be able to have less burdens on their backs from regulations.

I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Well, the gentlelady from Minnesota, I think, put it so well, and I think you and my colleagues would almost have to agree that this sounds so socialistic.

Mrs. BACHMANN. Perhaps because it is.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. There are worse terms you could apply to it, and the gentlelady may have one that she wants to express.

You know, as to this Government Motors business of, look, we have to do this so that people will be confident in the company and will buy these automobiles because now they feel secure in their 3- to 5-year warranty, listen, I would feel so much better with the chapter 11 option and if General Motors had to restructure under the bankruptcy code. Then nobody would lose their jobs. Maybe there would have to be a little cut in pay, and the vendors would take a little haircut, but this company would continue to be viable.

I want to just very quickly tell my colleagues about a company that is very important in my district, the 11th Congressional District of Georgia. We have a lot of poultry industry in northwest Georgia, and the big name that you hear about when you think about poultry processing—across the country, in fact, certainly not just in Georgia—is a company called Pilgrim's Pride. People know about Pilgrim's Pride. Well, they're financially struggling, and had to lay off literally thousands of workers and temporarily shut down for about 3 months until they made the tough decision to go into a bankruptcy reorganization under chapter 11.

I talked to some of the company executives within the last week when I

went back into the district, and they said, Congressman, we're doing fine. Everybody is back to work. We're going to work our way out of this, and we're going to end up being a much stronger company in the long run. That is the magic of the free market, Mr. Speaker, and that is exactly what we are talking about here tonight.

I commend MICHELE BACHMANN for her wisdom in presenting this, and I yield back to the gentlelady.

Mrs. BACHMANN. If the gentleman would yield, what you're talking about with Pilgrim's Pride, the great chicken producer in your district, that could have been done by our car manufacturers here in the United States without one dime of taxpayer money going into the auto industry.

I sit on the Financial Services Committee. We had the Big Three automakers in front of our committee, and I asked that question when the gentlemen were there. I asked, ''Wouldn't bankruptcy protection be your best friend? It would shield your company from further legal liability, and it would allow you the freedom to restructure your contracts and to restructure your organization.'' That would have been a great tool that would not have cost any money.

Unfortunately, our President has made a decision to take the most expensive and the deepest government intervention route that we have ever seen in the history of our country. My fear, Mr. Speaker, is we will never again see a free car manufacturer, an American-made car manufacturer, in the United States. Is there any industry that thinks, once the government gets its fingers at the level where it approves your business plan and then backs up the warranty of your product and decides what your product will be and who the purchasers of your product will be, that the government will ever get out of the car business? At that point, what are we going to have left to buy—pogo sticks?

We are not going to have much of a car industry left once the United States Government gets done with it. It's kind of like free health care. We will never see more expensive health care than when the Federal Government gets involved.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Well, if the gentlelady will yield, she kind of perked my interest a little bit there as she was starting to talk about health care.

Mr. Speaker, you know I am one of the physician Members of this body, and have practiced a long time—delivering babies in Marietta and in surrounding counties—and I am so glad that health care has been brought up tonight because the President just feels like government-run programs work better than the free market. We are on the verge of seeing Hillarycare all over again. I don't want to totally shift gears here on this subject, but it is such an important point, Mr. Speaker.

We don't necessarily try to say that the free market system of health care is perfect or that we don't need to do some things to try to get the 47 million or so who are uninsured in this country health care that is accessible and affordable and portable, that they own, where they can control their own destiny and where we can encourage them to adopt wellness policies regarding their own health.

□ 2200

That is a subject maybe for another hour, and I will yield back to the gentlelady from Minnesota.

But clearly, we Republicans, the minority party, feel that the marketplace is the best place to solve these problems. And I don't want, Representative BACHMANN doesn't want, and nobody in this Chamber should want government motors.

Mrs. BACHMANN. I thank the gentleman and thank you for this time.

We yield back. Thank you.

REPUBLICAN CONGRESSIONAL HEALTH CAUCUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I am coming to the floor of the House tonight to talk about health care. We had the occasion this morning over in the Library of Congress to have the first forum from the Republican Health Policy Caucus. This will be the first of several that we will do over the coming months. Obviously, health care is going to be a subject that receives a lot of discussion and a lot of debate, as it should. It's an important topic, and it is going to occupy a great deal of Congressional attention.

Let me just speak a little bit about the Caucus, and then I want to talk about the event that occurred this morning.

The Congressional Health Caucus was founded at the beginning of this Congress, the 111th Congress, and it was formed with several purposes in mind. It is a caucus on the Republican side, it is to educate members and their staff on the issues surrounding health care policy, and certainly, Mr. Speaker, the purpose of the caucus is to equip those same members with the resources for fostering debate and, of course, ultimately serving the American people with the most effective policy. It is designed to help members and their staffs communicate effectively, and we do welcome debate. It is not a closed-end caucus. Certainly we welcome a variety of members.

And perhaps one of the most important things that this caucus can do, this is an inclusive caucus. It does include members, is open to any member on the Republican side—I actually thought about the possibility of a bipartisan caucus but there wasn't much interest in that. But nevertheless, from our side of the aisle—and certainly we've had discussions with members of the other body as to whether they might be interested—but the idea is to have an inclusive discussion on the things surrounding health care reform.

But perhaps one of the most important things that I envision—one of the most important roles that I envision for this caucus is to take the discussion beyond the Capitol, beyond Washington, beyond the Beltway, the Potomac and all of the accoutrements and all things that are Washingtonian and speak to those patients, those doctors, those nurses, those hospital administrators who are actually doing the work in the trenches day in and day out and are actually looking toward Washington and wondering just what it is that we're up to now because, of course, some of them have seen this before. And it caused a great deal of disruption within the medical community some 15 years ago. They didn't see much that changed that was positive. Perhaps we allowed HMOs to get a more greater foothold in many markets across the country after the failure of the plans of health care reform 15 years ago.

So there is a great deal of interest but also a great deal of skepticism as people who work in the field—again, the doctors, the nurses, certainly the patients and their families, certainly the hospital administrators, people who work day in and day out delivering health care to our patients, our seniors, our youth, our families—there is a great deal of skepticism about what they see going on in Washington right now.

Well, in pursuit of those goals that I outlined, the events and resources provided by the caucus will be designed to prepare members to engage intelligently and effectively during this debate that we're going to see over the next several months and then beyond that. Whatever policies are arrived at or not arrived at, it will be the implementation of those policies, it will be the forward activity that occurs as a result of enactment of sweeping health care reform or the failure thereof.

Remember back in 1993 and 1994 when the bills did not get out of the—the bills did not become law, what was the focus then of the United States Congress on health care going forward? What type of attention was paid? It will be the purpose of this caucus that regardless of what happens, whether reform is enacted or not, that we will not take our eyes off the ball, and we will continue to be vigilant for the sake of the American people.

Now, Mr. Speaker, for reasons that I don't quite understand, I was invited down to the White House a couple of weeks ago to participate in the White House forum on health care reform, the White House Health Care Summit, and the President, in his remarks to us as the afternoon was concluding, was that it was his job to offer guideposts and guidelines, but principally he was there that day to try to find out what works.

And to that end, I applaud the President for having an open mind and having a willingness to listen to a variety of points of view. And I intend to be a resource. I intend to help him find out what works.

Yes, I have some ideas. They may not be mainstream Democratic ideas, but nevertheless, certainly they deserve some consideration. And many Members on both sides of the aisle have ideas, and we saw this very much in evidence in the break-out session that I attended.

One of the concerns I had with going down to the White House that day—was I just another pretty face to be down at the White House? Had this reform bill, in fact, already been written, was it just basking up in the Speaker's office awaiting for the correct time to be visited here upon the House floor and then we would all vote on it—much as the children's health insurance program bill, the reauthorization for that bill, came forward in August of 2007?

Well, is this bill already done? The President assured us it was not, that this would go through regular order, that he would look to the congressional committees and subcommittees to hold hearings to do the work to draft the legislation, to mark up the bills and do so under so-called regular order.

So I take the President at his word that—in fact, we're having a number of hearings in my subcommittee on health in the Energy and Commerce Committee, and I welcome that because I think these are important discussions for us to have.

But the American people also feel that Congress should do its work in the appropriate way and not just simply allow a bill to be crafted out of the public domain and arrive fully formed from the Speaker's office and come to the House floor. But the public expects us to have the debate, to have the discussion, to work on this bill in a bipartisan fashion.

Congress, in undertaking this project, must focus on solutions and not politics, and that's going to be very difficult for some of us to do. And, in fact, the later it gets in the 2-year cycle that the House lives with, the more difficult it is to separate politics from solutions. But still, we need to rise above that and work on those solutions, long overdue solutions, and focus on what is good for the American people.

We need to keep the idea of patients and not payments uppermost in our mind.

Now, the membership in the Republican Health Care Caucus is open to all members of the House Republican conference and their staff. We will host regular briefings and forums for members and staff as well as providing timely resources. This was the first today, the first policy forum that the caucus will host, and we were very fortunate. We were joined by three wonderful panelists whose ideas were not necessarily in concert with mine. Some I agreed with, some I disagreed with, but it was food for thought and very thought provoking; and I certainly learned some things as a result of the conference that we held today.

There will be a follow-up document that will be posted on the caucus Web site. It's actually a tab that can be accessed through my official congressional House Web site that's Burgess.House.Gov, and there is a health care caucus tab that's pretty easy to see when you first go to the page and, in fact, by clicking on that page, there is the opportunity to visit a—we simulcast this on the Web and the archive of that simulcast is now available on the Web site.

In fact, we did—to show that we were well into the 21st century, we took some questions from the audience and we took some that were sent to us over the new media phenomenon known as Twitter. So people outside the Beltway were able to send in questions which could then be posted to the panel. And I think that made for, again, a pretty lively question-and-answer period after the presenters did their formal preparation. We left about half the time for question and answer and again, not all of it came from the audience—or the physical audience—some came from the virtual audience that was watching on the web and sent their comments or questions in through the phenomenon known as Twitter.

So we came together actually in response to President Obama's desire to learn about what works. And with our assurances from the majority party that they are willing to work with Republicans as long as we negotiate in good faith, okay, great, and we wanted to get some ideas on the table, and I think we accomplished that this morning.

We had several questions that we put forth as we started the forum. We wanted to hear about what is being talked about as a so-called public health insurance option, the so-called government-run option, what the President's proposal for a government-run option could mean for health care in the future, what effect would this have on patients, what effect would this have on doctors, what effect would this have on the private market; and indeed, what effect would this have on those already-existing public programs such as Medicare, Medicaid, and SCHIP.

We heard testimony relating to what is called a National Insurance Exchange, a so-called insurance connector that can bring people and insurance policies together, and what are the good things about an insurance connector and perhaps what are some of the drawbacks of an insurance connector.

And we did hear discussion about what has been proposed as a national health board, a Federal-type of Federal Reserve board that would apply to health care and would this board have—how much power would it have, how much ability would it have to direct medical spending and medical decisions. All very important concepts that are all outlined or have been part of the discussion as far as what might be contained within the President's plan.

Just off the subject for a moment. During the fall, I had an opportunity to hear about the President's plan in a variety of cities across the country in a series of debates that were held during the presidential election, and I got fairly familiar with what was being talked about on the other side as far as the concepts embraced by then-presidential candidate Barack Obama as far as what his ideas were for health care reform.

It is interesting, now that we're out of the campaign and into the legislation part, some of the things that we heard a great deal about during the fall, we don't hear about so much any more. And in fact, some of the things that were vilified on the other side are now perhaps being embraced as ideas that are worthy of study and worthy of merit.

Specifically, during the fall we heard a great deal about a mandate for children, all children should be covered. I never could get a definition of what is a child. Is that a person who is under the age of 18, 19, 25, or 30? And I heard all four ages mentioned at some point during the debates.

Well, the mandate for children seems to have gotten lost in the translation. We expanded the State Children's Health Insurance Program in January. So I guess the assumption is that that box is checked and we have moved on to other things.

The National Health Board received a lot of attention during the fall. It remains to be seen how big a role that will play in whatever legislation is going to be written, and certainly the concept of a public option was one that was out there and discussed at great length during the presidential debates of last fall.

The public option plan, I can recall several statements that this would be a plan for people who right now lack health insurance, the so-called 40 or 45 million of individuals in this country who lack the benefit of health insurance, and that everyone should be given a plan just as good as a Member of Congress. So that would be the Federal employee health benefit plan option, which is a fairly expensive way to approach that.

Now, faced with the reality of what are some very significant budget deficits stretching ahead of us before we even get to anything beyond the preliminary discussions of health care reform, perhaps that is going to be, of necessity, be scaled back just a little bit and perhaps that public option, that government option, is going to look more like Medicare or perhaps even more like Medicaid going further into the discussion.

□ 2215

But it remains to be seen because that part of the story has not been written, but I bring it up because it's significant and it behooves people to pay attention to what those discussions are because it makes some difference.

We have had multiple hearings, as I mentioned, in our Subcommittee on Health in the Committee on Energy and Commerce. We have multiple panels who will come and discuss various aspects of health care reform. We have Democratic witnesses. We have Republican witnesses. And out of perhaps somewhere between 10 and 15 witnesses that we have had come before our committee, I've only found one witness who would be willing to exchange their health insurance that they have today for a program such as Medicaid if that were to be the government-run option. Almost every other panelist who's come before us, whether it be Republican or Democrat who's presenting to the panel, has no interest in substituting their health insurance for a Medicaid-type program.

Mr. Speaker, in fact, during the debate on the rule in Rules Committee leading up to the State Children's Health Insurance Program expansion, I offered an amendment in Rules Committee to allow Members of Congress the option for signing up for Medicaid as opposed to some of the other insurance products on the Federal Employee Health Benefits plan. Needless to say, that amendment was not adopted and received very little interest when I brought that up to the Rules Committee.

But it brings up the point, if we're not willing as Members of Congress or the people who testify before our committees are not willing to take on a public option program, a government-run program like Medicaid for their health insurance, well, what does that say about what we are making available then to people who currently are covered under Medicaid and people who are currently uninsured who may be offered a government-run program if it is made to look very much like Medicaid looks today?

I think we have a long way to go to fix some of those programs. Certainly, both Medicare and Medicaid have some significant problems. There are significant problems with finding providers. There's a significant problem that the funding for those programs falls far short of what it needs to be, and as a consequence, the private insurance in this country subsidizes or cross-subsidizes the Medicare and Medicaid programs to a significant degree, such that if you lost the option for private health insurance in this country it might be very very difficult indeed to pay for those public, government-run programs that are in place today.

But I have gotten a little far afield. Let me bring it back to the things that we had before us in the forum this morning.

We heard testimony on ways that our current system, public-private hybrid system, of insurance can be improved, and we heard about lessons from the States, lessons that we might look at very closely when we're formulating public policy. After all, in medicine we're always told you need to practice evidence-based medicine. You need to look at randomized clinical controlled, clinical trials before you make a decision about what to do.

Well, if that's good for America's physicians and America's patients, might that not also be good for America's policy-makers? Should we not also ask ourselves what is the evidence for the best policy? In other words, can we practice evidence-based policy here in the House of Representatives, the same as we ask our physicians to practice evidence-based medicine?

So, we are fortunate the States function as laboratories, as the Founding Fathers envisioned, and we did hear some testimony on lessons from the States.

And then finally we heard about proposals for a consumer-driven, market-based approach to reform that really may hold out a great deal of promise as being the most affordable of all of the options that were out there.

Our first presenter this morning was Dr. Karen Davis from the Commonwealth Fund, which is a private foundation that aims to promote a high-performing health care system that achieves better access, improves quality and greater efficiency. Dr. Davis has a Ph.D. from Rice University, the recipient of many accolades, the author of many books, and we were very, very fortunate that she was willing to come down from New York and participate in the forum this morning.

Dr. Davis talked a good deal about some of the problems that we have in our current system, and she spent a good deal of time discussing payment reform as a component of health care reform. Payment reform might reflect a new concept. The Medical Payment Advisory Commission, MedPAC, has talked about a concept called bundling, where we don't actually pay for individual treatments but that we bundle these services, doctor, hospital, laboratory, and there is a payment for an episode of care rather than a doctor billing for the doctor services, the hospital billing for the hospital services, the laboratory billing for the laboratory services. So there's more of a global fee, if you will, but bundling is even perhaps one step more than a global fee.

And one of the concepts embodied therein is that perhaps there would be a payment for an episode of care that would comprise a period for as long as a month, because some of the really difficult payment difficulties we get into, in Medicare in particular, result from patients who have to come back into the hospital after being released, and those rehospitalizations tend to be very expensive. And so this was a way to bring that type of expenditure under control.

Another concept that was discussed was a concept called gain-sharing; that is, if a medical group, hospital and doctor group could devise a method of delivering care in a more economic way, that part of the savings that that doctor group and hospital was able to demonstrate, part of that savings then could be shared with the medical group, the hospital that was involved in that episode of care.

These are concepts that are—they have been tried in some demonstration projects. To be sure, there's some difficulties. Emotionally, I have some difficulties when we talk about bundling a doctor's payment with a hospital payment. Quite honestly, doctors don't trust hospitals and hospitals don't trust doctors, so there are some barriers to overcome there.

The concept of gain-sharing, certainly if we're going to ask physician friends to do things smarter, cheaper, faster, perhaps we can include them in whatever benefit accrues to the government, i.e., the Medicare system. Perhaps we can include them in the distributional aspects of that.

Dr. Davis did talk some about the concept of a health care connector or an insurance exchange, the advantages there that you bring together the patient and the insurance policy. Particularly for someone who doesn't have employer-sponsored insurance, it can be a confusing array of products that are out there, particularly now if we're going to have a government-run option out there. A public plan, a public government-run plan out there, perhaps an insurance exchange may be a way to bring together the patient and the insurance company.

So, to be sure, there's some people are skeptical of exchanges. The current experiment going on in the State of Massachusetts points out some of the benefits but also some of the pitfalls for insurance connectors and insurance exchanges.

Part of the difficulty that has been discussed about is, is there an inherent conflict of interest having an umpire also play for the home team, and therein is the problem with the combination of a public, government-run plan and an insurance connector. The insurance exchange is going to set the rules by which coverage must be sold. It's going to set the rules as far as pricing is concerned, and oh, yes, it's also a competitor because the government-run option is going to also be part of that exchange.

But nevertheless, all of these are ideas that are worthy of discussion because the concepts going forward, we need to have the discussion on these. We can't just accept them as good ideas because someone else thought of them, and it's a way out of our conundrum with the uninsured and it's a way perhaps to control costs, but certainly, these philosophies need to be fully vetted.

We were then very fortunate to be joined by Dr. Merrill Matthews, who's the director for the Council of Affordable Health Insurance, and this is a Washington, DC-based research and advocacy organization promoting free market health insurance reform. Dr. Matthews earned his Ph.D. in philosophy and humanities from the University of Texas at Dallas.

Now, Dr. Matthews had a very interesting discussion for us. He focused more on what was happening with the role of the States and brought to us current examples of six States that are doing things. Some are working well, some not so much, but nevertheless, the President did, in his charge to us as he finished up that day at the White House, he said, I want to learn from what works. And Dr. Matthews brought to our policy discussion this morning six examples of things that are going on in States around the country and how those might deliver to us ideas that may be worthy of study or ideas that perhaps deserve a great deal of scrutiny because they've already been tried somewhere and they're not working so well.

The first State that Dr. Matthews mentioned was the State of Georgia. Georgia, of course, has a State income tax, and he highlighted the role of the tax system in providing for health care for the citizens of Georgia. A State tax credit for qualifying employers that offered health savings accounts and high deductible health plans was available. So an employer could get a tax credit off of their State income tax for offering a high deductible health plan or a health savings account, and for individuals, also, there was a State tax deductible for individuals purchasing health insurance, which begins to remove a little bit of the discrimination against an individual holding an insurance policy. But apparently, the preliminary results of Georgia are encouraging, and certainly that points the way to some discussion of some changes within our Federal tax code that may be more applicable to the national stage.

The State of North Carolina really highlights the need and the benefits of having a robust safety net for patients who have a preexisting medical condition. This is always a great fear that people have, what if I lose my employer-sponsored health insurance, I can't keep up with the COBRA payments, I'm diagnosed with some serious illness in the meantime, and then I am thereafter uninsurable and will remain uninsured until I can get taken on a Federal program such as Medicaid or Medicare. North Carolina has now a program to deal with those individuals who, because of the condition of medical fragility, are uninsurable by really fine-tuning the State high-risk pools.

This requires an assessment from the health plans that sell in the State. So each of the private entities are asked to contribute to the overall maintenance of this high-risk pool. To be sure, there is a sliding scale, Federal subsidy, State subsidy that can be made available, but it certainly shows with a little bit of planning and a little bit of willingness to work between the public and private sector that individuals with preexisting conditions do not need to be shut out of the health insurance system. There is a way, indeed, to provide insurance and bring people back into the fold.

Dr. Matthews talked about the State of New Jersey and how New Jersey has some of the highest health insurance premiums because of various requirements on policies in New Jersey and how just across the State line in Pennsylvania the health insurance premiums are significantly lower. So, within the State of New Jersey, legislation has been introduced to allow individuals to purchase insurance in adjoining States, insurance that is under the control of the insurance commissioner in those States, that has been fully evaluated and vetted, but at the same time has relief from some of the mandates that drive the cost up so very high within that individual's home State.

□ 2230

Certainly, this is a concept that is worth exploring. And it will be interesting to see if this legislation is indeed enacted in New Jersey and, if it is, how does it fare for allowing more people to use their own money to purchase insurance when the cost is not set arbitrarily so high that it is beyond their ability to pay.

Dr. Matthews also talked a little bit about what's going on in the State of Florida. Florida also highlights the issue of cost. They have required from the insurance companies within the States to sell insurance to anyone—the so-called guarantee issue—but it does focus on catastrophic coverage that is the high-deductible, low-premium type of insurance.

Again, it will be interesting to see if this does indeed bring more people into a condition of coverage and remove those individuals from the ranks of the uninsured.

Tennessee had an example with TennCare where virtually everything was offered to everybody for almost nothing. It really put severe financial constraint upon the State. So the Governor has now outlined a new plan—it's called Cover Tenn, which is a much more limited benefits plan. The premium is $150, which is split three ways—the individual, the employer, and the State all paying a share. There is a significant focus on preventive care and routine screenings.

Somewhat controversial, there is a benefit cap. Benefits are capped at $25,000 dollars, which may seem like this is not providing enough care but, in actuality, only four out of several thousand people covered under this program have actually hit that ceiling.

Clearly, this is a work in progress and this will have to be monitored. But it certainly shows we always talk about we need more preventive care, we need more disease management, we need medical homes so those so-called low dollar-expenditures you can make in health care perhaps, perhaps can deliver a significant benefit and prevent some of the high expenditure situations that people encounter.

Finally, Dr. Matthews talked about what's going on in the State of Arizona where a State initiative has been in place that sort of deals with the issue of personal freedom. You can choose to have insurance or you can choose not to. It is important. It is not forcing someone to pay something that they don't want or feel they don't need.

Now that initiative was put forward in the Arizona legislature. The initiative failed. But it's likely to see some additional activity in the coming legislative session.

So those were the ideas brought to us by Dr. Merrill Matthews, who is, again, from the Council for Affordable Health Insurance, and certainly showed how the States can function as laboratories in the concept of creating new ideas in the arena of health reform.

Finally, we heard from Dr. Grace-Marie Turner, the president of the Galen Institute, a public policy organization that promotes an informed debate over free-market ideas for health reform. Perhaps one of the most impressive statistics that Grace-Marie Turner has brought to the discussion is the percentage increase—the cost increase for regular indemnity insurance, the cost increase for PPOs, the cost increase for Medicare and Medicaid has all been 6 to 7 percent a year, well ahead of inflation, and it is that cost driver that is pushing the affordability of insurance past the reach of many patients.

With so-called consumer-directed health plans or consumer-directed options, high-deductible health plans, the actual rate of increase is 2¼ percent. So about one-third of what it is for the public plans and the indemnity plans and the PPO plans.

If indeed we want to find out what works and if indeed affordability is an issue, and I believe that it is because affordability is what is preventing many people from actually being able to afford or buy insurance, then why wouldn't we look at this type of data and why wouldn't we look at expanding, as Florida has done, as Arizona discussed doing, why wouldn't we look at expanding these so-called consumer-directed options that clearly the price goes up at a level much more in line with inflation and the consumer price index and not two to three times that level.

So certainly Grace-Marie Turner brought some good ideas to the forefront. She did talk about there being a climate for innovation that is pervasive and the fact that everyone is talking about health care, everyone is talking about how do we reform and improve the system. So that climate for

innovation is one that we should embrace and capture and utilize, not for political advantage, but for the advantage of, after all, the person who should be at the center of all of this is not an insurance executive, it's not the Secretary of Health and Human Services. The person at the center of all of this, ultimately, is the patient and their family.

Now, Mr. Speaker, just to depart for a moment, I've spent a lifetime in health care and I know very well that you look at this vast machine that we call the American health care system and what is it that we produce, what is the widget that the American health care machine churns out at the other end?

Well, the widget is the interaction that takes place between the doctor and the patient in the treatment room. It may very well be the operating room or the emergency room or the delivery room. But it is that fundamental action that occurs between doctor and patient.

So when I think of things that deal with changing health care and how it's delivered in this country and how doctors are paid and how patients are cared for and how insurance companies are structured, you have to look at that fundamental interaction between the doctor and patient in the treatment room and does this change that we're talking about, does it bring value to that interaction or is it perhaps somehow injurious to that interaction.

If it brings value then it really doesn't matter to me which side of the aisle the idea came from; it is one that is worthy of merit, it's worthy of study, it's one that perhaps is worthy of inclusion in whatever we eventually do in health care reform.

On the contrary, if what we are proposing to do detracts from the level of value of that fundamental interaction between doctor and patient in the treatment room, then we have got to be very, very critical, very, very serious about how we look at that because, after all, if we devalue the interaction between the doctor and patient in the treatment room, ultimately we devalue the experience for the patient and ultimately we are causing more stress and more harm to the system.

As we've talked about a number of things this evening and when Dr. Matthews was talking about his experience with the several States, I couldn't help but think of what has gone on in my own home State of Texas in the past 5 years since September of 2003, when the State passed what was then a very innovative, very forward leaning, extensive medical liability reform that really has been a game changer back home in Texas.

When I ran for Congress in 2002, Texas was in the middle of a very serious medical liability crisis. We were losing medical liability insurers. They were leaving the State because the State's environment was so hostile. They were losing money so they left the State. We went from 17 insurers down to two in a very short period of time. I promise you—you don't get many competitive influences when you have only got two insurers out there writing medical liability insurance.

Medical liability insurance was going up and up and up. Even for physicians who didn't have a claims history, just because you were practicing medicine in Texas, you were a significant risk to that insurance company. As a consequence, doctors all across the State saw their premiums go up, and some doctors simply could not find insurance at all, at any price.

I talked to a number of doctors that year I was running in 2002 who had just simply left practice or never were able to start their practice and were just out of school and unable to set up their practice in their home State of Texas because the medical liability climate was so severe that insurers were not willing to write them insurance policies at any price.

The whole trauma network in the Dallas-Fort Worth area was brought down by the fact that one of the neurosurgeons got his premium bill to re-up his medical liability premium, looked at the six-digit figure and said, That's it. I can't do it any more. I can't earn enough money to pay this bill, and I will have to leave the State.

When that happened, about 50 percent of the neurosurgeons then were gone from the trauma system, the trauma network in north Texas, putting that trauma network in serious jeopardy. How were they going to provide neurosurgical services 7 days a week, 24 hours a day, when they had but one physician remaining to provide those services?

So we were under extreme stress in the State of Texas in the fall of 2003. Then the State legislature passed a very forward leaning medical liability reform. It was a cap on noneconomic damages. It was a cap similar to the Medical Injury Compensation Reform Act of 1974, which has done such a good job in California, but perhaps modernized a little bit for the 21st century.

The cap was trifurcated; that is, there was a $250,000 cap on the physician, a $250,000 cap on the hospital; and a second $250,000 cap on a secondary hospital or nursing home if one was involved.

So an aggregate cap of $750,000 for pain and suffering. Actual damages, medical damages were not capped in any way. In fact, punitive damages, if gross negligence could be demonstrated, punitive damages were not capped.

What this has done in the State of Texas has been nothing short of phenomenal. We have doctors coming to the State, a State that was losing doctors in 2002, is now seeing more and more doctors coming to the State. In fact, one of the bigger problems we have today is not the inability to find medical liability insurance; one of the bigger problems today is the State Board of Medical Examiners finds itself short-staffed and is having difficulty keeping up with the volume of applications for State licenses that are coming in from other States.

As a consequence, Texas has gone from a situation where we were in fact getting into difficulty. We were in quite a fragile condition from the standpoint of providers. And now we find that that situation has been reversed.

This is such a commonsense application of previous legislation, again, that was enacted out in California over 25 to 30 years ago, that now is working today in its modern iteration in the State of Texas. I've introduced a similar bill in Congress because I feel this is so important to be able to offer this same type of protection to other doctors in the country.

There's no question that the concept of defensive medicine is a real one. When people look at the cost, escalating cost of medical care, one of the problems is that as a doctor you feel like you have got to do every test and every study so that if something goes wrong and you're called into court and that chart is put on the stand with you, that chart is going to be an A-plus and you've done every possible test right down the line and there can be no second-guessing. That's the onus, that's the burden that doctors practice with today in this medical liability climate.

So the idea of being able to relieve some of that pressure from defensive medicine, it won't happen overnight. This will take a significant amount of time to reverse some of these work patterns and thought processes. But, as they say, the journey of a thousand miles starts with the first step. And this Texas legislation is a very, very good place to start.

The legislation in fact saves money. As estimated by the Congressional Budget Office, it saves $3.8 billion, almost $4 billion over 5 years. I know that's not an enormous sum of money when you've got Congress writing a blank check for $787 billion in one weekend. I know a paltry little $5 billion doesn't look like much. But we are up in budget time and every little billion dollars adds up.

So I have, with no thought to any personal aggrandizement, I have offered this concept to both sides in their budgetary process. I'm willing to give up my $5 billion to the cause. And I would like to see us seriously take on some type of meaningful medical liability reform.

That brings up another issue. We've got 47 million people who are uninsured and we have got various proposals to bring more and more of those individuals into the ranks of the insured. You look at some of the graphs and people will talk about, ''well, we've got this plan, we've got that plan.''

And look how the number of the uninsured just drops precipitously. But, unfortunately, the other line on that

graph that no one ever pays any attention to is the number of doctors out there who are capable and willing and able to see patients. That's a relatively stable number.

So what is the essential effect of bringing many, many more people into the ranks of the insured if we haven't impacted the physician workforce at the same time. No question we are going to put additional stress on the system.

Now I do work on issues dealing with the physician workforce because I think that is so important. In the Health Care Caucus that will be the subject of one of our future forums because I do feel this is so important.

Certainly, at the end of the scale that deals with the young person getting out of college and contemplating a career in health care, cost—the barrier to entry right now—is a huge barrier to entry. No one wants to end up with 8 or 12 years of professional education with a loan repayment plan that is structured such that it's almost impossible to repay.

□ 2245

We have got to pay attention to that. We have got to make more help available to those, the best and brightest of our young people who may be contemplating a career in health care.

We passed a bill on the floor of this House just a couple of weeks ago that came through our Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health that dealt with the number of residencies out there for primary care physicians, pediatricians, OB/GYNs, family practice, internal medicine, general surgeons, the type of doctors that are going to be needed on the front lines of delivering care for generations to come. We are not making enough of them, and many communities just simply cannot attract a doctor.

One of the things that we found in Texas, a study done by the Texas Medical Association, is that a lot of doctors, maybe it is because they don't have much imagination, but they tend to practice close to where they train. I am a very good example of that; I trained in Dallas and I practiced in Louisville, Texas, about 15 miles away. We tend not to go very far away from where it was that we took our training.

As a consequence, if you can develop residencies in more communities where the actual need is high, those medically underserved areas, and you can develop residencies in those programs, pediatrics, general surgery, OB/GYN, family practice, internal medicine, if you can develop those residencies in hospitals or in those communities, you might be able to keep some of those physicians in the area, and that would be an innovative or a different way of trying to bring doctors or keep doctors in those communities.

Now, there was a bill very similar to that that passed out of Energy and Commerce. It passed on the floor of the House here a couple of weeks ago. It is now over in the other body. We in fact passed it last year as well, and it made it over to the other body, but it didn't quite make it out of the other body. And it was late in the year and I understand that. It is certainly no criticism to our good friends in the other body. But this year we passed it relatively early in the 111th Congress. We want to give them plenty of time to scrutinize it, plenty of time for the guys down at Office of Management and Budget and the White House to scrutinize it. But ultimately I think they will see that this is a good program, and it is not an enormous program.

The money that is going to be used for this will be a self-replenishing loan program, so that as the program matures the money will constantly be repaid. But it removes some of the barriers to entry for a hospital that right now is not offering a residency program in a medium-sized community, in a smaller community, perhaps a rural community that has got a hospital with sufficient clinical material that can be accredited by the American Council of Graduate Medical Education but at the same time right now does not have a residency. This can help eliminate one of the barriers to entry for that hospital being able to set up a residency program and, ultimately, can bring more physicians to those communities that right now are medically underserved, particularly in the primary care specialties.

Then, finally, and I talk about this frequently, we are going to talk about it I suspect many times this week because of the ongoing budget debate. But a formula that is used to calculate physician reimbursement for patient services in the Medicare program, the so-called sustainable growth rate formula which has programmed into it payment cuts for physicians, reimbursement reductions for physicians for years to come is a significant onerous burden on our physician community, and we do need to correct that problem.

We did a temporary fix in July of last year, about 9 months ago; it was an 18-month fix. It expires December 31 of this year. And Members of Congress who are not paying attention to this may find themselves very unpleasantly surprised when they go home sometime after the August recess and their physician community is up in arms because Congress hasn't done anything about this 20 percent reimbursement reduction that they are facing New Year's eve of this year. This is a problem that is barreling down the pike at us, and so far this year we haven't spent a great deal of time or energy dealing with that.

Now, to the President's credit he talked about dealing with that in some way in the budget, and indeed there was a line item in the budget that the President put forward, but it didn't really solve the problem. It extended this cliff that we fall off of every 6 months, 12 months, or 18 months. It extended it out for 10 years, but the cliff will be every bit very in evidence and in fact all that steeper because it is a 10-year cliff as opposed to a 2-year cliff. We really need to fundamentally change that formula, pay doctors under what the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission has called the Medicare Economic Index. That is a cost of living adjustment for paying Medicare physicians that basically says if the cost of doing business increases, we are going to increase the amount of reimbursement. It is the same thing we do for hospitals, it is the same thing we do for drug companies, it is the same thing we do for HMOs. We ought to do the same thing for America's physicians; because if we don't, we are going to wake up some morning and find ourselves with an absolute lack of physicians that is going to be almost impossible to overcome, and then Congress will be left scrambling on how to fill that gap. Do we just simply ordain people as doctors and tell them to go to work? Do we open the borders and bring people and steal doctors from some other country? Who knows what the position of a future Congress might be.

It is incumbent upon us to face that problem this year. It is important enough that we take care of it, that we not leave it for a future Congress, that we not postpone it 10 years, as was outlined in the President's budget. We just simply need to change this formula, and do it now. This is something that doctors are looking at the Congress and saying, well, you are talking about a public option government-run plan, you are talking about expanding Medicare, you are talking about all these things that you are going to do. But, Mister Member of Congress, when the only lever you have to pull to reduce cost is to restrain provider payments, that is going to make it pretty painful for those of us out here who are trying to earn a living taking care of your patients, the patients you asked us to take care of, the country's Medicare patients, arguably some of the most fragile and difficult patients to manage, and you are telling us you are going to cut our pay every year as far as the eye can see by 4 percent, 5 percent, 6 percent per year. This year, in fact, the aggregate will be a 20 percent reduction if we don't do something.

Well, we have got to maintain our physician workforce, and those three areas, paying attention to the health profession scholarships, loans, and bringing that up into the 21st century, perhaps we can talk about additional tax benefits for people who are willing to go into the health professions, certainly looking at residency programs in areas that are currently in medically underserved areas with high-need specialties; and then finally fix, once and for all, this cockamamy idea of a sustainable growth rate formula which pays physicians under a formula that is clearly, clear unsustainable and it is unjust.

Here is the secret about the sustainable growth rate formula. We talk about the fact, oh, it is so difficult to repeal because it costs so much. Guess what. That money that it supposedly costs is money that we have already spent. That is not money that is sitting in an earning account in some Federal T-bond somewhere. It is money we have already spent. It went out the door in 2001. We paid it out in 2005. Doctors were reimbursed that money in 2007. We just never accounted for it on the books. We sound like AIG.

This is nuts. We have got to stop this. End the SGR formula. Be up front about it. If the Congressional Budget Office needs to be instructed through legislation to do directed scoring to wipe that debt off the books, and then going forward we play this game straight with our country's physicians, then that is what we have to do. I intend to be introducing a bill; I have done so every Congress that I have been here, and I intend to introduce a bill that will do just that, and I will be back on the floor to talk more about that when that time comes.

We will hear some talk about mandates. When you hear the talk about the public option and mandates, you have got to ask yourself, what are we trying to do here?

Now, with mandates you tell everyone that you have got to buy insurance. We either do it as an individual mandate or an employer mandate. Well, employers look at that as a tax that you are going to put on jobs for health insurance. And if we put a tax on jobs while we are trying to recover from a recession and we want jobs to be created and we are going to tax them, so the small business community will come to us and tell us: Don't put a tax on jobs with an employer mandate in health insurance.

Now, an individual mandate says that everyone out there has the responsibility to have an insurance policy. The trouble with individual mandates is people don't always take them seriously. Look at the IRS, a pretty serious mandate, a pretty serious penalty if you don't comply. And what is our compliance rate with the IRS? About 85 percent. What is our compliance rate with voluntary health insurance right now? It is about 85 percent. So you don't get a lot of bang for your buck by putting in mandates.

Now, mandates are great for insurance companies, because everyone has to have insurance so they like that. Everyone is going to buy their product. Yea, we all make money. Put a public option plan on the table, and then the insurance companies are not so happy because now that mandate may be satisfied by a public option. But now we are forcing our insurance companies to compete with insurance that we are putting on the table at the Federal Government. It is hard to compete with the Federal Government. We can write a check for any amount of money. We never go broke, we never run out of money, we just simply print more money when we need it. Well, the large health insurers in this country don't have that option. It is very, very difficult for them to compete with a government option or a government-run plan because they don't have the option of just simply printing more money when the time requires it.

So we do have to be careful with how we institute, if that is the direction we are going to go. And certainly all through the campaign I heard President Candidate Obama say that, surely if you like what you have got, you are going to be able to keep it. Well, that is true, unless we run them all out of business, in which case it will be hard for you to keep what you have got in your employer-sponsored insurance, and the only option will be a public.

Now, there are lots of moving parts to this debate. We are going to be back here frequently over the next several months. We are in the budgetary cycle now. As I understand, late in the night in the Budget Committee, the House Budget Committee, the House-passed budget did contain so-called language for reconciliation, which means that over on the Senate side they will only need 50 votes to pass whatever they want to pass.

The way forward is set for almost any change the Democratic majority and the Democratic President want to make in health insurance. I hope they are going to make the right decisions. I take the President at his word that he wants to learn from what works. I think we have talked about some of those things this evening, what we have seen working as far as State plans are concerned, what we have seen working as far as the affordability concept in the consumer directed plans. Certainly we need to learn from what works as far as connectors, because we have a State, Massachusetts, that is currently using a connector, and we need to see what the effect has been on the cost and availability of insurance; and, are people in fact conforming with the individual mandate that the State of Massachusetts has imposed?

If we look at all of these things in aggregate, we may not always make the right decision, but we will come closer to making that right decision than if we all just sit in a windowless room, as we all want to do here in the United States Congress. We love to do that down. We sit in a little windowless room down in the basement of the Capitol, we all talk about the things that matter to us. We never listen to anyone else's ideas. And is it any wonder that everything always looks the same when it comes out of the United States Congress?

Let's do things differently this time. Let's listen to each other. Let's take the President at his word. Let's practice evidence-based policy, let's figure out what works, and then let's get on with it.

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

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Ms. BERKLEY (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today.

Mr. REYES (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today on account of official business in the district.

Mr. WESTMORELAND (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today, March 31 and April 1 on account of illness.

Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today and the balance of the week on account of medical reasons.

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 Ms. WOOLSEY) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SHERMAN, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. LEE of California, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. BURTON of Indiana) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. BURTON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, April 3.

Mr. POE of Texas, for 5 minutes, April 3.

Mr. JONES, for 5 minutes, April 3.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, for 5 minutes, today and March 31.

Mr. FLAKE, for 5 minutes, April 1, 2 and 3.

Mr. MORAN of Kansas, for 5 minutes, March 31, April 1 and 2.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

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. 146. An act to designate certain land as components of the National Wilderness Preservation System, to authorize certain programs and activities in the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture, and for other purposes.

BILL PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Lorraine C. Miller, Clerk of the House reports that on March 24, 2009 she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill:

H.R. 1512. To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the funding and expenditure authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, to amend title 49, United States Code, to extend authorizations for the airport improvement program, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 58 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, March 31, 2009, at 10:30 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:

1078. A letter from the OSD Federal Register Liaison Officer, DoD, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's ''Major'' final rule — Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services (CHAMPUS)/ TRICARE: Inclusion of TRICARE Retail Pharmacy Program in Federal Procurement of Pharmaceuticals [DoD-2008-HA-0029; 0720-AB22] received March 17, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

1079. A letter from the Vice Chair and First Vice President, Export-Import Bank, transmitting a report on transactions involving U.S. exports to Mexico pursuant to Section 2(b)(3) of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945, as amended; to the Committee on Financial Services.

1080. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's ''Major'' final rule — Power Reactor Security Requirements [NRC-2008-0019] (RIN: 3150-AG63) received March 23, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1081. A letter from the Director, International Cooperation, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's intent to sign Amendment One to Supplement 3 to the Program Memorandum of Understanding among France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the United States for Cooperative Production of the Multifunctional Information Distribution System Low Volume Terminal, dated October 4, 1991 (Transmittal No. 03-09), pursuant to Section 27(f) of the Arms Export Control Act and Section 1(f) of Executive Order 11958; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1082. A letter from the Chairman, International Fund For Ireland, transmitting the Fund's Annual Report for 2008; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1083. A letter from the Acting Director, U.S. Trade and Development Agency, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1084. A letter from the Public Printer, Government Printing Office, transmitting the Office's annual report for fiscal year 2008; to the Committee on House Administration.

1085. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Viking Air Limited Model DHC-6-1, DHC-6-100, DHC-6-200, and DHC-6-300 Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2008-1267; Directorate Identifier 2008-CE-069-AD; Amendment 39-15815; AD 2009-04-09] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 27, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1086. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Rolls-Royce Deutschland Ltd & Co KG, BR700-715A1-30, BR700-715B1-30, and BR700-715C1-30 Turbofan Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2007-0169; Directorate Identifier 2007-NE-45-AD; Amendment 39-15819; AD 2009-04-13] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 27, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1087. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 777-200 and -300 Series Airplanes Equipped with Rolls-Royce Model RB211-TRENT 800 Series Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2009-0199; Directorate Identifier 2009-NM-017-AD; Amendment 39-15835; AD 2009-05-11] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 27, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1088. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No.: 30657; Amdt. No. 3313] received March 27, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1089. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier Model CL-215-6B11 (CL-215T Variant) and CL-215-6B11 (CL-415 Variant) Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2009-0159; Directorate Identifier 2008-NM-175-AD; Amendment 39-15828; AD 2009-05-04] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 27, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1090. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; BAE Systems (Operations) Limited (Jetstream) Model 4101 Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2009-0034; Directorate Identifier 2007-NM-082-AD; Amendment 39-15797; AD 2009-02-07] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 27, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1091. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; BURKHART GROB LUFT — UND RAUMFAHRT GmbH & CO KG G103 Series Gliders [Docket No.: FAA-2008-1078 Directorate Identifier 2008-CE-051-AD; Amendment 39-15814; AD 2009-04-08] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 27, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1092. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; General Electric Company CF6-80A, CF6-80C2, and CF6-80E1 Series Turbofan Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2008-0952; Directorate Identifier 98-ANE-49-AD; Amendment 39-15816; AD 2009-04-10] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 27, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1093. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Pratt & Whitney Canada PW206A, PW206B, PW206B2, PW206C, PW206E, PW207C, PW207D, and PW207E Turboshaft Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2007-0219; Directorate Identifier 2007-NE-46-AD; Amendment 39-15806; AD 2009-03-05] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 27, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1094. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Turbomeca S.A. Models Arriel 1E2, 1S, and 1S1 Turboshaft Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2008-0681; Directorate Identifier 2008-NE-13-AD; Amendment 39-15805; AD 2009-03-04] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 27, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1095. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Cessna Aircraft Company Models 182Q and 182R Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2008-1205; Directorate Identifier 2008-CE-062-AD; Amendment 39-15811; AD 2009-04-05] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 27, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1096. A letter from the Board of Trustees, National Railroad Retirement Investment Trust, transmitting the Trust's annual management report on its operations and financial condition, pursuant to Section 105 of the Railroad Retirement and Survivors' Improvement Act of 2001; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1097. A letter from the Director of Regulations Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's ''Major'' final rule — Post-9/11 GI Bill (RIN: 2900-AN10) received March 27, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

1098. A letter from the Auditor, District of Columbia, transmitting a report entitled, ''Implementation of Omnibus Homeland Security Act: D.C. Government Needs to Sharpen Its Focus on Homeland Defense''; jointly to the Committees on Oversight and Government Reform and Homeland Security.

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 referenced to the proper calendar, as follows:

[Omitted from the Record of March 26, 2009]

Mr. WAXMAN: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 1256. A bill to protect the public health by providing the Food and Drug Administration with certain authority to regulate tobacco products (Rept. 111–58 Pt. 1). Ordered to be printed.

Mr. TOWNS: Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. H.R. 1256. A bill to protect the public health by providing the Food and Drug Administration with certain authority to regulate tobacco products; with amendments (Rept. 111–58 Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

[Filed March 27, 2009]

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania: Committee on House Administration. House Resolution 279. Resolution providing for the expenses of certain committees of the House of Representatives in the One Hundred Eleventh Congress; with an amendment (Rept. 111–59). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. SPRATT: Committee on the Budget. House Concurrent Resolution 85. Resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2010 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2009 and 2011 through 2014 (Rept. 111–60). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

[Submitted on March 30, 2009]

Mr. CONYERS: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 985. A bill to maintain the free flow of information to the public by providing conditions for the federally compelled disclosure of information by certain persons connected with the news media (Rept. 111–61).

Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. WAXMAN: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 1253. A bill to require that limitations and restrictions on coverage under group health plans be timely disclosed to group health plan sponsors and timely communicated to participants and beneficiaries under such plans in a form that is easily understandable (Rept. 111–62 Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 294. A resolution providing for consideration of the resolution (House Resolution 279) providing for the expenses of certain committees of the House of Representatives in the One Hundred Eleventh Congress (Rept. 111–63). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts: Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 1664. A bill to amend the executive compensation provisions of the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 to prohibit unreasonable and excessive compensation and compensation not based on performance standards; with an amendment (Rept. 111–64). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania: Committee on House Administration. H.R. 151. A bill to establish the Daniel Webster Congressional Clerkship Program (Rept. 111–65). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania: Committee on House Administration. H.R. 151. A bill to make technical corrections to the laws affecting certain administrative authorities of the United States Capitol Police, and for other purposes (Rept. 111–66). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. MATSUI: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 296. Resolution providing for consideration of the Senate amendments to the bill (H.R. 1388) to reauthorize and reform the national service laws (Rept. 111–67). Referred to the House Calendar.

DISCHARGE OF COMMITTEE

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XII, the Committees on Education and Labor and Ways and Means discharged from further consideration. H.R. 1253 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. MCNERNEY:

H.R. 1774. A bill to incorporate smart grid capability into the Energy Star Program, to reduce peak electric demand, to reauthorize energy efficiency public information program to include Smart Grid information, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. MCNERNEY:

H.R. 1775. A bill to provide support to develop career and technical education programs of study and facilities in the areas of renewable energy; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. ALTMIRE:

H.R. 1776. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to expand the development of quality measures for inpatient hospital services, to implement a performance-based payment methodology for the provision of such services under the Medicare Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California (for himself, Mr. MCKEON, Mr. HINOJOSA, and Mr. GUTHRIE):

H.R. 1777. A bill to make technical corrections to the Higher Education Act of 1965, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and Labor; considered and passed.

By Mr. WELCH (for himself, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. PATRICK J. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mrs. MALONEY, Mr. HONDA, Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mrs. DAHLKEMPER, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. TONKO, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. TEAGUE, Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. INSLEE, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. CARNAHAN, Mr. HIMES, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. MASSA, and Mr. POLIS of Colorado):

H.R. 1778. A bill to provide for the establishment of national energy and environmental building retrofit policies for both residential and commercial buildings, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Financial 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. SCOTT of Virginia:

H.R. 1779. A bill to provide for resources for the investigation and prosecution of financial crimes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committees on Oversight and Government Reform, and Financial 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 Ms. MATSUI:

H.R. 1780. A bill to amend the Clean Air Act to achieve greenhouse gas emissions reductions through transportation efficiency; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SPACE:

H.R. 1781. A bill to direct the Secretary of Labor to carry out a sustainability workforce training and education program; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. ELLISON:

H.R. 1782. A bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to protect consumers from certain practices in connection with the origination of consumer credit transactions secured by the consumer's principal dwelling, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. POLIS of Colorado:

H.R. 1783. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to encourage investment in certain industries by providing an exclusion from tax on certain gains; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. POLIS of Colorado:

H.R. 1784. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to encourage the purchase of residential property by providing an exclusion from tax on certain gains; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BERMAN (for himself, Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California, Mr. NADLER of New York, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. SCHIFF, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. COBLE, Mr. WEINER, and Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California):

H.R. 1785. A bill to expedite adjudication of employer petitions for aliens of extraordinary artistic ability; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. HARMAN:

H.R. 1786. A bill to establish a Best-in-Class Appliances Deployment Program; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. INSLEE:

H.R. 1787. A bill to amend the Clean Air Act regarding transportation fuels and establishment of a low carbon fuel standard; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. BERMAN (for himself, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California, Mr. CONYERS, and Mr. COHEN):

H.R. 1788. A bill to amend the provisions of title 31, United States Code, relating to false claims to clarify and make technical amendments to those provisions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida:

H.R. 1789. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide incentives to encourage investment in the expansion of freight rail infrastructure capacity and to enhance modal tax equity; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. ENGEL:

H.R. 1790. A bill to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions resulting from land conversion and deforestation in developing countries, to provide incentives for developing countries to increase forest carbon stocks, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, 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. FLAKE:

H.R. 1791. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to authorize certain aliens who have earned a Ph.D. degree from a United States institution of higher education in a field of science, technology, engineering, or mathematics to be admitted for permanent residence and to be exempted from the numerical limitations on H-1B nonimmigrants; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. KING of New York (for himself, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. CROWLEY, and Mr. SHULER):

H.R. 1792. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide recruitment and retention incentives for volunteer emergency service workers; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Education and Labor, 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. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California (for himself and Mr. SMITH of Texas):

H.R. 1793. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, with respect to money laundering; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California (for himself and Mr. COSTA):

H.R. 1794. A bill to provide incentives to reduce dependence on foreign oil; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committees on Science and Technology, and Energy and Commerce, 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. MATHESON:

H.R. 1795. A bill to provide for the establishment of an Offsets Integrity Advisory Board, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. MATHESON:

H.R. 1796. A bill to amend the Consumer Product Safety Act to require residential carbon monoxide detectors to meet the applicable ANSI/UL standard by treating that

standard as a consumer product safety rule, to encourage States to require the installation of such detectors in homes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. MEEKS of New York:

H.R. 1797. A bill to reform certain provisions of section 404 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 to make compliance with that section more efficient, with the goal of maintaining United States capital market global competitiveness; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. MEEKS of New York:

H.R. 1798. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to eliminate the limitation on the foreign earned income exclusion, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MICHAUD (for himself and Mrs. SCHMIDT):

H.R. 1799. A bill to amend title 23, United States Code, with respect to vehicle weight limitations applicable to the Interstate System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, 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. NADLER of New York (for himself, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. PAUL, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. HOLT, Mrs. MALONEY, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. FARR, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. STARK, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Ms. LEE of California, and Mr. HINCHEY):

H.R. 1800. A bill to establish reasonable procedural protections for the use of national security letters, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Financial 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. SHERMAN (for himself, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. FILNER, Mr. KUCINICH, and Mr. DEFAZIO):

H.R. 1801. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to impose a 70 percent tax on certain compensation received from certain companies receiving Federal bailout funds; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. TIAHRT:

H.R. 1802. A bill to establish a commission to conduct a comprehensive review of Federal agencies and programs and to recommend the elimination or realignment of duplicative, wasteful, or outdated functions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committee on Rules, 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 Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas:

H. Con. Res. 86. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for the unveiling of a bust of Sojourner Truth; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (for herself, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. PENCE, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. INGLIS, and Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas):

H. Con. Res. 87. Concurrent resolution observing the 15th anniversary of the Rwandan genocide and calling on all responsible nations to uphold the principles of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. STUPAK:

H. Con. Res. 88. Concurrent resolution urging local tax assessors, in light of the current housing market and economic struggles of people in the United States, to more frequently reassess the property values used to determine property taxes for primary residences, and encouraging local governments to provide property tax relief to those whose home values have declined; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. WEXLER (for himself, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. GALLEGLY, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. MCMAHON, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, and Mr. WAXMAN):

H. Con. Res. 89. Concurrent resolution supporting the goals and objectives of the Prague Conference on Holocaust Era Assets; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. FLAKE:

H. Res. 295. A resolution raising a question of the privileges of the House.

By Mrs. BIGGERT (for herself, Mr. WOLF, Mr. STUPAK, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, and Mr. ROONEY):

H. Res. 297. A resolution recognizing May 25, 2009, as National Missing Children's Day; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. KING of Iowa (for himself, Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN, and Mr. BOREN):

H. Res. 298. A resolution congratulating the on-premise sign industry for its contributions to the success of small businesses; to the Committee on Small Business.

By Mr. LYNCH (for himself, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia, Mr. CUMMINGS, and Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland):

H. Res. 299. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that public servants should be commended for their dedication and continued service to the Nation during Public Service Recognition Week, May 4 through 10, 2009, and throughout the year; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. MCHUGH:

H. Res. 300. A resolution congratulating Camp Dudley YMCA of Westport, New York, on the occasion of its 125th anniversary; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. PRICE of North Carolina (for himself, Mr. WATT, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. MILLER of North Carolina, Mr. KISSELL, Mr. MCINTYRE, Mr. SHULER, Ms. FOXX, Mr. ETHERIDGE, Mr. JONES, Mrs. MYRICK, Mr. MCHENRY, and Mr. COBLE):

H. Res. 301. A resolution honoring the life of Dr. John Hope Franklin; 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. 22: Mr. ENGEL, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. JONES, Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey, Mr. MOLLOHAN, Mr. CHAFFETZ, Mr. POLIS of Colorado, Mr. MARKEY of Massachusetts, Mr. BOUCHER, Ms. GRANGER, Mr. CALVERT, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. WU, and Mr. PUTNAM.

H.R. 24: Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. PATRICK J. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mrs. DAHLKEMPER, Mr. COHEN, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. TIAHRT, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. KAGEN, Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. KANJORSKI, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. RADANOVICH, and Mr. BOEHNER.

H.R. 27: Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida.

H.R. 83: Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida.

H.R. 97: Mr. HOLT.

H.R. 103: Mr. HOLT.

H.R. 155: Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS.

H.R. 197: Mr. BISHOP of Utah and Mr. SCHOCK.

H.R. 205: Mr. BACHUS.

H.R. 275: Mr. SCHOCK, Mrs. BLACKBURN, and Mrs. BACHMANN.

H.R. 302: Mr. COURTNEY and Mr. TERRY.

H.R. 388: Mr. SESTAK.

H.R. 403: Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. GIFFORDS, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. STARK, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Mr. MCMAHON.

H.R. 422: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, and Mr. SESTAK.

H.R. 442: Mr. CALVERT and Mr. BROWN of South Carolina.

H.R. 444: Mr. KISSELL, Ms. LEE of California, and Mr. SARBANES.

H.R. 498: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.

H.R. 521: Mr. MOORE of Kansas.

H.R. 528: Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin.

H.R. 558: Mr. ROSS.

H.R. 610: Mr. MEEKS of New York and Mr. HINCHEY.

H.R. 613: Mr. WOLF, Ms. GIFFORDS, Mr. SPRATT, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. MASSA, and Mr. PAUL.

H.R. 620: Mr. LAMBORN.

H.R. 621: Mr. SPACE.

H.R. 626: Ms. CLARKE and Mr. RUSH.

H.R. 627: Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. BACA, and Mr. HONDA.

H.R. 634: Mr. MOLLOHAN and Mr. SULLIVAN.

H.R. 644: Mr. HONDA.

H.R. 666: Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan and Mr. LAMBORN.

H.R. 667: Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania and Mr. LUJÁN.

H.R. 669: Mr. HINCHEY.

H.R. 676: Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD.

H.R. 707: Mr. BAIRD, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina, Mrs. BACHMANN, Mr. KRATOVIL, Mr. VISCLOSKY, and Mr. CAMPBELL.

H.R. 729: Mr. PAYNE, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. MEEKS of New York, and Mr. SIRES.

H.R. 731: Mrs. MYRICK.

H.R. 745: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. SERRANO, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, and Mr. BURTON of Indiana.

H.R. 805: Mr. TONKO.

H.R. 848: Mr. CLEAVER and Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi.

H.R. 864: Mr. HARE.

H.R. 868: Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. GORDON of Tennessee, Mr. SESTAK, Mr. MICHAUD, and Mr. WOLF.

H.R. 874: Mr. DOYLE, Mr. BERRY, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. WALZ, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. CAPUANO, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. OBERSTAR, Mr. MOORE of Kansas, Mr. DAVIS of Tennessee, Mr. SNYDER, Mr. FILNER, Mr. WAXMAN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. ROSS, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. NADLER of New York, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. TANNER, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. COSTELLO, Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts, Mr. COHEN, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. CLAY, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HONDA, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. BROWN of South Carolina, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Mr. GORDON of Tennessee, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. WATSON, Mr. COOPER, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. KIND, Mrs. BIGGERT, Ms. HARMAN, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. ETHERIDGE, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Ms. WATERS, Mr. OLVER, Mr. WELCH, Mr. BOSWELL, Ms. CLARKE, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. PINGREE of Maine, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. KAGEN, Mr. CROWLEY, Mrs. LOWEY,

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mrs. LUMMIS, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. PASTOR of Arizona, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. TOWNS, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. MATHESON, Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. BAIRD, Ms. KILROY, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. ORTIZ, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. LYNCH, Mrs. MALONEY, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. POLIS of Colorado, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. MOLLOHAN, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. CHAFFETZ, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. EHLERS, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. MARKEY of Massachusetts, Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. STARK, and Mr. COSTA.

H.R. 930: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 932: Ms. FUDGE, Mr. DINGELL, and Mr. BOCCIERI.

H.R. 936: Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan.

H.R. 959: Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. SESTAK, Mr. GERLACH, and Mr. ALTMIRE.

H.R. 968: Mr. SESSIONS.

H.R. 1029: Mr. SMITH of Texas.

H.R. 1098: Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. REYES, and Mr. GRAYSON.

H.R. 1134: Mr. MARKEY of Massachusetts.

H.R. 1171: Ms. HARMAN and Mrs. HALVORSON.

H.R. 1179: Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut, Mr. HALL of New York, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. LATHAM, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. GORDON of Tennessee, Mr. NADLER of New York, and Mrs. DAVIS of California.

H.R. 1189: Mr. OBERSTAR.

H.R. 1190: Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS.

H.R. 1203: Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN, Mr. POSEY, Mr. PAUL, Mr. SPACE, Mr. BROUN of Georgia, Mr. KANJORSKI, Mr. SESTAK, Mr. OBERSTAR, Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey, Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky, and Mr. CLAY.

H.R. 1204: Mr. REHBERG.

H.R. 1205: Mr. OLSON, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mrs. SCHMIDT, and Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky.

H.R. 1207: Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. GINGREY of Georgia, and Mr. TERRY.

H.R. 1214: Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.

H.R. 1220: Mr. KANJORSKI.

H.R. 1238: Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas.

H.R. 1240: Mr. SMITH of Washington and Mr. SESTAK.

H.R. 1242: Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.

H.R. 1255: Mr. STARK.

H.R. 1261: Mr. PERRIELLO, Mr. MILLER of North Carolina, and Mr. BRIGHT.

H.R. 1305: Mr. ALTMIRE.

H.R. 1310: Mr. GORDON of Tennessee and Mr. BAIRD.

H.R. 1327: Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. FLEMING, Mrs. BIGGERT, Mr. SCHOCK, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. MELANCON, and Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.

H.R. 1362: Mr. SESTAK, Mr. RUSH, Mr. SPACE, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. DAVIS of Alabama, Mrs. SCHMIDT, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. HARE, Mr. LEE of New York, and Ms. FUDGE.

H.R. 1384: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. AKIN, Mr. MILLER of Florida, and Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.

H.R. 1402: Mr. GORDON of Tennessee, Mr. WELCH, and Mr. NYE.

H.R. 1403: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. MANZULLO, and Mr. EDWARDS of Texas.

H.R. 1405: Mr. FILNER and Mr. DRIEHAUS.

H.R. 1452: Mr. BOUCHER.

H.R. 1454: Mr. ABERCROMBIE and Mr. CALVERT.

H.R. 1456: Mr. CAPUANO.

H.R. 1458: Mr. SCHIFF.

H.R. 1466: Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 1476: Mr. BARROW.

H.R. 1499: Mr. CARNAHAN and Mr. MCDERMOTT.

H.R. 1505: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.

H.R. 1509: Mr. LAMBORN and Mr. MASSA.

H.R. 1551: Mr. RUSH, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. FILNER, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Ms. TITUS, and Mr. TIERNEY.

H.R. 1552: Mr. DRIEHAUS, Mr. MASSA, Ms. GIFFORDS, Ms. KOSMAS, and Mr. SCHRADER.

H.R. 1558: Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. LOEBSACK, Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland, Mr. KENNEDY, and Mr. TOWNS.

H.R. 1566: Mr. PAULSEN.

H.R. 1571: Mr. STARK and Mr. CARNAHAN.

H.R. 1587: Mr. COBLE, Mr. MCHUGH, and Mr. GINGREY of Georgia.

H.R. 1588: Mrs. MYRICK, Mr. PITTS, Mr. BOOZMAN, and Mr. CAMPBELL.

H.R. 1590: Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. WEINER, Mr. WEXLER, and Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.

H.R. 1615: Mrs. BONO MACK, Mr. LEE of New York, and Mr. TERRY.

H.R. 1646: Mr. SENSENBRENNER.

H.R. 1664: Ms. FUDGE.

H.R. 1670: Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. GORDON of Tennessee, Mr. MURTHA, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. BONNER, and Mr. PLATTS.

H.R. 1681: Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. ROSS, and Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 1685: Mr. STARK and Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 1691: Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts, Mr. GRAYSON, and Mr. SCHAUER.

H.R. 1692: Mr. BURGESS.

H.R. 1696: Mr. STARK and Mr. PAYNE.

H.R. 1700: Mr. MASSA.

H.R. 1708: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mrs. BONO MACK, Ms. KILROY, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, Mr. OLVER, Mr. PAUL, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. DOYLE, Mr. MCDERMOTT, and Ms. DELAURO.

H.R. 1715: Mr. DOGGETT and Mr. BURGESS.

H.R. 1725: Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland and Mr. SARBANES.

H.R. 1731: Mr. SHULER.

H.R. 1740: Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia, Ms. GIFFORDS, Mr. POLIS of Colorado, Mr. GRAYSON, Ms. BERKLEY, Ms. JENKINS, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. DINGELL, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. GORDON of Tennessee, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mr. BOUCHER, Mr. MINNICK, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. ACKERMAN, Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. SALAZAR, Mr. FARR, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. PIERLUISI, Mr. DRIEHAUS, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. HOLT, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. HARE, Mr. FILNER, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. PETERS, Ms. WATSON, Mr. GRIFFITH, Mr. SCHRADER, Ms. TSONGAS, Ms. PINGREE of Maine, Mr. HILL, Mr. ALTMIRE, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. ETHERIDGE, Mr. MARKEY of Massachusetts, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. TANNER, Mr. WU, Mr. KISSELL, Ms. GRANGER, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. BERRY, Mr. MILLER of North Carolina, Mr. STARK, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. SNYDER, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. MOLLOHAN, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, and Mr. DEFAZIO.

H.R. 1750: Mrs. MYRICK.

H.R. 1753: Mr. BARTLETT.

H.R. 1761: Mr. CARNEY and Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan.

H.R. 1770: Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. WILSON of Ohio, and Mr. LOBIONDO.

H.J. Res. 41: Mr. MCCOTTER and Mr. BACHUS.

H. Con. Res. 29: Mr. LINDER and Mr. GINGREY of Georgia.

H. Con. Res. 36: Mr. WEINER.

H. Con. Res. 60: Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mr. MILLER of North Carolina, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky, Mr. RAHALL, and Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.

H. Con. Res. 70: Mr. LANCE, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. PITTS, Mrs. BACHMANN, and Mr. SOUDER.

H. Con. Res. 74: Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H. Con. Res. 78: Mrs. TAUSCHER.

H. Res. 111: Mr. INGLIS and Mr. PUTNAM.

H. Res. 130: Mr. PALLONE and Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas.

H. Res. 170: Mr. INSLEE, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. DICKS, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. WALZ, Mr. STARK, Ms. RICHARDSON, and Mr. HOLDEN.

H. Res. 197: Mr. BROWN of South Carolina.

H. Res. 209: Mr. WEXLER and Ms. LEE of California.

H. Res. 243: Ms. BERKLEY.

H. Res. 244: Mrs. MYRICK.

H. Res. 247: Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia.

H. Res. 249: Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. SHADEGG, and Mr. MANZULLO.

H. Res. 251: Mr. MCCAUL and Mr. WAMP.

H. Res. 254: Mr. COSTELLO, Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey, and Mr. WEINER.

H. Res. 266: Mr. MCCOTTER.

H. Res. 271: Mr. NADLER of New York, Mr. CLEAVER, Ms. NORTON, and Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan.

H. Res. 274: Mr. MATHESON, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. KIRK, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. HARMAN, Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. OBERSTAR, Mr. MASSA, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. HARE, Mr. INSLEE, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. ROSS, Mr. SKELTON, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. RUSH, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. MOORE of Kansas, Mr. COHEN, Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. PUTNAM, Mr. WELCH, and Mr. WOLF.

H. Res. 282: Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN.

H. Res. 290: Mr. BILBRAY, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. MCKEON, Mrs. BONO MACK, Mr. HERGER, Mr. MCCARTHY of California, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. NUNES, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, and Mr. GALLEGLY.

DELETION OF SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were deleted from public bills and resolutions as follows:

H. Res. 111: Mr. DEAL of Georgia.

United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 111th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 155 WASHINGTON, MONDAY, MARCH 30, 2009 No. 53

Senate

The Senate met at 11 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable CARL LEVIN, a Senator from the State of Michigan.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O God, the fountain of wisdom, today help our lawmakers to be wise enough to ask for Your guidance and humble enough to receive it. Give them the ability to hear Your voice and follow Your leading. Lord, lead them to be as kind to others as they want people to be to them. As they faithfully work for freedom, remind them that they are living in Your sacred presence. Give them the wisdom to avoid the paths that bring regret, remorse, and shame. At all times, keep their thoughts pure, their words true, and their actions honorable. Cultivate within them the grace of gratitude, integrity, discipline, and kindness.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable CARL LEVIN 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, March 30, 2009.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable CARL LEVIN, a Senator from the State of Michigan, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. LEVIN thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following leader remarks, the Senate will proceed to the budget resolution. Under the statute that governs this legislation, we have 50 hours of debate. There will be no rollcall votes today. There should be a lot of votes in the next few days after today.

THE ECONOMY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, 8 years ago, President Bush inherited from President Clinton a prosperous and a very strong nation with a tremendously powerful, growing economy. Our unemployment rate was at an exceptionally low rate of just over 4 percent. We had a budget surplus of about $130 billion. We were actually paying down the debt. For 3 years, we paid down the debt by about half a trillion dollars.

President Bush and congressional Republicans inherited an economy that was growing and lifting all Americans along with the growing economy. Then Bush, Cheney, and the congressional Republicans set about dismantling the foundation of prosperity that built up over the years. They slashed taxes for the super-rich based on the long-discredited theory that these dollars would trickle down to the middle class and poor. They repealed or ignored oversight laws meant to protect our financial markets from manipulation and excess. They borrowed hundreds of billions of dollars to fight a war in Iraq marred by waste, fraud, and abuse. It took all of their 8 years in power, but George Bush, Dick Cheney, and Republican allies here not only reversed the prosperity they inherited but set us on the course of the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression.

This January, President Obama inherited from President Bush an unemployment rate above 7 percent, and climbing, a Republican deficit of nearly $500 billion, and a national debt twice the level it was when he took office. In the first weeks of his term, President Obama has shown exactly why our country entrusted him with the Presidency during this hour of crisis. We inherited a Republican deficit of half a trillion dollars. But with calm and determined leadership, President Obama proposed an economic recovery plan that is now beginning to stem the tide of job loss—especially jobs—and create new opportunity for workers and small businesses in every corner of our country. He proposed a budget that focuses on long-term prosperity, in addition to near-term recovery, by lowering taxes for working people, laying the groundwork for cutting the Republican deficit in half, and investing in renewable energy, health care, and education.

Over the past weeks, Members of Congress have taken a close look at the President's budget and considered their own proposals to strengthen it further. As usual, Chairman CONRAD has done an outstanding job. He has brought Democrats and Republicans into the budget process and considered all proposals with equal weight. That is how we will approach this week ahead.

A piece of legislation this important to America's future requires us to move forward in a serious, productive, and inclusive manner. Democrats have maintained all year that the best solutions to the challenges we face come

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

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when both parties seek and find common ground. The minority can play a major role in this process but only if they offer solutions, not sound bites.

We all recognize that reversing 8 years of Republican deficits and fiscal irresponsibility will take time. It will not happen overnight. We may not know exactly when the recession will end, but I am confident that passing the budget will hasten the day when recovery begins.

Mr. President, 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.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET FOR THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2010

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to consideration of S. Con. Res. 13, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A Senate concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 13) setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2010, revising the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal year 2009, and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2011 through 2014.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have spoken to the two managers of the bill. As soon as Senator MCCONNELL comes to the floor, they will turn the floor over to him. He is coming, but he was detained on the way. So if the two managers will go ahead and start the bill, and when Senator MCCONNELL gets to the floor, he has a statement he wants to make, and that will start the time counting.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, Americans have serious concerns about this budget and the massive amount of spending, taxing, and borrowing it calls for right in the middle of a recession. They are also increasingly concerned that Democratic leaders in Washington seem to be less and less straightforward about what we are actually doing here on Capitol Hill.

Americans were upset to learn that a provision was quietly dropped from the stimulus bill that would have kept taxpayer dollars from going to executives at failed financial firms. But they were equally upset at how those bonuses came about—the language blocking them was quietly stripped from the bill in a closed conference room somewhere in the Capitol without anybody looking.

A few days after that, openness took another holiday on Capitol Hill when Democratic leaders announced new budget gimmicks that had the effect of concealing the true long-term costs of the administration's $3.6 trillion budget. And now questions about diminishing transparency relate to the budget itself—a budget that almost makes the trillion-dollar stimulus bill look fiscally responsible by comparison.

Everyone knows that the national debt is already too high and that this budget would cause that debt to balloon even more—doubling in 5 years and tripling in 10. Yet, even with all that borrowing, the administration still will not have enough money to pay for the massive expansion of Government outlined in this budget. In order to cover the cost, they propose two things: a tax on income that hits small business very hard and a new national energy tax that would hit every American household and business.

But the Democratic budget writers had a problem: This new energy tax is deeply unpopular, and it is a serious job killer. According to some estimates, this tax could cost every American household up to $3,100 a year just for doing the same things people have always done, such as turning on the lights and doing the laundry. It is also a tax on all economic activity, from factory floors to front offices. This tax won't just hit American households, it will cost us jobs.

Another problem was that virtually all Republicans and a lot of Democrats agree with most Americans that this new national energy tax is a terrible idea and that we can't afford it. Yet, without this tax, there is just no other way for Democratic leaders to pay for all the new Government programs the administration wants. The solution to the problem was this: Democratic budget writers decided to use a rule that allows them to fast track legislation down the road, including potentially the new energy tax, without any input from Democrats and Republicans who either have serious concerns about this tax or who oppose it altogether.

The chairman of the Budget Committee argues that this version of the budget resolution doesn't allow this avenue for fast tracking legislation on an energy tax, and that may be so. But we also know two things: First, the language House budget writers have used in their budget resolution leaves the door wide open to include the energy tax, and the Democrats need this tax as a slush fund to pay for all the new programs the budget creates.

Some still argue that this fast-track process won't be used for the energy tax. They must not be paying attention to the administration's budget director, who says fast tracking the energy tax isn't off the table. And they must not have been paying attention to our friend the majority leader, who, to his credit, has been quite candid about the fact that the amount of money the administration needs for its health care proposals is almost exactly what the administration says it can raise from a national energy tax. Americans don't need another $3,100 added to their tax bill.

And just as worrisome is the method being used to ram this tax through Congress: lay the groundwork, keep it quiet, and rush it through with as little transparency and as little debate as possible.

If there is anything we have learned over the past few weeks, it is that the American people want more people watching the store, not fewer. If the bonuses taught us anything at all, it is that Americans think we should take more time, not less, when considering how to spend their money. If Democratic leaders intend to pay for all the administration's programs with a new energy tax, they should say so now, bring it to the full Senate, and let the people decide. Anything less on a policy shift of this magnitude betrays a troubling lack of straightforwardness about the Democrats' plan for imposing a massive new tax on the American people and American businesses.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and 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. CONRAD. 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. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the use of calculators be permitted on the floor during consideration of the budget resolution.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I know my colleague, Senator GREGG, the ranking member, has a statement he would like to make, and so I will withhold for his statement.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I appreciate the courtesy of the Senator from North Dakota, who is always extraordinarily courteous, professional, and generous. Before we begin the specific debate on the issue of the budget, which obviously we both have to be here for—and I know he has a lot of things going on in North Dakota with the flooding—I would like to make a few remarks off topic.

(The further remarks of Mr. GREGG and Mr. CONRAD are printed in today's RECORD under ''Morning Business.'')

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I speak to the matter now before us on the floor of the Senate, the budget.

I would like to start by pointing out what this President has inherited because this President, who has only been in office a few months, has inherited a series of crises almost unparalleled in our country's history. You think about it. Not only does he have a fiscal crisis, he has a housing crisis, he has a financial crisis, he has two wars, and he has a legacy of debt that is truly stunning.

The debt more than doubled in the previous 8 years, the foreign holdings of U.S. debt tripled in the previous 8 years, and the President inherited an economy in recession for more than a year, an economy which contracted by more than 6 percent in the last quarter of last year. Of course, when that happens, deficit and debt soar. That is precisely what has happened. In the last years, the deficit and debt have skyrocketed. So this President walks into a very challenging situation.

This shows what happened to just the Federal debt in the past years. It went from $5.8 trillion to over $12 trillion. The way we do it, we don't hold Presidents responsible for their first year because they are inheriting a situation. We don't hold George Bush responsible for the first year he was in office. He was working off the previous President's budget. And we do not hold this President responsible for the first year because he inherits the previous President's budget. But this is what happened in the previous 8 years: more than doubling of the debt. Perhaps even more alarming, there was a tripling of foreign-held debt.

President Bush, as we can see by this chart—it took 42 Presidents 224 years to build up $1 trillion of foreign-held debt. President Bush, during his period, ran up more than $2 trillion of foreign holdings of U.S. debt. Last year alone when we went to finance our debt, 68 percent of the funding came from foreign entities.

Some say that is a sign of strength. I don't share that view. To have the Chinese be our biggest financier, to have Japan be No. 2, to have them financing 68 percent of our newly issued debt—I don't think that is a sign of strength. I think it is a sign of vulnerability.

Not only did President Obama inherit those very tough fiscal situations, he also inherited a country facing very dire economic conditions, with over 3.3 million private sector jobs lost in the last 6 months alone.

You can see, going back to September, 300,000 jobs were lost. That jumped up to almost 400,000 in October of 2008; in November of 2008, over 600,000 jobs lost. Then it approached almost 700,000 in December of 2008. In January of 2009 there were nearly 700,000 jobs lost; in February of 2009, another almost 700,000 jobs lost.

We see the unemployment rate rose very dramatically, starting back in March of 2007, when it was just at about 4.4 percent. Then it started skyrocketing back in March of 2008. You can see it took off at a very rapid rate to a level of 8.1 percent in February of 2009.

This is much more than numbers on a poster. These are real people losing their jobs—meaning their ability to hold on to their homes was threatened, meaning their ability to provide for their families was diminished. These people are wondering what comes next for them; what are we going to do that is going to make a difference in their lives.

We also see economic growth contracted very dramatically from the third quarter of 2008, when there was a negative one-half of 1 percent of growth, to the fourth quarter of 2008 where the economy contracted at a rate of over 6 percent. That is the worst economic performance in decades.

That is the situation this President inherited. But it is more than that. He is inheriting record deficits; a doubling of the national debt; the worst recession since the Great Depression; financial market and housing crises, as I indicated; 3.3 million jobs lost in the last 6 months; and on top of that, ongoing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

I have often thought of the crushing responsibility on the shoulders of this President, but he is equal to it. I can say, in meeting after meeting I have had with him, one of the things that has always appealed to me about Barack Obama, now President Obama—not only is he a very smart person, but he is remarkably calm.

Even in the face of great crisis, this President maintains a coolness under fire. I find it very appealing and very reassuring that with all of these crises he is absolutely calm and he is very clear thinking. That is what we need at this time.

So when the President came with major priorities in his budget, I think many across America thought, those are exactly the right priorities. He is talking about reducing our dependence on foreign energy, one of his three key priorities; excellence in education. If we do not have the best education in the world, we are not going to be the strongest country in the world; for very large major health care reform, because I think everyone understands that is the 800-pound gorilla. That is the thing that could swamp the boat, because we are spending $1 of every $6 in this economy on health care, and we are headed for more than $1 of every $3 in this economy going to health care if we stay on the current trend line. Clearly that is unsustainable and the President has called for major health care reform.

A continuation of middle-class tax cuts, the 2001 and 2003 tax cuts. The President added additional middle-class tax cuts in his budget. All the while the President called for these major initiatives, but to do it and cut the deficit in half over the 5 years. We have tried our level best to meet the President's major priorities, understanding that we were going to have to make some changes, because the Congressional Budget Office, who did their forecast of revenue available, had done their forecast several months after the President's forecast was done. In the meantime, the situation, as I have already shown, had deteriorated. So we were left with a circumstance in which we had $2.3 trillion less to write a budget than did the President when he wrote his.

When I say $2.3 trillion, I want to emphasize that. I am not talking about ''million,'' I am not talking about ''billion,'' I am talking about ''trillions'' of dollars. Trillions of dollars. A trillion dollars is 1,000 billion dollars; 1,000 billion dollars.

So when we say $2.3 trillion was lost in the forecast of revenue available, that is a big deal. I was given the responsibility of telling the President that we were faced with that very changed circumstance, because the Congressional Budget Office does not report to the President, it reports to the Congress. So when we learned of this very significant change, I and Chairman SPRATT, the chairman of the Budget Committee in the House, were given the responsibility to meet with the President and to inform him of these very significant changes.

As you can imagine, the President was not very happy. But I can tell you he is a realist, and he understood immediately the implications. He understood immediately that we would have to make some changes in his budget. But he asked us to preserve his key priorities, and that is what we have attempted to do.

Again, we need to reduce our dependence on foreign energy. I think everyone knows, or nearly everyone, that this is one of the major fundamental threats to the United States. Our dependence on foreign energy, back in 1985, we imported 27 percent of the oil we use. By 2008, that had increased to 57 percent of the oil we are using being imported from abroad, much of it from unstable parts of the world, some of them not very friendly to the United States.

So this poses a fundamental long-term economic and security threat to our country. The President has rightly identified, even though the pressure is off right now because oil prices are way down, that this is something we have got to face up to if we are going to have a strong America in the future.

So in this budget we have responded with a reserve fund that reduces dependence on foreign energy, creates green jobs, helps preserve the environment, and helps with high home energy costs. We do it through a reserve fund to accommodate legislation, to invest in clean energy, and address global climate change.

We also provide the President's level of discretionary funding for the Department of Energy for the year. We

build on the economic recovery package investments in renewable energy, efficiency, and conservation, low-carbon coal technology, and modernizing the electric grid. That process had been started in the economic recovery package. It is in the budget; critically important to the economic future of the country.

In terms of a focus on excellence in education, there are lots of warning signs out there that we are starting to lose the battle to be the best educated people in the world. But what are the indications? Here is just one. We are now dramatically lagging China in producing engineers. You can see, in 1985, each of our countries produced about the same number of engineers. We produced, each of us, about 75,000 engineers.

But look at what has happened since in the United States. The number of engineers we are producing has declined to about 65,000. Look at what has happened in China. They have increased from about 75,000 to more than 440,000 engineers. Now, why is that important? I think we know it is important because you have got to have engineers if you are going to be building a strong infrastructure. If you do not have a strong infrastructure, you do not have a strong base for competition in this globalized world economy.

We have done everything we can to capture the President's priority of emphasizing excellence in education. We generate economic growth and jobs, prepare the workforce to meet the global economy, make college more affordable, and improve student achievement. We do it with a higher education reserve fund.

To facilitate the President's student aid increases, we extend the simplified college tax credit providing up to $2,500 a year, and we also focus on the President's requested level of $5,550 for Pell grants and fully fund his education priorities, such as early education.

Now, I was raised by my grandparents. My grandmother was a schoolteacher. She was five feet tall. We called her Little Chief. We called her Little Chief because she commanded respect. And in our family, she would tell us there are three priorities: Education is No. 1. Education is No. 2. And education is No. 3.

I tell you, we got the message, my generation. I have 13 cousins. Every one got advanced degrees. We were not a family of any special means, a middle-class family. But we understood that education was the way to secure a better future. She made it very clear to us that was the expectation. We need to reemphasize excellence in education in this country.

But we also face an enormous challenge in health care. As I indicated in my opening remarks, $1 in every $6 in this economy is going for health care. This chart shows 16 percent of our GDP, and we have just gotten updated numbers that show now we are over 17 percent of our gross domestic product going to health care. If we stay on the current trend line, by 2050, 37 percent of our gross domestic product will be going for health care. That is utterly unsustainable. It is the biggest threat to our long-term deficits and debt. It is the biggest threat to our economic competitive position. It is the biggest threat to the economic viabilities of families and companies and communities. So this is something that must be addressed.

President Obama has called for major health care reform, and we have sought to preserve that priority in the budget resolution. We invest in health care in an attempt to bend the health care cost curve to save money, reduce long-term costs, reduce the buildup of deficits and debt, also to improve health, to expand coverage, to increase research, and promote food and drug safety.

We do it in three fundamental ways. First, a reserve fund to accommodate the President's initiative to reform the health care system. What does a reserve fund mean? It means simply this: The committees of jurisdiction are given full flexibility to write legislation to accomplish the President's goals. But they have certain requirements, and the requirement is that they pay for what they produce, that it be deficit neutral.

The administration has said all along, that is their intention, and we try to match that intention in this budget. The reserve fund also addresses Medicare physician payments. It is already scheduled in law that doctors will take very significant reductions. We do not want to see that happen. So, again, we are saying to the committees of jurisdiction: Fix it and pay for it. Fix it and pay for it, because we cannot add to the deficit and debt to do it.

Finally, we continue to invest in key health care programs such as the National Institutes of Health and the Food and Drug Administration.

On defense, which is always of great interest in terms of a budget resolution, we actually provided $45 billion more in funding for defense than President Bush's final defense plan. You can see the final defense plan of President Bush is this red block. The hatch lines here are the additional funding we have provided over the years 2010 to 2013, because that is as far as the Bush defense plan goes. We provided $45 billion more. Frankly, President Obama came forward and said: Look, let us more honestly account for war costs than has previously been done. In the previous administration, all too often they did not put in the budget funding for war. This President did, and we do in the budget resolution.

Now, the President also gave us a charge to cut the deficit by more than half over the 5 years of the budget resolution. You can see that we have done, that this year we project the deficit at $1.7 trillion under this budget resolution, and we step it down every year. We will reduce it by $500 billion the first year, by $300 billion the second year, by another $300 billion the third year, by a little bit the fourth year, and by another about $60 billion the final year, to get down to $508 billion. That is a reduction of more than two-thirds over the 5 years, as a share of gross domestic product, which is what the economists like to look at, because that takes out the effect of inflation.

You can see we are reducing the deficits from 12.2 percent of gross domestic product in 2009, down to less than 3 percent in 2014. That is the magic goal, less than 3 percent of gross domestic product. Because at that level the economists tell us you stabilize the growth of the debt. That is the goal the President set, getting down to 3 percent of GDP or less in a deficit in the fifth year, and we beat that goal by a little bit.

There has been a lot of talk about the spending in this budget resolution. I want to make clear here is what happens. The spending again is a share of gross domestic product. Again the economists say that is the most fair comparison over time because it takes out the effect of inflation. You can see in 2009, we are spending 27.6 percent of GDP in this budget. That is a very high level historically. And, of course, the reason for it is the tremendous economic downturn, the need to provide stimulus to the economy, to provide lift. So spending is at a high level as a share of the gross domestic product in 2009.

You can see each and every year we step it down until 2012, and then basically it stays at that level for 2013, 2014, at about 22 percent of GDP. So we are going from 27.6 percent of GDP this year to 24.5 percent in 2010, down to 23.3 in 2011, and then basically stabilize at 22 percent of GDP through 2014, again getting down to our target of a deficit of less than 3 percent of GDP in the fifth year.

Again, on spending, to go into some additional detail, breaking down discretionary spending, as you know, in the budget we have mandatory spending, things such as Social Security and Medicare. Those are mandatory programs, mandatory in the sense that if you qualify, the Federal Government pays for what you have coming. Discretionary programs are programs that are open for the Appropriations Committee to adjust every year. If we look at the discretionary side of our budget, we can see, on defense, we are providing the full request by the President, a 3.8-percent increase. Internationally, we are not providing the President's full request because of the diminished resources available to us. So we cut the President's request by $4 billion. We are still providing an increase of almost 18 percent. Why are we giving such a large increase to international accounts? The reason is quite simple. We are engaged in two wars.

The Secretary of State called me the weekend before this weekend at home. The Secretary of Defense called me at

home. Both delivered the same message. They were a little unhappy, disappointed that I was cutting international accounts by $4 billion from the President's request. They emphasized the importance of these increases because what has been done before is to make supplemental requests outside the budget. This President said no more of that. We are going to be direct. We are going to be open in the money we are requesting. These funds are needed to deal with Iraq and Afghanistan and Pakistan and other threats we are facing around the world.

Interestingly, I have never before, in my 22 years in the Budget Committee, had the Secretary of Defense call me to support the budget for the State Department. Why would the Secretary of Defense call me and ask me to increase what I have provided for in the international accounts? He told me: There is a lot that is being spent out of the Defense Department budget that should be spent out of the State Department budget for activities in Afghanistan and Iraq. President Obama has put those categories of spending where they belong, and it ought to be supported. Of course, I have great respect for them both. I had to tell them: When you lose $2.3 trillion, you have to make a lot of changes to make it add up. So I felt compelled to reduce these accounts from the President's request.

Domestic spending, we increase by 6 percent. The President asked for more in that category. Again, we simply could not make the numbers work without making reductions.

So the total in this area, $1.03 trillion, is from last year. This year it is $1.08 trillion, for a combined increase in discretionary spending of 5.3 percent. We can see on nondefense discretionary, that combines international and domestic, we are giving a 7-percent increase. The President asked for over 10 percent. Again, I know there are people who are disappointed. I am sorry, but my responsibility is to deal with the reality with which I am presented. The reality I was presented with was $2.3 trillion less in revenue. I have had to make reductions in the discretionary accounts. I have had to make reductions in mandatory accounts. I have had to make changes on the tax side of the ledger in order to get the deficit down to a sustainable level.

Revenue changes in the budget resolution: I have heard some say we have all these tax increases. That is not what the Congressional Budget Office says, when they look at my budget and look at all the proposals and compare it to current law. They conclude that I am providing $825 billion of tax reduction. That is a different story than we hear coming from some quarters. That is not my claim. This is what the Congressional Budget Office finds when they look at my budget and compare it to current law. Why the difference? First, we have extended all the middle-class tax relief provided in 2001 and 2003; specifically, the 10-percent bracket, the child tax credit, the marriage penalty relief. All that is continued in this budget, as well as education incentives. On top of that, alternative minimum tax reform costs $216 billion to prevent 24 million Americans from being subjected to the alternative minimum tax. We also have estate tax reform; estate tax reform at $3.5 million an individual, $7 million a couple. Those people who have estates of less than that amount will pay zero in estate tax. Over 99 percent of the estates in America will pay zero, nothing, not a penny. That is a reform that needed to be made. It is included in this budget. The President called for it, and we have adopted it.

We also have a series of business provisions and the so-called tax extenders, things that need to be adjusted every year. We do it in this budget for a subtotal of tax relief of $958 billion. We have an offset to that, certain loophole closures, shutting down abusive tax havens, abusive tax shelters, offshore tax dodges that will raise $133 billion for total tax cuts of $825 billion.

In the President's budget, he has recommended that we not continue all the tax relief contained in the 2001 and 2003 acts for people earning over $250,000 a year. We have adopted that recommendation in this budget. All of the middle-class tax relief from 2001 and 2003 is here. It is funded. It is provided for.

In addition, the President called for additional tax reductions for middle-class people, the so-called make work pay provisions. Two years of that is already funded in the economic recovery package. So that will continue for the next 2 years. The President wanted to make that program permanent. Again, we could not do that in light of the new forecast. So we have provided that those make work pay provisions can be extended, if they are paid for. They will continue for the next 2 years, but after that, if they were to be extended, they would have to be paid for.

We also provide for important budget enforcement in the budget resolution. We have discretionary caps for 2009 and 2010. We maintain a strong pay-go rule. We have a point of order against long-term deficit increases, a point of order against short-term deficit increases. We allow reconciliation for deficit reduction only, which was the original purpose of reconciliation. We provide a point of order against mandatory spending on an appropriations bill; no backdoor stuff that used to go on, people raiding the Federal Treasury by coming in here and changing mandatory spending on an appropriations bill.

The budget resolution also addresses our long-term fiscal challenges in these ways. No. 1, we have the health reform reserve fund. That is absolutely the key element to dealing with our long-term buildup of deficits and debt. That is the part of our spending that is absolutely out of control. The only way to get it back under control is fundamental health care reform which is provided for in this budget on a deficit-neutral basis. We also have program integrity initiatives to crack down on waste, fraud and abuse and a long-term deficit increase point of order to require 60 votes to increase the deficit long term.

President Obama has said this about the need for further work on our long-term fiscal situation. Let me be clear: The first 5 years—this budget is a 5-year budget—we do quite a good job, a credible job of getting the deficit down. We reduce it by more than two-thirds. We get it down to less than 3 percent of GDP. But the second 5 years of the President's plan, even if we extended our budget for 5 years, is going to require much more effort. We are on an unsustainable course for the long term. In the next 5 years, I think we have done a credible job of moving in the right direction, reducing the deficit by two-thirds. But beyond the 5 years, we have big problems on the horizon.

The start in this budget to deal with it is health care reform because it is the 800-pound gorilla. But it is going to take more than that. It is also going to take tax reform because we have a tax system that is hemorrhaging to these offshore tax havens, abusive tax shelters and, frankly, a system that is very inefficient at collecting the revenue that is due. If we collected the money that is due under the current Tax Code, we would have no structural deficit. We wouldn't need any tax increase. If we just collected the money that is due under the current tax levels, we would have no structural deficit. The problem is, we aren't collecting the money that is due under the current code. We are only collecting about 75 percent of what is due. A big reason for that is the explosion of offshore tax havens, abusive tax shelters, the tax gap. All those things are rendering the tax system very ineffective.

The President recognizes the need for further action to address the long-term fiscal imbalance as well. He said:

> Now, I want to be very clear. While we are making important progress towards fiscal responsibility this year, in this budget, this is just the beginning. In the coming years, we'll be forced to make more tough choices, and do much more to address our long-term challenges.

That is the truth. We are going to have to do much more in those years beyond the 5 years of this budget.

Finally, I would like to address the question of a 5-year budget versus a 10-year budget. The President sent us a 10-year budget. We have written a 5-year budget. Some have said that is an attempt to conceal the effect of the second 5 years. The President sent us a 10-year budget. It has been fully scored by the Congressional Budget Office. There is no hiding of anything. The President provided us a 10-year budget. I was critical of the previous administration for not providing a 10-year budget because I was concerned they

were hiding the effect of their tax cuts in the second 5 years. This President has made no attempt to conceal his 10-year plan. He sent it to us. It has been scored by the Congressional Budget Office. We know what it is.

But Congress, when it writes budgets, has almost always written a 5-year budget. In fact, of the 34 budgets Congress has written under the Budget Act, 30 have been 5-year budgets. Why? Because the projections for year 6 through year 10, the projections for revenues and expenditures for years 6 through 10, have been woefully inaccurate. They have been notoriously unreliable. But never have I seen them more unreliable than right now. That's because of the extraordinary uncertainty we're facing in the near term. Inaccuracies in the forecasts for the next several years will compound into huge differences in years 6 through 10.

So we wrote a 5-year budget that fully discloses the spending and revenue for the 5 years. We did not write a 10-year budget. Congress almost never has. But the President did. And the President's 10-year plan is fully disclosed.

We have done our level best to make changes that were necessary in what the President sent us in order to address his key priorities and at the same time to reduce the deficit in the way that he called for and to reach a deficit that was less than 3 percent of GDP in the fifth year.

I am proud of what we have done. Is it a perfect document? The work of men and women is never perfect. We are flawed. I will confess to that. To me, the greatest flaw is we still have not fully coped with the long-term deficit and debt challenge to this country. Much more will have to be done.

Senator GREGG and I have one proposal. We have a proposal for a task force that would require Members of Congress and the administration—16 of them—to be given a responsibility to come up with a plan to get our long-term deficit and debt condition in order. If 12 of the 16 could agree, that plan would come to Congress for a vote.

I believe it is going to take some special effort, some special structure to deal with these long-term deficits and debt threats. I want to say for myself, I do believe the long-term debt accumulation does fundamentally threaten the economic security of America. While we have a good start in this first 5 years, much more must be done.

Mr. President, I thank you for this time.

I will yield the floor.

Before I do it, I thank Senator GREGG, the ranking member of the Budget Committee. There are many policy issues that divide us. There are some where we are joined at the hip. But Senator GREGG has been a thorough professional in all of the work of the Budget Committee this year. His staff is outstanding as well. I recognize Senator GREGG as somebody who has credibility. He may say some things that are somewhat uncharitable about the budget I am presenting today. I understand that. That is his job. He has strong feelings, and I applaud him for them because that is what we need. If everybody in the room thinks the same thing, nobody is thinking very much. I will tell you one thing, Senator GREGG is thinking. He cares deeply about the economic future of this country, and he is doing his level best to get us on a path that makes more sense. I applaud him for it. But I would be remiss if I did not recognize the professionalism and leadership he has exhibited in the work of the Budget Committee this year. In no way does that mean he endorses this plan. He will make very clear he does not. He strongly disagrees, as is his right. But I do want to recognize the very good working relationship we enjoy.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. AKAKA). The Senator from North Dakota, Mr. CONRAD, yields the floor.

The Senator from New Hampshire is recognized.

Mr. GREGG. Thank you, Mr. President.

Let me first thank the chairman for his generous comments, and let me second those relative to himself and his staff.

We obviously have a deep difference of opinion as to the best way to proceed relative to shepherding the financial house of our Nation, and especially specifically relative to this budget that has been sent to us by this President. But I have an immense amount of respect for him and his staff, who are professional and extremely courteous, and we have a great personal and working relationship, which actually makes the job much more enjoyable as a result of that.

And, of course, we send to North Dakota our deep concerns about what they are going through with the floods. I know the Senator was out there this weekend supporting the folks who are working so hard to try to protect their communities—an amazing story: 80,000 volunteers in a town of 90,000. It is very impressive. Let's hope the waters recede before they do any more damage.

I should mention that UNH beat North Dakota in the hockey game this weekend in the NCAA. I noticed my colleague from North Dakota did not actually mention that.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, if I could say, our hockey team lost to his hockey team in the last one-tenth of 1 second. I say to the Senator, our Congressman in North Dakota said: We don't want the flood fight to have the same outcome.

Mr. GREGG. Nor do we.

Mr. CONRAD. We don't want to have won this right to the end and then lose it at the end. So even the hockey game has provided inspiration for the flood fight. We wish we had won the hockey game, but it is most important that we win the flood fight.

Mr. GREGG. It was an exciting game, and North Dakota played extraordinarily well.

Mr. President, we do differ on this budget. The budget that has been proposed by the President of the United States has essentially been given its stamp of approval by what has been brought forward by the Senator from North Dakota. There are virtually no differences. As Director Orszag said, they are 98 percent the same, and they are.

This budget, in our opinion, represents a clear and present danger to the financial health of our Nation and to the financial security of our children. It is a budget which spends far too much money, taxes far too much, and borrows an extraordinary amount—it is clearly far too much. It basically repeals the essential laws of common sense—the essential laws of common sense—that say you cannot simply keep spending at a rate that you cannot afford to pay for forever and not have to suffer as a society, and suffer significantly.

Margaret Thatcher sort of captured the tempo of this budget. To paraphrase her, she might have said about this budget: The problem with the Obama budget is that at some point you run out of money.

If you follow the proposals of this budget, you are going to run out of money sooner rather than later. In order to understand this budget, you have to understand the dramatic nature of this budget. Historically, when we have debated budgets in this body, they have been important because they obviously represent guideposts for our Congress, but they have not been a philosophical document that has redirected the Nation fundamentally.

On the part of the President—I give him credit that he is not trying to hide this—his budget openly attempts to redirect the Government of the United States and move it significantly, dramatically to the left, expanding the role of the Government in all sorts of areas, expanding the cost of Government in a historic way, and expanding the burden of the Government in the area of taxes and in the area of borrowing in a way which we have never contemplated as a nation.

To try to put it into perspective, under the budget prepared by the President and sent up here—and it is essentially the same as the budget we are receiving from the Senate Democrats today—the President's budget doubles the national debt in 5 years. That is pretty bad. Then it triples the national debt in 10 years. And that is intolerable.

Now, I have tried to figure out how you explain to people what $1 trillion or what $15 trillion is or what $17 trillion is. It is very hard. Conceptually, it is extraordinarily difficult to get your hands around what $1 trillion is.

As you can see, I had this chart made up when the original estimate was $15 trillion—it went up to $17 trillion—to

show the number of zeros here. It is a staggering amount of money that is being added to the Federal debt. You have to ask yourself: Who is going to pay all this money? This is real money. It has been spent on programs the President wants. Who is going to pay it all? Who is going to pay $15 trillion—with all of these zeros?

Well, unfortunately, our children and our children's children get that debt. It gets put on their backs. At the end of the President's budget, the average household in this country will owe $130,000 in debt for the Federal Government—$130,000. They will have an interest payment on this debt—the average household—of over $6,000. So the debt they are getting may actually exceed the value of their house.

Put another way—which was first coined by my esteemed chairman—he designed this wall of debt. This is the wall of debt, as shown on this chart. This is what the Federal debt does over the period of the Obama budget. It goes straight up. It is a massive wall of debt, which is an incredible burden on our Nation, and really an unacceptable burden if you are going to be accurate about it.

To try to put it in a more understandable term, as shown on this chart: This is a picture of President Obama, of course, on the right side of the chart. On the left side of the chart are pictures of all the Presidents we have had in our Nation since our Nation began 232 years ago, starting with George Washington and going through George W. Bush.

In that period, from George Washington through people such as Madison, Adams, Lincoln, Grant, Hayes, Wilson, Roosevelt the first, Roosevelt the second, Truman—in this period from George Washington all the way through George W. Bush, we have accumulated about $5.8 trillion of national debt. That is how much those Presidents added to our national debt.

Within the first 5 years of this Presidency, President Obama will add more debt on the backs of our people and our Nation than all these Presidents put together. Within 5 years, he will have taken the total debt put on the backs of Americans and doubled it since the country began—a staggering fact.

Now, does this have to happen, the addition of all this debt because of the fact that he has inherited a terrible situation? And he has, and we all admit to that; this economy is in a very difficult way. No, it does not. Yes, in the short term there has to be a government that is run at a deficit in a very significant way in order to try to get the economy going because we all understand the Federal Government is, right now, the only liquid entity around here. So the money is being pumped into the economy to try to give it some lift.

But this recession is not going to go on forever. We are a resilient nation. We will recover from this recession. It will be over hopefully sooner rather than later. But it certainly is not going to run that much longer in the terms of this Presidency. Certainly, by the midterm of this Presidency, we should be out of this recession.

So you would presume—you would presume—at that point, say, in 2011 or 2012 at the latest, the spending of the Government and the deficit of the Government would start to come under control, that there would be some attempts to bring it down and manage it in a more historic way.

Unfortunately, that does not happen under this budget. What the President is proposing is that we continue to grow the size of Government at an extraordinary rate, independent of whether we are in a recession. The average deficit over the term of this President's budget is $1 trillion a year—$1 trillion a year. That is a staggering number. To put it in a historical context, that adds up to about 5 to 6 percent of gross domestic product, and historically the deficit has been about 2 percent of gross domestic product. At the end of this Presidency, the public debt, which is what people own outside the Government, will be 80 percent of the productivity of the country—80 percent of the productivity of the country. What does that mean, 80 percent of the productivity of the country? Well, historically, the public debt has been about 40 percent of the productivity of the country, but under this President, he is going to take that public debt very quickly up to 60 percent, then to 70 percent, and then, by the end of the period of the budget proposed, it will be at 80 percent. That is such a high number, when you couple it with the deficits of $1 trillion a year, that you get to a point where it is simply not sustainable. That is why this budget is a clear and present danger to the fiscal health of this Nation and to the opportunities of our children. In fact, ironically, if the United States were to try to seek membership into the European Union—which, of course, we have no interest in doing, but those are all industrialized nations and they do have a standard for operating their governments in a responsible way. The standard of the European Union is, public debt can't exceed 60 percent of Gross Domestic Product, that deficits can't exceed 3 percent of GDP. We will be twice that number, and it is not sustainable.

Now, did this have to happen? Did the President have to run up these debts? If we had stayed on a pure glidepath and done nothing—in other words, operated the Government as it is—as it is—this blue line would be the cost of the Government. We would actually almost be in balance by the year 2018. That is current law. Now, CBO uses very arcane rules as to how it builds a baseline, but it is the baseline that we determine as a Congress to use. I wouldn't accept that baseline as a recipe for future policy because there are some tax increases in there I don't like, but even if you were to factor out the tax increases, the line would come in the middle here. The reason this goes up so significantly, the reason President Obama's budget goes up so significantly in its deficits is because they propose a radical increase in spending. It is pretty much that simple. It is not about economics or taxes; it is about spending. Essentially, the President's proposal is to incredibly increase the size of the Federal Government and the amount it spends, not only in the short run, which we all accept is necessary—although it has been poorly handled relative to the stimulus bill; worse than poorly handled, it has been a waste of money relative to the stimulus bill—but this is the spike in spending to reflect the deficit and the attempt to address it through the stimulus bill. But look here: After we are out of the recession in the year 2011, the line keeps on going way up—way up—to 25 percent of GDP by the end of this budget.

Well, you say, what does that mean, 25 percent of GDP. Well, how big a government is relative to the productivity of the economy defines how productive the economy will be. You can't have a productive economy if the Government is taking out all the money. It doesn't work very well. Historically, we as a country have tried to keep—and this is the black line here, and you will see it has been very level ever since the year 1958—this is the average, this black line, of how much spending the Government has done. It is around 20 percent of GDP, the product of the United States. Under the Obama years, as proposed by President Obama, that is going to be increased at a staggering rate—huge increases in spending.

President Obama is not trying to hide this. He has not tried to be—he has been very open about it. He said, to paraphrase him, essentially: I believe we create more prosperity by expanding the size of Government in a number of areas. In fact, if you listen to the Senator from North Dakota, he listed all these areas they are going to explode the size of Government in, moving it dramatically to the left, and increasing it at an incredible rate. In the budget document he sent, he said exactly that. He said: At this particular moment, Government must lead the way in providing the short-term boost necessary to lift us from a recession that is severe and lay the foundation for prosperity.

He went on to say he intended to do this by spending a great deal of money on his priorities, which were clean energy, education, health care, and new infrastructure. However, he doesn't stop spending the money after this recessionary period; he keeps it going into the outyears at a rate which is not sustainable. It is simply not sustainable. You can't take the money from the productive side—from the people who are working and producing jobs and taking risks and going out there and actually producing wealth for this Nation, in the sense that they are actually producing something we have to

sell and use in trade and basically create jobs as a result of that—you can't take the money from them and move it over to the Government at a rate that exceeds the historical norm at this level and expect you are going to be able to maintain prosperity for the years to come. It doesn't work. It does not work. As Margaret Thatcher says, you eventually run out of money.

The effect of this massive increase in spending is a massive increase in debt. This is the national debt, publicly held debt, which I discussed before, as a percentage of GDP. It averages about 36 percent since 1958. That is the black line right here. It has been up, it has been down, but that is the average. Under President Obama's plan, it goes straight through the roof, and this, I say to my colleagues, is the threat. This is the threat. This is the clear and present danger to our people, to our Nation, and to our children's future, because when you get debt up to that level, you are not able to function as a government. People get concerned about buying your bonds and buying your dollars and using your currency.

You don't have to listen to me to find out that is the case. The Chinese Government has made that very clear, and they happen to be the biggest holder of our dollars. In fact, the chairman is always talking about how outrageous it is that the Chinese own so much of our debt. Well, they own it because they considered it to be a good investment, and if they didn't own it, we would be paying a lot more in interest payments and in taxes in this country and our dollar would be less valuable. But Mr. Zhou, the governor of the central bank in China, has said he is getting concerned about this crisis and about the value of our dollar. The Premier of China said: ''We lent such huge funds to the United States and, of course, we are concerned about the security of our assets.''

Well, it is disconcerting and obviously not very nice to find out for us as a nation—one that has always considered itself to be a reasonably independent and strong Nation, the most independent and strongest in the world—that the Premier of China, who owns most of our debt outside the United States, is worried about it.

Why is he worried about it? Why are the Chinese worried about it? Why are the other nations which buy our debt worried about it? Because they look at this line, they look at this budget. This isn't done in a vacuum. They know what this budget proposes. The President's budget proposes massive increases in spending but absolutely no fiscal discipline. It has discretionary spending jumping by $1.4 trillion—trillion—it has mandatory spending, a net mandatory spending increase, as it was sent up here, of $1.1 trillion, and it has zero savings in the core accounts, which are mandatory accounts. That leads to these massive debts.

It also has, interestingly enough, $1.5 trillion in new taxes. Now, that is a pretty staggering figure in and of itself, $1.5 trillion. I was entertained to hear my colleague from North Dakota say: Well, actually, we get a tax cut in this bill. That is going to come as a real surprise to all the people whose taxes are going to go up very significantly as a result of this budget. For small business people, taxes are going to go up dramatically as a result of this budget. People who take charitable deductions and homeowner deductions in the higher brackets, their taxes are going to go up, which will probably affect charitable giving under this bill.

But the most insidious tax proposed in this budget is something euphemistically called a carbon tax. Well, what is a carbon tax? That is a way to bury a term so you never understand what they are doing.

A carbon tax is literally a new national sales tax on your electric bills, a brand new national sales tax. We don't have a national sales tax in this country. What is being proposed in this budget by this President is a brand new national sales tax on your electric bill. So every time you hit your light switch in your house, you are going to get hit with a new tax—a sales tax—and it is a big one. It is a big one. The White House sent this specious estimate of it. They said it was $646 billion, but that was low-balling the number. MIT, which doesn't have a dog in this fight, took a look at a similar proposal, along with a number of other groups, and they said it would actually generate over $300 billion in new taxes every year. It works out to about $3,000 per household. So everybody living in America today who has an electric bill or other energy bills, as a result of this new national sales tax, if the President gets what he wants, is going to pay $3,000 more in taxes a year, on average, for their energy bills. That is a huge tax, and it is an incredibly regressive tax. I saw this chart that the chairman brought up, saying we are going to create green jobs. That is all about this energy tax, by the way. That is akin to calling it a carbon tax; they are going to call it creating green jobs. What are they going to call the jobs they are sending overseas? Because industries in this country, which have to use a lot of electricity—those are the hard-core industries that we still have in this country—can no longer compete because they got hit with this massive increase in taxes on their energy production and use. What are they going to call those jobs? Green jobs sent overseas? The simple fact is, this type of tax increase is incredibly regressive. Sales taxes are regressive by definition, but a sales tax that is targeted on the productive side of the ledger, as this one is, is exceptionally regressive, as is the dramatic increases in taxes on small businesses in this country.

Now, my colleague has said a number of things about how their budget is different from the President's. It is a little bit different, but it is 98 percent the same, and that is the score. I think I have a chart which reflects that. This is the difference between the two budgets. They are identical on discretionary for all intents and purposes, identical on outlays, identical on revenues. Interestingly enough, however, CBO came back and gave us—CBO is the Congressional Budget Office—an honest evaluation of the President's budget, and some of the things they said, which hopefully scared a few people around here, were that the President's budget increased deficit spending by $9.2 trillion over 10 years, $2.3 trillion more than what the President had told us; that on an annual basis, it averages out to a budget deficit of about $1 trillion a year, and that the percent of public debt jumps, as I have mentioned, but it needs to be reemphasized that it jumps from what it is today to 80 percent of GDP. The deficits jump to 5 or 6 percent of GDP.

The administration has had both the Treasury Secretary and the OMB Director up here over the years—the OMB Director has been coming up here for years but the Treasury Secretary just recently—testifying that the deficits in excess of 3 percent weren't sustainable. They said that; we didn't say that.

So when CBO honestly evaluated their budget and did things such as actually calculate the fact that there was 8.1 percent unemployment, and it is probably going to go up and, as the President said, the top rate would be 8.1 percent, but we weren't there yet—when CBO put the real numbers onto the President's numbers and got these massive increases in spending and in debt, well, these folks decided that we cannot have that. They wanted to get that back down to 3 percent. Did they do it by reducing spending or reducing any of the President's spending initiatives? No. Zero. Do you know how they did it? They did it by playing the old-fashioned games around here of smoke and mirrors and hiding the ball, saying one thing but meaning another.

The President, to his credit, and to the credit of Mr. Orszag, was forthright in their budget, which was probably as close to an honest statement—with exception of the defense number—of what was really happening here relative to spending and what was going to happen as we have had in a long time. I congratulated them for that and still do. But we went backward with this proposal from the Democratic leadership. So that they could get it below 3 percent as a percentage of GDP and get their deficit and debt numbers down, they left out of their budget $1.1 trillion of spending and taxes that President Obama had in his. They are not different, so it is just games. They didn't score their budget correctly or honestly or straightforward. Their budget becomes the ''tax too much, spend too much, borrow too much, and now hide too much'' budget. At least the President's budget wasn't a ''hide too much'' budget, although his defense number has serious problems

with it. At least he didn't take $1.1 trillion in very illusory action, moving the shell around so that you cannot find the real numbers, claiming they made real savings in those accounts. It is actually just pretty ridiculous to take that step backward.

Of course, they now claim that they cut the deficit in half. Now, that is where we depart from common sense. There are a lot of things on which they tried to repeal the law of common sense in their budget, but this is the most outrageous. First, they increased the deficit fivefold and then they reduce it back to half of that and then claim they are cutting the deficit in half. That is like taking six steps back, three steps forward, and saying you are making progress. You are not making any progress. They are so far out of whack with what has been the historical norm that it is not even acceptable. The deficit they ended up with after taking six steps back and three steps forward is still in the 4-percent range. It is still throwing debt on the books at a rate you cannot afford, and it is absurd to claim that is fiscally responsible.

Well, before I get into what we would do, I will mention a couple of gimmicks that are played here because they are beyond the shell game gimmick, which is pretty outrageous—moving around $1.1 trillion so they don't have to put it on the budget. They take it off budget, essentially, so they can look as if they are doing better than the President, even though they have the exact same policies and numbers as the President, for all intents and purposes.

They do a couple other things. They have reserve funds—lots of them. This is a way to make like you are doing something that is fiscally responsible by saying: You cannot spend this money unless you can pay for it. The only problem is that they make the reserve funds in the most critical area—specifically, health care, which we all know we are going to want to address this year. They create this incredible activity. They put into place a health care reserve fund, which means they are going to rewrite the policy of health care for this country. Every part of this Nation is going to be affected.

You heard the chairman say that 17 percent of the gross domestic product in this country is involved in health care. The purpose of this proposal—the health care reserve fund—is to address that 17 percent. There is virtually nothing in this country that isn't affected by that. Either everyone is directly affected or a member of their family is or their job is.

There is a rule here called pay-go, which has become the mantra of the other side of the aisle about how they are going to be fiscally disciplined. I never heard anyone from the Democratic party or the Congress, including the President when he was running for President and running for Senate, fail to talk about how they were going to use pay-go to discipline the Federal Government because it implies that they are going to pay for what they are doing. It is a great term, by the way. The only problem is, they don't ever use it. They claim they are going to do it, but they never do. I call it ''Swiss cheese-go'' because there are so many holes in it. In the last 3 years, when the Democrats ran the Congress, they avoided pay-go in the amount of $341 billion in spending.

This health care trust fund is a brazen act of putting a hole in pay-go. Up front, they say we are not going to apply pay-go to health care reform. Pay-go has a rule that says that in the first 6 years you have to meet it, and the second 5 years you have to meet it. No, we are not going to do that; we are going to be able to spend it over 11 years before you have to meet the pay-go rules. Why don't you just give it up and say we are not going to discipline ourselves. There is no pay-go rule, and it is a problem.

The second gimmick that really concerns me—it is more than a gimmick—is a big-time exercise of threatening the prerogative of the Senate and the constitutional purpose of the Senate, which is the use of reconciliation. This is a term of art, and nobody outside the Congress really understands it. Essentially, reconciliation was put into the budget process when the budget was created for the purpose of making sure that what the budget said should be spent or should be taxed actually occurs, so that there was a procedure to reconcile—to say to committees if they exceeded a certain amount of spending and it wasn't inside the budget: You must change that spending; if your tax policy created more of a deficit, you must change that tax policy. It is a procedure which, over the years, has evolved. It has been used aggressively by both President Clinton and President Bush to pursue policies that already exist or to adjust policies that already exist—whether it happens to be already existing laws on welfare or existing laws on tax policy. Yes, it has been used effectively and aggressively in those areas. But it has never been used to create a brand new policy on something that has as dramatic and all-encompassing and pervasive effect on the American public as to change the entire health care system or something like that. It has never been used to create out of whole cloth, ab initio, a brand new major tax system, such as a national sales tax on electric bills, and its use is solely a purpose of the Senate. The House doesn't need reconciliation.

How does reconciliation work? It basically eliminates the prerogative of the Senate to amend the bill. The greatest prerogative of the Senate is that we have the right to debate, to discuss, and to amend legislation. The House doesn't have that right. The House has something called a Rules Committee, and it is under the control of the Speaker. The membership of the Rules Committee is made up 2 to 1, plus 1, so the Speaker could never lose a vote in the Rules Committee. The Rules Committee sets out for the House of Representatives when a bill comes to the floor—no matter the policy of the bill—and that you will have this many hours of debate and they will allow this many amendments and here is what they are. They can run through a bill in a half hour if they want. That is the way the House has functioned for years. It is the way the House was supposed to function when it was set up constitutionally. The Senate, on the other hand, has no such rule. When a bill is brought to the floor of the Senate, it is open for debate, discussion, and amendment. If you can get 60 votes, you can get it off the floor.

The budget sets up a process to allow the Senate to function more like the House. The budget is on the floor for 50 hours of debate. Amendments are allowed—any amendment, really, but at some point people run out of energy and stop offering amendments—and there has to be a vote.

In order to reconcile parts of the budget, the reconciliation system was set up where there is 20 hours of debate and virtually no amendments because they would have to be germane, and that is a high standard to meet here.

So the reconciliation situation is that it allows you to basically ram through the Senate—as you would through the House—a bill without amendment, discussion, debate, or amendments. It is a huge weapon. If used incorrectly, it fundamentally undermines the constitutional purpose of the Senate. It turns the Senate into the House of Representatives and makes us a body in which amendments are not allowed and debate doesn't occur, of any significance. It has a truly debilitating effect on the idea that you will have a body in this constitutionally structured Government of economics and balances where debate occurs vociferously and aggressively and where problems can be aired out in a more timely and orderly manner than occurs in the House of Representatives. So it should never be used to ab initio create a massive, new program, such as a tax on everyone's electric bill. It should never be used for the purpose of undertaking a major policy event, such as rewriting the health care of the United States, which will affect everybody.

To the chairman's credit, he doesn't have it in this bill. He understands that. He has spoken out fairly effectively on this point—probably more concisely and effectively than I have spoken on it. But the House of Representatives has put reconciliation instructions in. What earthly reason could there be for the House of Representatives to put reconciliation instructions in their bill? They don't need it; they have a Rules Committee.

It is obvious. This is a game, a very dangerous game. The House puts in

reconciliation instructions but the Senate doesn't put it in because the leadership knows that maybe it cannot get that across the floor and doesn't want a vote on such a thing. So they can take it to conference and, much to nobody's surprise, the conference budget comes back with reconciliation instructions, which control activities on the Senate floor.

It is totally inappropriate that the House should be dictating to the Senate how we are going to legislate and structure our debate system here on the floor and try to make us into the House of Representatives. It is unconscionable in the context of the constitutional structure of our Government. Yet that is the game that is being played here, and it is a cynical game. It is totally wrong. If for no other reason, everyone in this body should not vote for a budget that has reconciliation in it.

On our side of the aisle, we think we can do better. I have talked at some length about the clear and present danger this budget represents to our children because of the massive increase in debt. We don't think that has to be the course of action. You don't have to run the spending of the United States up to 23 percent of GDP, which this chart reflects, way above 25 actually, way above the historical norm. That is not necessary. Short-term spending may be necessary for this significant problem we have with the recession, but you do not have to take the Government and expand it radically, move it to the left, and spend money on what these groups are and constituencies are at this rate. The Government should live within the basic historic norm of 20 percent of GDP as part of its spending. That is where we part ways philosophically.

The President genuinely believes, and the party passing this budget, the Democratic Party, generally believes you create prosperity—and the President said it; he used those terms—you create prosperity by expanding the Government significantly in these different areas of social interest. You do not if you are spending up those areas so much that people cannot afford it.

It does not happen that way. The way you create prosperity is by keeping Government at an affordable level, doing what it is supposed to do while you give individuals the ability to go out and be productive, take risks, and create jobs. That is a difference of philosophy here.

When the President proposed in his budget the way he is going to address health care, where we presently spend 17 percent of our gross national product on health care right now—that is 5 to 6 percentage points more than the next closest industrialized nation, so there is a huge amount of money being spent on health care—he proposes we explode that spending by another $1.2 trillion. We don't have to. We can get every American insurance, and good insurance, without radically increasing the amount we are spending on health care. We can do it by more effectively spending the money we already have in the health care system.

If you are spending 17 percent of the gross domestic product on health care, you do not have to take it up to 18, 19, 20 percent. In fact, if you do, you are probably not getting much efficiency out of it. Rather, spend more efficiently the money you are already spending.

We believe as a party that everybody has a right to decent health care insurance, and we also believe as a party we can do that within the context of the money that is already available by being more efficient, by giving people more choices, and by not putting the Government between patients and their doctors. We do not believe in nationalizing the health care system, which is basically what these numbers are, the stalking horse for, that the President is proposing.

In the area of energy, the President's answer to energy is that you put in place a new national sales tax, as I have mentioned before, on every electric bill in this country, everybody's electric bill, so that when you turn on your light switch you get hit with a new sales tax. That is probably not going to produce a whole lot of energy. It is going to probably undermine the productivity of our economy, and it certainly is going to ship a lot of jobs offshore.

The way to produce a better energy policy is to look in an environmentally sound way for more American supply and you can conserve more energy. So we drill, and we can drill in an environmentally sound way in identified offshore areas and produce more American energy. You create more powerplants through using nuclear power, a totally clean form of energy from the standpoint of pollution to our air. You use wind, solar, and other alternatives, but you acknowledge the fact that you cannot possibly get to the goal we have to get to, which is enough energy to continue to maintain our international competitiveness as a nation and continue our prosperity as a nation, if we are just using solar and wind.

Solar and wind make up 2 percent of our national energy supply. If you triple it, you only get 6 percent, and tripling it would be a little difficult because there are a lot of people who do not want windmills in front of their houses, whereas nuclear can be expanded, whereas we can drill and find more American energy more effectively, whereas we can use oil shale, which we have more of than Saudi Arabia has oil, to produce energy more effectively, and we can be more conservation minded, and there is agreement on that, obviously, on both sides of the aisle. But you do not accomplish this by sticking the American people with a brand new national sales tax.

In the area of cost discipline, clearly we do not have to run up spending at these rates. We should bring them back down, and the way you bring them back down is by addressing entitlement spending.

This budget that was sent up by the President of the United States, who claims he is interested in fiscal responsibility—although, obviously, it is sorely tested by the numbers in this budget, these trillions of dollars of new debt—does not, on net, reduce the entitlement accounts. He does suggest that Part D premiums be paid for in part by wealthy people. I agree with that. We have actually offered that amendment on our side of the aisle for the last 2 years under this Democratic Congress and were beaten every year on that proposal. I am glad the President is on our side this time. Maybe we will be able to adopt it. It is called the Ensign amendment.

The fact is, unless you have a comprehensive approach to disciplining entitlement spending so it is affordable, and we continue to deliver reasonably good quality care and support to senior citizens, we are not going to get these spending issues under control. You cannot kick this can down the road, as the President has said. You have to start, and the President has not started now. This budget has nothing in it to that effect.

In one other area where we would do something significantly different is defense. This budget basically assumes a declining funding of defense for the next 10 years that is significantly less than what is presently funded as a percentage of GDP.

We are at war. I wish al-Qaida was going to go away. I wish these folks who represent such a huge and immediate threat to us, especially if they get their hands on a weapon of mass destruction, did not exist, but they do. They do exist, and they are a threat—a very significant threat. We cannot confront them through goodwill because they are not interested in goodwill. We have to confront them with a military that is properly funded, properly cared for, and properly armed. That, unfortunately, takes money.

The first obligation, the first absolutely most important obligation of the Federal Government is national defense. Yet this budget, first, does not include sufficient funding for the President's war costs and, second, as a practical matter, it simply assumes that you can run the military on the cheap, I guess, and that is a big mistake.

We do have differences, as Chairman CONRAD has said, over how this budget is structured. They come back to this very core issue of debt, of what we are leaving our children, what we are passing on to our children. It is simply not right for one generation to give another generation less than what we received from our parents.

We, as a nation, have always—always—had the older generation pass to the younger generation a better, stronger, and more prosperous nation. Yet we are now on a pathway, if this budget is followed forward, where the debt and the deficits will be so high

that our children will not be able to have as good a life as we have had. The cost of maintaining this Government will so burden them their ability to finance a home, buy a home, send their kids to college, or just live a lifestyle that is something of the level and enjoyment and prosperity that we have had will be seriously—seriously—threatened. It is not fair to do that, not fair for one generation to do that to another generation. Yet the numbers do not lie.

I understand the Democrats did not want to show us the second 5 years of the budget. They hid it, along with a lot of other things they hid, in this budget, but the President showed us the second 5 years of the budget. Every American should take pause because when you see the debt go up by $9.2 trillion, when you see the public debt ratio to GDP go to 80 percent, when you see deficits annually of $1 trillion a year on average for as far as you can see, when you see a deficit rate of 5 to 6 percent of GDP, you are talking about a country which is headed toward a fiscal crisis the likes of which we probably have not seen since the Great Depression. It is a country which cannot afford its Government. It is a nation that will be passing on to its children significantly less than was passed on to us.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LIEBERMAN). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GREGG. 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. GREGG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that for the remainder of this debate on the budget over the next 50 hours, the time be equally divided under a quorum call.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GREGG. 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. CONRAD. 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. CONRAD. Mr. President, I would like to come back to the argument I continue to hear advanced—that because we have gone from the 10-year budget the President proposed to a 5-year budget, something is being hidden. I don't believe anything is being hidden from anyone.

Of the 34 budgets the Congress of the United States has done since the Budget Act, 30 of them were 5-year budgets—30 of the 34. Only four were 10-year budgets. The reason Congress has tended to do 5-year budgets—not just tended to but overwhelmingly has done 5-year budgets—is that the outyear forecasts are notoriously unreliable; notoriously.

Some have said I criticized the previous administration for not doing a 10-year budget. Indeed, I did—because I believed they were trying to hide the effect of their tax cuts in the second 5 years. But this administration did not do a 5-year budget. This administration did a 10-year budget. There is nothing hidden. It is all out there for anybody to see. The Congressional Budget Office has scored the President's 10-year budget. Some of us have expressed concern about the second 5 years.

People get in a habit around here and they get used to doing something a certain way, they get used to criticizing budgets a certain way so they keep doing it. It was legitimate to criticize the previous administration for not doing a 10-year budget. It was legitimate to suggest they might have something to hide. But this administration did a 10-year budget. We in Congress—remember, ultimately the budget is a congressional act. The President does not have to sign it. It does not become law. Congress has almost always done a 5-year budget; 30 of the 34 budgets written under the Budget Act have been 5-year budgets, including the last 5, including 2 in which Senator GREGG was the chairman. Again, it has been done that way, number one, because the outyear forecasts have been notoriously unreliable and, number two, because we do a budget every year.

In fact, there is some question whether a 5-year budget is required because we are going to do a new budget every year. So what matters the most in any budget is the first year.

But I did wish to address that because I see this criticism. I saw it in the David Broder column. I have immense respect for him. I saw it in the David Rogers column. I have immense respect for him. But I don't think the criticism applies in this particular situation. Nobody has been more clear, publicly or privately, than I have that the second 5 years of the Obama budget raises a real concern about the sustainability of our fiscal direction.

Let me just say, if you took my budget, which is a 5-year budget, the budget that came out of the Budget Committee, and extended it for 10 years, you would see dramatically lower deficits and debt than in the President's budget. In fact, I believe the first 5 years we have saved $600 billion from the President's proposal. In the second 5 years the total savings—for the 10 years, if we extended our budget 5 years, would be over $2 trillion. That is just in the nature of the beast. You know, the savings grow over time. We have put in $600 billion of savings in the first 5 years.

With respect to the question of spending, we are only increasing domestic spending—and that includes defense, that includes international, and that includes domestic spending in the appropriated accounts—5.3 percent. That is a modest number. Some of our friends on the other side want to absolutely freeze spending. I say to them I think that would be a serious mistake in an economic downturn, to absolutely freeze spending. In this situation, where the economy is contracting sharply, consumers cannot fill in the gap. They are tapped out, and they are worrying about losing their jobs. Companies cannot fill in the gap because they, too, are threatened. The only entity with resources to step in, to fill the breach, is the Federal Government.

One of the things we learned in the Great Depression was that profound mistake that was made was not necessarily on the fiscal policy side—although that didn't help—but the biggest mistake was on the monetary policy side controlled by the Federal Reserve. They did not expand the money supply. They did not provide liquidity to prevent the contraction from deepening, from growing, and from becoming far more destructive.

Thank goodness we have learned. That is not what is happening here. The Federal Reserve is providing liquidity, and that is on the monetary side. On the fiscal policy side, we did pass a large stimulus package—as imperfect as it was. We provided a large stimulus package to help fill in some of the gap between where the economy should be and where it is, the gap that was exacerbated by a more than 6-percent contraction in the economy in the fourth quarter of last year.

I believe we are doing many of the right things—again, however imperfectly. If I were able to design the stimulus package, I must say it would have been much different. I would have put much more money into infrastructure. I believe that would have been a better way to stimulate the economy. Even so, there was substantial infrastructure in the stimulus package. Not as much as I would have preferred but, nonetheless, a significant amount. Additionally, I think the Federal Reserve is going in the right direction with respect to the policies it is pursuing in terms of providing liquidity and credit.

When we talk about Hoover economics that our colleagues on the other side of the aisle embraced back in the 1930s, the fundamental assumption was that markets were self correcting. That is what Hoover economics was founded upon, the notion that the Federal Reserve did not need to take countercyclical action and that the Federal Government did not need to take countercyclical actions in terms of helping people who were unemployed. Hoover opposed providing that kind of Federal Government assistance.

Today we know that such assistance actually one of the most stimulative things you can do because that money gets into the economic bloodstream very quickly. It gives lift to the economy, it reduces the size of the contraction, it reduces job loss, it reduces

more and more homes going into foreclosure because people can't pay their mortgage, it reduces the vicious cycle that can suck down an economy.

I just wish to be clear. When we have been critical of their stance against stimulus, their stance against doing the things that are being done by the Fed, they have this mantra they chant. Too much spending—let me look at our budget in terms of spending. In the short term, yes, spending increases because you are countering the cycle of the economy, so we are up to 27 percent of GDP in spending this year. But then we step it down to 22 percent of GDP, of gross domestic product, by the fifth year. So that is going in the right direction—even for our friends on the other side.

They say too much taxes. Let me remind them, in the President's proposal, on a net basis, according to the Congressional Budget Office, his budget cuts taxes $2.2 trillion. That is a 10-year budget. Our budget on a 5-year basis cuts taxes $825 billion, on a net basis. Yes, there are some tax increases on those of us who are high-income earners. Yes, we have our taxes increased somewhat. But on an overall basis, the President's budget has significant tax cuts from current law, as does the budget that is before us now.

Third, they say too much debt. Look, I am in agreement with them. But where were they in the good times during the Bush administration, when they doubled the debt of this country? They doubled the debt of this country when economic times were relatively good—until the end of the Bush administration when the economy collapsed. That is what this President inherited. He inherited an economy that was in full collapse: It declined 6 percent in the last quarter of last year; an economy that was in free fall; an economy with a housing crisis, a financial crisis, a banking crisis, and a fiscal crisis.

I say to my friends on the other side, it was their policies that put us in the soup. It was their policies of doubling the debt, of tripling foreign holdings of U.S. debt, that put us in this ditch. Now this President has to try to clean up the mess and part of cleaning up the mess is higher deficits and debt in the short term. That is unavoidable. That was already happening in a very dramatic way before this President ever took office. He inherited a deficit. If he had done nothing, he would have inherited a deficit this year of $1.3 trillion. That is after our friends on other side had already doubled the debt over the previous 8 years, and, worse, tripled foreign holdings of U.S. debt. Now we have China as the biggest creditor and our friends here say: Gee, China might not continue to finance our debt.

My friends, where were you? I warned about that starting in 2001. Anybody can review the record. You can go back and look at what I said on the public record over and over and over, that we were headed for big problems financing our debt. The party on the other side did not seem to respond.

Now, all of a sudden, they are concerned about the debt they have passed on to this President. That is not fair. I am plenty willing to say, as I have said publicly, the second 5 years of the Obama budget needs a lot more work. We are going to have to do a lot more to keep the deficit going down. But the first 5 years is a good start for the President's budget and ours is even somewhat better. In fairness to him, we had to make additional adjustments in his budget because the Congressional Budget Office said we lost $2.3 trillion in revenue—$2.3 trillion from the forecast the President was working off of that was made some time earlier.

I hope, in this debate, we do not try to lay at the desk of this President, who has been in office less than 3 months, disasters he inherited. No. No, we are not going to let that happen. That is not going to go unconfronted because that is not fair. This President walked into more crises than I can think of confronting any President, going back to Franklin Delano Roosevelt—a housing crisis deeply underway before he ever took office, a banking crisis deeply underway before he ever took office, a financial crisis deeply underway before he ever took office. So let us be fair in this debate and discussion about where responsibility lies.

Barack Obama, President Obama did not create any of these problems. He has been asked to clean up the mess and an incredible mess it is.

One other point I wish to make, and a place where I do strongly agree with Senator GREGG, is the need to do much more for the long term. That is why he and I have proposed a 16-member task force given the responsibility and the authority to come up with a plan. If 12 of the 16 could agree, that plan would come to the floor for a vote because I do not believe we are going to get through this without special measures and special procedures and a process to take on this long-term debt bomb that overhangs our country. But let's be fair about who is responsible for building the foundation of this mess. It does not lie at the feet of President Obama.

I see the Senator from Alaska. Is the Senator seeking time?

Ms. MURKOWSKI. I am, in morning business.

Mr. CONRAD. This would be a perfect time. I would be happy to yield the floor and give her an opportunity. While the Senator is getting ready, she has, as the Chair knows, has had a skiing accident. We are glad to see she is up and ambulatory and here at work. We are delighted she is back.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. I think we will soon see that the Senator from Alaska is not only ambulatory but her vocabulary is working quite well.

The Chair recognizes the Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MOUNT REDOUBT ERUPTION

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, today I am rising to talk about an issue that has captivated my constituents in the State of Alaska. We have got a mountain that is erupting. Mount Redoubt, which is located about 150 miles southwest of Anchorage, our largest community, has been more than active in the past week or so generating a great deal of press, a great deal of interest, and a considerable amount of impact in my State. So I wanted to take a few minutes this afternoon to talk about what is happening up North, talk a little bit about the importance of volcano monitoring.

I think we are all aware that there have been some recent comments made about Federal spending for volcano monitoring, and the suggestion that perhaps this might be wasteful money in that we do not have any need to be monitoring volcanos.

I can assure you that monitoring volcanos is critically important to the Nation, to the world, and particularly to Alaska right now, where, as I say, we are being held hostage by a volcano.

A little bit of a personal note here. This afternoon—my boys' spring break concluded last evening. We have been up in the State enjoying spring skiing. And they are grounded by Mount Redoubt. They may be home Wednesday evening. Now, others might think this is a bad thing, but for these young pages here this morning, when you are 17 and you are shut out of school for an additional 3 days after spring break concludes, and you have to stay in Alaska and keep skiing, maybe the volcano is not a bad thing.

But there is a very serious aspect to what we are talking about. Mount Redoubt has erupted 17 times now since March 22. And when it was initially under watch, you would see the steam and the haze coming off the volcano. But then we started to see some pretty significant eruptions, eruptions that would go 65,000 feet up into the air.

This is a picture of Mount Redoubt. This was actually taken back in 1989, the last time Mount Redoubt was active. But what happens is these plumes go straight up into the air, get caught by the jet stream at 40- or 65,000 feet, and then that ash is dispersed throughout the State.

What we have been seeing up North this week, and actually for about the past 10 days, is the cancellation of air flights, complete closure of the Anchorage International Airport over the weekend. Alaska Airlines alone has canceled about 230 flights. It has affected about 10,000 passengers, including my boys.

What is happening as a result of this volcano does become quite personal. We have school districts down in the southern part of the State where they have experienced the ash fall-out, where the students have dust masks, respirator masks so they are not breathing the ash that is coming through.

Home Depot made a point of staying open 24 hours a day so people could get the masks, the ventilator masks, get tape to put around their windows, around the doors, because this ash, this particulate is so fine that it comes underneath and into your home, it gunks up your computers, it clogs your car engine.

It is most worrisome, most threatening, though, with airplane engines, the ash itself, this particulate that is like ground-up stone and has this very debilitating effect of messing up your engine. So what is happening is at the airports, the engines of the airplanes, if they are not inside, which we do not have the capacity for, are being wrapped in Saran Wrap—more sophisticated than Saran Wrap but having to be wrapped. Our military at Elmendorf and Ft. Richardson is looking to relocate their assets, so that these very fine precision aircraft are not in harm's way.

A lot is happening as a result of this volcano and the series of eruptions. The volcanoes in Alaska make up well over three-quarters of U.S. volcanoes that have erupted in the last 200 years. About 50 volcanic eruptions occur around the world every year. This is according to USGS. It seems like a high number, but most of them are not eruptions that make much in terms of headlines.

The United States ranks third, behind Indonesia and Japan, in the number of historically active volcanoes. That is why it is so very important to fund volcano monitoring, which in Alaska is through the Alaska Volcano Observatory. The AVO, as I call it, is one of five volcano observatories in the United States. It is a joint program of the USGS, the United States Geologic Service, the Geophysical Institute of the University of Alaska-Fairbanks, and the State of Alaska Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys. The AVO is unique in the United States, and probably in the world, in that it is a thoroughly collaborative undertaking of Federal scientists, State scientists, university faculty, and students.

AVO was formed in 1988, after an eruption of Mt. Augustine, and uses Federal, State, and university resources to monitor and study Alaska's hazardous volcanoes, to predict, to give that early warning, and record eruptive activity, and also to mitigate volcanic hazards to life and property.

Alaska has over 30 active volcanoes that are currently being monitored by the AVO. There is no other observatory in the world that even comes close to that. The AVO also analyzes available satellite data twice daily from thermal anomalies and ash plumes at about 80 volcanoes in the North Pacific. Russian volcanos frequently put ash into areas where the United States has aviation safety responsibilities. Alaska's active volcanoes also offer superb opportunities for basic scientific investigation of volcanic processes. An important component of AVO's program is to conduct research at selected volcanic centers.

Now, I mentioned the hazard to air traffic. I think it is important for people to understand that when we are talking about volcanic ash being in the air and being distributed, it is not just something that is dirty and an annoyance, but it has the potential to be life threatening and absolutely deadly. If the jet engines ingest the volcanic ash, the potential for catastrophe is very real.

Back in 1989, December 15 of 1989, there was a Boeing 747 flying about 150 miles northeast of Anchorage and it went through the ash plume that had erupted from the Redoubt volcano. It was flying at night so they could not see they were flying into an ash cloud.

We did not have the monitoring process, so the pilots were flying on through and it sucked in the ash at—I am not entirely certain what altitude they were flying when they first encountered the ash—but the plane, with 231 passengers aboard, lost more than 10,000 feet elevation. All four engines lost power. And they went down 10,000 feet. That is about 2 miles.

Now, we do a lot of flying around here. Next time you are up in that airplane, look down and think about losing all of the power in your 747 and falling out of the sky almost 2 miles before these incredibly skilled pilots are able to restart the engines.

They were able to land the airplane safely, no lives lost, but I cannot imagine what it would have been like to have been a passenger on that jet aircraft. The airplane suffered about $80 million in damage. All four of those engines were shot. And, again, the good news out of the story is that there was no loss of life.

The FAA estimates, based on information provided by the FAA, that more than 80,000 large aircraft per year and 30,000 people per day are in the skies over and potentially downwind of many of Alaska's volcanoes, mostly on the heavily traveled great circle routes between Europe and North America and Asia. It is along this route, which coincidentally follows the northern portion of the Pacific Ring of Fire, that there are over 100 volcanoes capable of depositing ash into the flight path. Some are in Japan, many are in Russia, but about half of them are in Alaska. And by analyzing the satellite imagery and working with the National Weather Service to predict where the winds will carry the ash, AVO assists the FAA in warning aircraft of areas to avoid.

Volcanic eruptions from Cook Inlet volcanoes—these are right around the south central area: Spurr, Redoubt, Iliamna, and Augustine—can have severe impacts, as these volcanoes are nearest Anchorage, which is obviously our largest population center.

Back in 1989, when Redoubt blew before, I was working in an office, and essentially we were shut down because the ventilation system needed to be turned off, computers needed to be turned off and covered. The impacts economically and in all ways are very real.

The last major series of eruptions of Mt. Redoubt were in 1989 and 1990. These eruptions totaled 23. So right now with Redoubt we are already up to 17. The 23 that took place in 1989 occurred over a 6-month period. We are seeing 17 eruptions over a period of about 10 days.

These eruptions seriously affected the population, commerce, and oil production throughout Cook Inlet and air traffic about as far away as the State of Texas. Total estimated economic costs were about $160 million, making this eruption of Redoubt the second most costly in U.S. history after Mount St. Helens. It had significant impact on the aviation and oil industries as well as on the people of the Kenai Peninsula.

As mentioned, this volcanic ash is fine bits of abrasive glass that can damage lungs, it can damage vehicles, electronic equipment. Right now, as we speak, in the area just outside of Anchorage, at Mount Alyeska, where I was a couple of weeks ago, we are hosting the U.S. National Ski Championships. We have got some of the country's finest athletes who are performing on that hill. They cannot race if they are breathing in this volcanic particulate.

The Redoubt eruption also damaged five commercial jetliners. This was again back in 1989. It caused several days' worth of airport closures and airline cancellations in Anchorage and on the Kenai Peninsula. Drifting ash clouds disrupted air traffic as far away as Texas.

International volcano monitoring is also a role of the Federal Government. It helped, very likely, to save many lives, and significant money, in the case of the 1991 eruption of Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines, where the United States had military bases at the time.

The eruption back in 1991 lasted more than 10 hours and sent a cloud of ash as high as 22 miles into the area that grew to more than 300 miles across.

The USGS spent less than $1.5 million monitoring the volcano and was able to warn of the impending eruption which allowed the authorities to evacuate residents, as well as aircraft and other equipment from U.S. bases there. The USGS estimates that the efforts saved thousands of lives and prevented property losses of at least $250 million.

It is not enough, though, to justify a program by identifying a danger. The more important question is whether something can be done to reduce the impact of a volcanic eruption in terms of property damage and loss of life. That means getting people out of harm's way by providing advanced warning. That is exactly what the USGS Volcano Hazards Program seeks to do through the existing volcano observatories in the United States. Some

may say there is an abundance of caution going on right now by shutting down the airport, by cancelling flights, by diverting flights. But as a mother whose sons are there and going to be relying on air travel, I want to make sure that we err on the side of caution.

I want to make sure we are using those scientists who will tell us exactly when it is safe to be back up flying.

The advances made in monitoring can now provide much more accurate and timely predictions of eruptions. Back in 1989, AVO was only able to provide a few days' warning before Mount Redoubt erupted. This year, they began to detect activity and notified the public a couple months before it eventually erupted. The biggest challenge remains finding an adequate and stable source of funding. The USGS Volcano Hazards Program has been constantly underfunded. Both USGS and the FAA provide funding, but it is not enough to manage all of the observatories or provide for an expansion of the system to cover increased monitoring and volcano research.

It is because of inadequate funding and the critical importance of this program that I intend to introduce a bill that will provide funding stability volcano monitoring needs. This program shows that with a modest investment, a very large benefit can be produced in reducing the impacts of catastrophic events. My legislation will establish a national volcano early warning and monitoring system within the United States Geological Survey to monitor, warn, and protect citizens from undue and avoidable harm from volcanic activity. USGS will coordinate a management plan with other relevant Federal departments, including the Department of Transportation, FAA, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The legislation authorizes appropriations annually to the Department of Interior to carry out the act.

I appreciate the attention given me on this issue this afternoon. As I mentioned, all eyes are upon the State of Alaska right now as we watch this volcano, but this is not the only one we are actively monitoring and watching. We want to make sure that not only the residents of the State of Alaska are provided a level of safety through monitoring and warning but any of those who may be endangered because of Mother Nature doing what Mother Nature does on a very unpredictable trajectory. So what we are attempting by introduction of legislation to establish the national volcano early warning and monitoring system is good, and I look forward to having the support of my colleagues on this very important matter.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WEBB). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CONRAD. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I wish to go back for a moment to the question of a 10-year budget versus a 5-year budget, because I have heard so many questions raised about why we did a 5-year budget rather than a 10.

Again, the Congress has done 34 budgets under the Budget Act, 30 of which have been 5-year budgets. A key reason has been that the longer term forecasts are notoriously unreliable. CBO said the current forecast ''has greater than normal uncertainty.''

> CBO'S current forecast, particularly for the near term, is subject to a greater than normal degree of uncertainty . . . Both the magnitude of the contractionary forces operating in the economy and the magnitude of the government's actions to stabilize the financial system and stimulate economic growth are outside the range of recent experience.

The Federal Reserve Chairman, Mr. Bernanke, said the economic outlook is subject to considerable uncertainty.

> This outlook for economic activity is subject to considerable uncertainty . . . One risk arises from the global nature of the slowdown.

He went on to say:

> If actions taken by the Administration, the Congress, and the Federal Reserve are successful in restoring some measure of financial stability—and only if that is the case—there is a reasonable prospect the current recession will end in 2009 and that 2010 will be a year of recovery.

Again, very small differences have very big effects over time.

Senator GREGG himself said in March of this year:

> Ten-year forecasts are very much a guess . . .

That is why almost every time the Congress does a 5-year budget rather than a 10-year budget. In fact, the last five budgets done by Congress, including three under Republican chairmen, have been 5-year budgets.

Now, there has been some suggestion by columnists that doing a 5-year budget suggests you are hiding something. Again, I want to emphasize, President Obama came forward with a 10-year budget that has been fully scored. Nothing is being hidden from anybody. That score is out there. It is available. It is public. So there is nothing being hidden. And Congress has almost always done 5-year budgets just because of the extraordinary uncertainty of those outyears.

I also want to say, for a moment, those who argue that this budget has too much spending are up against the factual record. The factual record is that in this year, the spending will be 28 percent of gross domestic product. We bring that down very sharply in the first 3 years. We get it down to 22 percent of GDP by 2012. Again, there is a deficit in the fifth year of less than 3 percent of GDP, which the economists tell us is critical to having a sustainable debt.

Let me say my own view. I believe we have to do better than that. I believe we have to do better than that. I believe the outyears under any of the budgets are unsustainable. I believe we have to have some special process such as the one Senator GREGG and I have proposed, and I am completely open to other suggestions about how we deal with the entitlement reform and the tax reform we so badly need.

I see our colleague, Senator MCCAIN, is now in the Chamber. We advised his office we would like to get him in at about this hour, so I would be happy to take a break and give Senator MCCAIN a shot at this.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I thank my friend from North Dakota, and I thank him for his hard work under very difficult circumstances.

Obviously, the debate begins on the budget resolution for fiscal year 2010. Like the President's plan, the measure offered amounts, in all candor, to generational theft. It increases spending by $225 billion over current levels, raises at least $361 billion in taxes, and borrows $1.1 trillion more than what we expect to borrow under current law.

But unlike the President's plan, the resolution budgets for 5 years. Now, I would like to say, in deference to my friend from North Dakota and members of the Budget Committee, I am aware that in previous years a 5-year budget process has been generally the way to do business. There are years where we have used 10 years. The President's budget was 10 years. In these difficult times, given the circumstances under which we are laboring, I think we do a disservice to not do a 10-year budget. So budgeting for only a 5-year period in many respects hides the costly expansion of Government that is sure to take place after 2014.

As we go through this debate—and I notice the Senator from North Dakota has many charts—I will be bringing forward some charts that show the dramatic expansion in cost for a whole variety of reasons, including demographics and more and more baby boomers retiring, which, as the President's chief budget person, Mr. Orszag, has stated, is ''not sustainable.''

The Senate owes it to the American taxpayer, in my view, to produce a 10-year budget that shows the unsustainable fiscal path we are on and the terrible burden we are passing on to future generations because of the explosive debt it produces.

The Senator from North Dakota, the distinguished chairman of the Budget Committee, just mentioned a proposal for a commission for reform of Social Security and Medicare, and I agree with him. But I would also argue that on the issue of Social Security we could all sit down in a matter of hours and address the issue of Social Security. We know the factors that are involved. We know what the costs are.

We know the fixes that basically are necessary. And it would have to be done in the spirit of compromise, as Tip O'Neill and former President Reagan did way back in 1983, the last time there was any significant reform to Social Security. Medicare and Medicaid and health care is obviously a much more complicated issue.

In an op-ed entitled ''Hiding a Mountain Of Debt'' from yesterday's Washington Post, David Broder, who, in my view, is perhaps the most respected columnist in America in many ways, and certainly the most experienced, wrote:

[T]he Democratic Congress is about to perform a cover-up on the most serious threat to America's economic future. . . .

The Congressional Budget Office sketched the dimensions of the problem on March 20, and Congress reacted with shock. The CBO said that over the next 10 years, current policies would add a staggering $9.3 trillion to the national debt—one-third more than President Obama had estimated by using much more optimistic assumptions about future economic growth. . . .

The ever-growing national debt will require ever-larger annual interest payments, with much of that money going overseas to China, Japan and other countries that have been buying our bonds.

Reacting to this scary prospect, the House and Senate budget committees took the paring knife to some of Obama's spending proposals and tax cuts last week. But many of the proposed savings look more like bookkeeping gimmicks than realistic cutbacks. . . .

But the main device the Democratic budgeteers employed was simply to shrink the budget ''window'' from 10 years to five. Instantly, $5 trillion in debt disappeared from view, along with the worry that long after the recession is past, the structural deficit would continue to blight the future of young working families.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have the David Broder column that appeared in the Washington Post yesterday printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Washington Post, Mar. 27, 2009]

HIDING A MOUNTAIN OF DEBT

(By David S. Broder)

With a bit of bookkeeping legerdemain borrowed from the Bush administration, the Democratic Congress is about to perform a cover-up on the most serious threat to America's economic future.

That threat is not the severe recession, tough as that is for the families and businesses struggling to make ends meet. In time, the recession will end, and last week's stock market performance hinted that we may not have to wait years for the recovery to begin.

The real threat is the monstrous debt resulting from the slump in revenue and the staggering sums being committed by Washington to rescuing embattled banks and homeowners—and the absence of any serious strategy for paying it all back.

The Congressional Budget Office sketched the dimensions of the problem on March 20, and Congress reacted with shock. The CBO said that over the next 10 years, current policies would add a staggering $9.3 trillion to the national debt—one-third more than President Obama had estimated by using much more optimistic assumptions about future economic growth.

As far as the eye could see, the CBO said, the debt would continue to grow by about $1 trillion a year because of a structural deficit between the spending rate, averaging 23 percent of gross domestic product, and federal revenue at 19 percent.

The ever-growing national debt will require ever-larger annual interest payments, with much of that money going overseas to China, Japan and other countries that have been buying our bonds.

Reacting to this scary prospect, the House and Senate budget committees took the paring knife to some of Obama's spending proposals and tax cuts last week. But many of the proposed savings look more like bookkeeping gimmicks than realistic cutbacks. The budget resolutions assume, for example, that no more money will be needed this year to bail out foundering businesses or pump up consumer demand, even though estimates of those needs start at $250 billion and go up by giant steps.

Republicans on the budget committees offered cuts that were larger and, in some but not all instances, more realistic.

But the main device the Democratic budgeteers employed was simply to shrink the budget ''window'' from 10 years to five. Instantly, $5 trillion in debt disappeared from view, along with the worry that long after the recession is past, the structural deficit would continue to blight the future of young working families.

The Democrats did not invent this gimmick. They borrowed it from George W. Bush, who turned to it as soon as his inherited budget surpluses withered with the tax cuts and recession of 2001–02. But Obama had promised a more honest budget and said that this meant looking at the long-term consequences of today's tax and spending decisions.

There are plenty of people in Congress for whom the CBO report was no surprise, and some of them have proposed a solution that would confront this reality. Kent Conrad, the chairman of the Senate Budget Committee, and Judd Gregg, its ranking Republican, have offered a bill to create a bipartisan commission to examine every aspect of the budget—taxes, defense and domestic spending, and, especially, Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security. Congress would be required to vote promptly, up or down, on its recommendations, or come up with an alternative that would achieve at least as much in savings.

In the House, Democrat Jim Cooper of Tennessee and Republican Frank Wolf of Virginia have been pressing a similar proposal but have been regularly thwarted.

The roadblock in chief is Nancy Pelosi, the speaker of the House. She has made it clear that her main goal is to protect Social Security and Medicare from any significant reforms. Pelosi has not forgotten how Democrats benefited from the 2005–06 fight against Bush's effort to change Social Security. Her party, which had lost elections in 2000, 2002 and 2004, found its voice and its rallying cry to ''Save Social Security,'' and Pelosi is not about to allow any bipartisan commission to take that issue away from her control.

The price for her obduracy is being paid in the rigging of the budget process. The larger price will be paid by your children and grandchildren, who will inherit a future-blighting mountain of debt.

Mr. MCCAIN. What does the President's budget do? It doubles the public debt in 5 years and nearly triples it in 10 years. As a consequence, beginning in 2019, the Government will spend more on interest than on the defense of our Nation. That is $806 billion on interest, $720 billion on defense. That is eight times more than we will spend on education and eight times more than we will spend on transportation. The budget proposals offered by the President and the Senate Democrats put us on an unsustainable fiscal path and will pass on to future generations an unprecedented level of debt they will never be able to afford.

We should not take lightly the significant impact our mounting debt has on our future financial stability and security. Currently, China owns nearly $2 trillion of our debt, and because of the global economic downturn, the Chinese are now focused on pumping their money into their own economy. I believe one of my colleagues said it best when he warned: ''The only thing worse than China holding so much of our debt, is China declining to finance any more of our debt.''

Buying our national debt is no longer a very attractive investment for the Chinese and, given the explosion of debt currently envisioned in the President's budget, an even less inviting one in the future. We see evidence of this approaching predicament brought on by their well-founded concerns about the dollar's declining value and in China's recent suggestion that the world should consider a new international currency to replace the dollar.

Here are some cold, hard facts: Our current national debt is $10.7 trillion. The projected deficit for 2009 is $1.7 trillion. The total cost of the stimulus bill enacted last month is over $1.1 trillion. We gave the Troubled Asset Relief Program, known as TARP, $700 billion, but everyone expects the administration will request up to an additional $750 billion or more. President Obama recently signed an Omnibus appropriations bill totaling $410 billion. The Federal Reserve recently pumped another $1.2 trillion into our markets, and the President has submitted a budget request of $3.6 trillion.

Just today, we have decided we will keep General Motors and Chrysler alive, when General Motors and Chrysler should go to a prepackaged bankruptcy. They could enter bankruptcy, change the parameters on which they are doing business, and emerge as more competitive and efficient automobile manufacturing corporations that could compete with automobile manufacturing here in the United States, only they are not located in Michigan, they are located in other States. So instead of sending General Motors and Chrysler into the prepackaged bankruptcy they deserve, we now have taken the unprecedented step of firing the CEO of General Motors—a remarkable move by the Federal Government, I think unprecedented in the history of this country. What does the signal send to other corporations and financial institutions about whether the Federal Government will decide to fire them as well?

But the fundamental issue here is, who is too big to fail? Who is too big to fail in America? And what do I tell the businessperson in Phoenix, AZ, who is

about to have to close their doors because they do not have the financing and they have not been bailed out? Who is too big to fail and who is too small to survive? That is why we have seen an outpouring and outrage over the bonuses paid to executives of financial institutions that they neither deserve nor warrant.

The President's budget numbers are simply staggering. On average, he adds $1 trillion to the debt every year for the next 10 years. He produces deficits totaling $9.2 trillion over this period, taking spending from 20 percent of GDP up to 25 percent of GDP. The deficit for fiscal year 2009 will be more than three times the previous record of the biggest deficit. The President's budget also contains $1.4 trillion in tax increases. It resurrects the death tax and, even at this critical time, discourages investment in our economy by raising the top rate on capital gains and dividends by one-third.

If the CBO-projected deficits in the budget's outyears prove close to accurate, by 2019 Americans would owe a debt that is over 80 percent of our gross domestic product—the highest level since 1948—and double our debt's current share of gross domestic product. It would create more debt than under every President from George Washington to George W. Bush combined. As others have already warned, the Nation would be bankrupt, and the America our children and grandchildren inherit would be, for the first time in history, a land of limited opportunities.

Beyond the serious ramifications of the budget numbers, we also need to be concerned about the very real fight we face over reconciliation. The House has included reconciliation instructions for both health care and education. The administration has been clear that it wants climate change added to the reconciliation measures.

I recently read where the administration is considering declaring greenhouse gases a health risk. Just 2 weeks ago, the EPA delivered documents to the White House stating findings that global warming threatens both public health and welfare. If this declaration is made, none of us should be surprised to see changes to environmental law used as an opening to fund universal health care.

I fully recognize that Republicans have in the past engaged in using reconciliation to further the party's agenda. It was wrong then. I wish it had not been done. And I hope and I wish it would not be done now. But the groundwork has been laid. I think this would be a grave mistake. We should be working on the most pressing issues in a bipartisan, thoughtful manner.

We are in the midst of a severe recession. The U.S. Labor Department announced that employers cut another 651,000 jobs in February, raising the unemployment rate to 8.1 percent, the highest since 1983. These statistics are dire and argue for Government's intervention to stimulate the economy. However, it would be an appalling dereliction of duty to use the crisis caused by the global credit crunch, as some members of the administration have suggested, to excuse profligate spending that would not hasten economic growth and that puts the United States on an accelerated path to bankruptcy.

I believe the President's budget has fallen prey to the siren song of short-term expediency. It is bad economics. The antiquated U.S. Code has driven an increasing number of businesses—especially small, dynamic startup ventures—to file their taxes as individuals. Nearly one-half of Americans work in businesses with fewer than 50 employees, and we should focus on keeping those jobs and creating more of them. While the administration argues that a minuscule number of businesses are affected by its proposed tax increases, a majority of small business income will be hit by them. Jobs are where the money is, and increasing taxes on jobs endangers the recovery.

It is a misguided policy toward fairness. Rising inequality is a 30-year process with its roots in skills and education—not tax policy.

Lastly, insulating 95 percent of voters from the consequences of their electoral decisions is dangerous for a democracy. It is also misleading. Does anyone really believe we can expand all nondefense spending to a record share of GDP, reform the health care system that is one-sixth of the economy, reinvent the energy portfolio that powers our lives, and drive next-generation broadband to every home, while cutting taxes for 95 percent of Americans? It doesn't add up, it won't add up, and it won't last.

I fully recognize tough choices need to be made in order to get our country back on course. It is like the old saying, ''Everyone wants to go to heaven, but no one wants to die.'' Except in Washington, it would be, everyone wants fiscal prosperity, but no one wants to force the belt tightening.

For two centuries, Americans have worked hard so their children could have better lives and greater opportunity. Do we really want to reverse that order by having our children work hard so we don't have to make hard economic choices now?

The Federal budget must address the most pressing issues facing our Nation. Among those priorities are keeping Americans safe and the Nation secure, enhancing economic growth and raising standards of living, reducing the burden of debt for the next generation, reforming our health care system, and shifting to a cleaner, more secure energy portfolio. The budget must also ensure that taxpayers' dollars are managed in the most fiscally responsible manner by targeting resources to priorities, spending no more than needed, eliminating waste and special interest projects, and holding the Government accountable to the taxpayer.

We are obviously living in perilous economic times, but with resolute action and clarity of vision, we can emerge from this period with strong job growth, rising incomes, restored confidence, and the ability to meet our patriotic obligation of passing to the next generation the opportunity to make their lives safer, more prosperous, and more enriching than our own. We are in a financial crisis, a housing crisis, and a consumer-led recession. Why, then, does the President's budget envision borrowing trillions of dollars for new initiatives in education and health care, energy, the environment, transportation, and technology without any spending discipline or offsets?

Of course, those programs sound appealing, but whether you support or oppose those long-term goals, addressing our most important and immediate problems should be our urgent priority. We have not devoted resources to the right problems. We have left our principles behind as we deliver check after Treasury check, and we will not be able to continue down this road.

I hope again that we, on both sides of the aisle, can sit down together for a change and work out a bipartisan agreement. I believe with the right kind of preparation and the right kind of work, we could have come up with a budget proposal that took into consideration the concerns of those of us on this side of the aisle. As with the stimulus package, as with the omnibus bill, as with SCHIP, and with other issues that have come before this body, there has not been what the American people want so badly for us to do, and that is to sit down and work together and come up with a common recipe for the common challenges we face that affect all Americans, whether they be Republican or Democrat.

Again, I regret that this budget, after our usual national—well, I won't go into it, but the budget vote-arama, that this budget will go down, will be passed largely on party lines. I regret that. We will have time in the future, as we are facing other issues such as health care reform, issues of climate change and others—energy independence—that we should be able to sit down together. So far we haven't. I wish we had.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I thank the Senator for his observations on the budget. I do wish to indicate the budget before us is different than the budget the President sent us. First of all, the Senator mentioned reconciliation instructions. We have no reconciliation instructions in this budget—not on health care, not on climate change, not on education. My own belief is that was never the purpose of reconciliation. Reconciliation was really designed to be for deficit——

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. CONRAD. I am happy to yield.

Mr. McCAIN. Does the Senator really believe that reconciliation will not be part of the final budget resolution?

Mr. CONRAD. Well, I would say this to the Senator: I don't know, but I know it is not part of this resolution, and that was rather intense debate, as my colleague can imagine. I have said publicly and privately what I believe. I don't believe reconciliation was ever intended for the purpose of writing this kind of substantive reform legislation such as health care reform, such as climate change.

As people get into how reconciliation actually works, I think they are going to be a lot less eager to pursue it. If I could just give two examples.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, would the Senator yield for another question?

Mr. CONRAD. I am happy to yield.

Mr. McCAIN. I am sure one of the things my distinguished colleague is referring to is that after 10 years, whatever the reconciliation would then expire. But I also would again question whether the Senator is aware that it is accepted as common knowledge that there will be reconciliation in this budget resolution when it is finally passed, whether it contains health care reform, education reform, and/or climate change.

I do acknowledge, again, before my friend answers, that Republicans began this, and it was the wrong thing to do. It was the wrong thing to do. Sometimes you reap what you sow. So I fully acknowledge that.

However, I think to address an issue as serious as health care reform in America, to put it on a budget resolution would be a very serious breach of the customary way the Senate addresses these issues. I thank the distinguished chairman of the Budget Committee for his hard work on this issue for many years.

Mr. CONRAD. I thank the Senator. I would just say I am going to argue strenuously against it in conference committee. The Senator asked me what will be the result. I don't know. Am I going to be able to prevail in the conference committee on this matter? I don't know. But I really do think—I hope colleagues who think reconciliation is the answer will think very carefully about how it actually works.

Anything in reconciliation, first of all, is subject to the Byrd rule. The Byrd rule says any legislative proposal that does not score, that doesn't cost money or save money, is subject to automatic strike. Any provision that the score is only incidental to the policy change is subject to automatic strike.

Our distinguished Parliamentarian has said, if you try to write major legislation in reconciliation, you will be left with Swiss cheese. So I hope people are thinking about that. I know there are attractive features of reconciliation, and it is true I think Republicans abused it in writing the tax reductions because I deeply believe reconciliation was only intended for deficit reduction. So I think it was wrong to have been applied solely for tax reduction during the years the Republicans were in control. I don't think two wrongs make a right. I don't think we should do it for substantive legislation that is really not deficit reduction legislation.

One other thing I wish to say—and I hope people are thinking very carefully about this. The way reconciliation works is there is only one instruction for revenue, one instruction for spending, one instruction for debt in a year. So if you are going to put all of these provisions together, you are going to have education, you are going to have health care reform. You may well have to do those in one bill—in one bill. Now, are we really going to do that? Are we going to have education reform and health care reform put in one legislative vehicle? I think we better think very carefully about that. So I thank the Senator from Arizona for his observations.

I do wish to stress that the budget we have before us is substantially different than the budget the President sent, and there is a simple reason for that. We have $2.3 trillion less over 10 years to write this budget. This is a 5-year budget, so we made $608 billion in changes. In spending alone on the discretionary side, we have reduced discretionary spending over 5 years by $160 billion—$160 billion. We have changed the mandatory side of the equation by $240 billion. We have changed the revenue line by almost $160 billion. So I hope as people look at this budget, they will recognize substantial changes have been made in light of the new forecast. We have attempted to be responsible, and we have gotten the deficit down by two-thirds by the fifth year and less than 3 percent of GDP, which is what all the economists say is necessary to stabilize the debt.

My own strong belief is we need to do even better than that in the second 5 years in light of the retirement of the baby boomers and in light of this enormous debt that has been stacked up. Again, that did not happen—it was not the fault of President Barack Obama. He inherited a colossal debt. He inherited a colossal fiscal crisis, financial crisis, housing crisis. It wasn't his fault. He didn't create it. He is in on the cleanup crew.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The minority whip is recognized.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, first, let me say the job the chairman of the Budget Committee has is very difficult. I think I can speak for virtually everybody on our side of the aisle when I say there is a lot of respect for the way he has approached this job, especially this year. I, for one, appreciate the comments about the difficulty with the deficits and with the application of reconciliation. I think the chairman is exactly right. There are a lot of issues with reconciliation, and if it is to be used for the purpose as he identified it, if what Republicans did was wrong, then as lawyers say: a fortiori, this would be wrong, meaning it is even more the case because this would be policy that doesn't even relate specifically to taxes, except indirectly.

So I certainly hope the chairman can be successful in his efforts to remove or to ensure that reconciliation instructions are not included as a part of this budget. From my standpoint, primarily because that would effectively take Republicans out of the ball game in terms of helping to write new health care and environmental and energy and education policy, that should better be done on a bipartisan basis, or at least to the extent possible on a bipartisan basis. That would be very difficult to do if reconciliation got involved. So I appreciate his efforts in that regard.

I wish to begin by quoting a statement that President Obama made at a recent press conference:

> The best way to bring our deficit down in the long run is . . . with a budget that leads to economic growth by moving from an era of borrow and spend to one where we save and invest.

That is true. I think it is too bad that the President's budget doesn't meet the test he laid out. It borrows and spends more than any previous budget, and its new taxes will retard economic growth, especially at a time when the stock markets are unsteady, consumers are wary, and unemployment continues to rise, the President's budget should not propose unprecedented spending increases, huge tax increases on individuals, businesses, and families, and deficits as far as the eye can see.

This is not an era of new responsibility. Simply put, the budget spends too much, it taxes too much, and it borrows too much.

First, with regard to spending, we need to remember that middle-class families and small businesses are making sacrifices and tradeoffs in their own budgets every day. But not in Washington. The Federal Government continues to spend trillions of taxpayer dollars on bailouts and new Government programs. This $3.9 trillion budget continues business as usual, making no hard choices about how to rein in out-of-control Government spending. It also marks a nearly 20-percent growth in nondefense Federal spending since the end of 2008. This budget is so big that, according to the Heritage Foundation estimates, 250,000 new Federal bureaucrats may be required to spend it all.

Nor is there any intention of cutting back. This budget does not contemplate one-time investments followed by years of reduced spending. Instead, billions in new outlays will continue indefinitely. So it is not just about massive spending but about the permanent accruement of power in Washington. As the Wall Street Journal recently editorialized:

> With [his] fiscal 2010 budget proposal, President Obama is attempting not merely

to expand the role of the Federal Government, but to put it in such a dominant position that its power can never be rolled back.

Don't be fooled by the word ''investments.'' The lion's share of this new spending is not what a well-run business or IRS would count as an ''investment,'' such as equipment or other tangible assets. Most of the new spending would be for services where long-term value is difficult to measure.

Going to the item of taxes, President Obama said he will cut taxes for 95 percent of Americans. But his budget would raise taxes by $1.4 trillion over 10 years. It not only lets some of the existing tax cuts expire—thus raising taxes—but it implements a new $646 billion energy tax that will impact every American household, regardless of income, and is estimated to increase energy costs for every family by $3,168 annually. It is described as a ''downpayment,'' meaning there is more to come.

This tax is touted as a way to curb greenhouse gas emissions, but there is no way around the fact that it will be a tax on virtually all economic activity, since almost every aspect of our daily lives requires energy from fossil fuels. I recall candidate Obama telling the San Francisco Chronicle that ''under my plan of a cap and trade system, electricity rates would necessarily skyrocket.'' Is this what we need or want—especially in a time of recession?

It is also important to understand that existing expiring income tax relief for individuals is not a new tax cut. When an Arizona family thinks of a tax cut, it assumes it will pay less in taxes from one year to the next. The administration claims that if you don't pay more in taxes, you are receiving a tax cut. This difference, to borrow a phrase from Mark Twain, is like the difference between lightning and a lightning bug.

The budget also increases taxes on half of small businesses with 20 or more employees. So far, during this recession, small businesses have created all of the net new jobs. Why is this tax a good idea?

We are straying too far from the principle that the purpose of taxes is to pay for the costs of Government in a way that does the least damage to the economy. Hippocrates' oath for his medical students to ''first, do no harm'' should also apply to fiscal policy. This budget will not lead to economic recovery. What, in these times, could be more important?

Finally, as to borrowing, there is the deficit. Last year, the deficit was $459 billion. The Congressional Budget Office now projects a $1.669 trillion deficit in 2009. In 5 years, this budget will double the public debt. In 10 years, it will triple the public debt. After bottoming out at $658 billion in 2012—a level still more than 40 percent above the highest deficit during George W. Bush's Presidency—the Congressional Budget Office projects the deficit to increase to $9.2 trillion in 2019, an astounding 82.4 percent of GDP. It also creates more debt than the combined debt under every President since George Washington. Think of that. That is not sustainable, as even the President's OMB Director, Peter Orszag, has said.

Let's not forget the finance charges. Beginning in 2012, and every year thereafter, the Government will spend more than $1 billion per day on finance charges to holders of U.S. debt. How will this impact the average American family? Federal spending on finance charges for our Government's debt will be about $1,500 per household for 2009. Under President Obama's budget, this number soars to nearly $5,700 per household by 2019. What happened to his plan to ''spend wisely''?

This excessive borrowing increases our dependence on creditors in countries such as China and Japan. These two countries now hold more than a third of our foreign debt. Other countries hold more than half of America's total publicly held debt. When other countries hold a large amount of our debt, they also have leverage to influence our currency, trade, and even our national security policies.

The final point I want to make relates to what I regard as class warfare. I am struck by the language of the budget, starting this class warfare in America. Page 5 of the budget reads:

> While middle-class families have been playing by the rules, living up to their responsibilities as neighbors and citizens, those at the commanding heights of our economy have not.

Is this true? Is it true that everyone in the upper brackets has not lived up to their responsibilities or played by the rules? Many of your family physicians, for example, fall into the category of top earners—after years of training and mountains of debt from student loans and round-the-clock work hours, on call for you and me. Are they guilty of not living up to their responsibilities or playing by the rules? That is what the President's budget says.

Most high-income people work pretty hard. They contribute to the economy, give to charity, and pay a lot in taxes. The budget complains that the top 1 percent of earners now holds 22 percent of the Nation's income. But it fails to recognize that they also pay 40 percent of all Federal income taxes.

As Daniel Heninger recently wrote in the Wall Street Journal:

> What is becoming clearer as [President Obama's] presidency unfolds is that something deeper is underway here than merely using higher taxes to fund his policy goals in health, education, and energy . . . . The rancorous language used to describe these taxpayers makes it clear that they will be made to ''pay for'' the fact of their wealth—no matter how many of them have worked honestly and honorably to produce it. No Democratic President in 60 years has been this explicit.

Republicans want to work with the President to get the economy back on track. But the massive amounts of spending, taxing, and borrowing in this budget will hinder an economic recovery. In times such as these, we have to focus on growing our economy, not growing the Government.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida is recognized.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, let's see what we start with when we start to draw a budget. In this current fiscal year, there is going to be a deficit of $1.7 trillion; that is, Federal revenues are going to be less than Federal expenditures by $1.7 trillion.

Why did that occur? It occurred for a number of reasons over the last several years and budgets that were developed that caused the Federal Government to have a huge deficit. On top of that, you have a declining economy with the tax receipts of the Federal Government, because of the declining economy going south. As a result, what you have is an ever-expanding deficit because expenditures are going up in times of a down economy, particularly with regard to the stimulus bill and with regard to the completion of the appropriations bill for this current fiscal year. All of that spending, with the declining revenues, based on past practices, has brought us to this point. So we inherit a deep hole from which we start.

The question is, how do we get out of that hole and, at the same time, how do we stimulate the economy in order that we can get our economic engine running again and get America moving again? I think the chairman of the committee, Senator CONRAD, has done a magnificent job in his mark that takes this present $1.7 trillion deficit in this year, 2009, downward, or increasing the margin to a narrow margin by which the Federal revenues are exceeded by the Federal expenditures and puts that on a path to where you bring the Federal deficit down to less than 3 percent of gross domestic product 5 years out.

What this budget document does is take us from a position of $1.7 trillion in this year, and then, over the next 5 years, takes it down to a position that is about $500 billion—still a huge deficit, but when you compare it to $1.7 trillion or compare it to the fact that all of the economists will testify that any deficit within the range of 3 percent is an acceptable deficit to keep the economy going and, in fact, the deficit 5 years away is less than 3 percent—it is 2.9 percent—then you should have a budget document that puts us on a path for economic recovery.

I have heard all of these comments about how this budget is spend, spend, spend, and how this is going to run us into bankruptcy, and all that. Well, consider a few facts. First, there is a series of reserve funds for necessary legislation that we want to achieve, such as reforming the health care system. Unless we can get a health care reform enacted into law, we will have very little chance of getting our arms around an exploding budget in the future, because you have to rein in these health care costs. So a series of reserve funds is set up in the budget.

Some would say that is budgetary sleight of hand, until you get into the details of the budget and find out that these reserve funds have to be fiscally or financially neutral and, if they are not, the budget law of the velvet hammer is enacted to come down that any exceeding of a budget-neutral reserve fund has the consequence that the expenditures in that reserve fund have to be paid for.

In other words, the hammer is there if you are not going to produce—in this case we are talking about health care reform—a package over 5 years—and in this case I think it is 10 years—then the hammer of the Budget Act comes down and says not only is that not allowed, you have to bring up a tax revenue in order to pay for whatever the expenditures in that reserve fund are.

Other reserve funds have to be budget neutral. Clean energy and preserving the environment, higher education, child nutrition, and Women, Infants, and Children, infrastructure investments, economic stabilization and growth, America's veterans and the wounded servicemembers, the judgeships, reforming defense acquisition, investments in local governments, and strengthening the Food and Drug Administration—each one of them is a reserve fund that has to be paid for. They have to be budget neutral under this budget we are going to pass. If they are not, the hammer of the budget law comes down on them so that not only can you not enact that particular reserve legislation, but, in fact, if you go over it, you have to provide for the Federal revenues that will pay for it. I think we have an enforceable document.

I will make one other point and that is that out of this 5-year budget, this document slashes some $800 billion of spending and tax relief, tax cuts from the President's budget—$800 billion. Most of that is slashing spending. Some of that is an elimination of some of the President's tax cuts.

The net effect is, it has, over 5 years, a reduction of the deficit by $800 billion. That is moving in a conservative fiscal direction. People are wondering: Did the Budget Committee do anything with the President's budget? Mr. President, $800 billion is a significant amount. But that is 5 years. When we project this budget out over 10 years, how much is slashed? It is a whopping $2.7 trillion in the President's 10-year budget projections.

I think it is clear by these numbers that this is a much more moderate or conservative approach to spending and tax policy, and with the hammer, the enforcement mechanism of the budget law governing these different trust funds—important legislation that we want to enact—we have a manageable way to take us from fiscal recklessness, where we are now with a $1.7 trillion deficit, to a manageable 2.9 percent of GDP 5 years from now and a deficit that is approximately $500 billion.

It would be nice if, over the course of those 5 years, we could move back into balance. It would have been nice, 8 years ago when we had a surplus, had we not enacted the budgets that were enacted back then that took us from a position of surplus, to have used that surplus to pay down the national debt. Instead, a course of action was enacted that took us to huge budget deficits, where we find ourselves today. Therefore, we have a situation that is very difficult.

To maintain the amount of stimulus in the economy to keep us on a stabilized economic road to the future, this budget is about the best we can have. Concurrently, if proposals by the Treasury Department to get the banks lending again are starting to work in the economy with a stabilized and moderate approach to budgeting, then we will start to see our economy come back to life. It is my hope that this is the commonsense kind of budget blueprint we need going forth for the next 5 years.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HAGAN). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CONRAD. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CONRAD. Madam President, we have heard a lot of concern this afternoon about deficits and debt and spending from our colleagues on the other side. I wish to remind them of a little of the history of what brought us here. This is what happened with spending when they were in charge—spending about doubled in the Bush administration. Of course, we know the debt more than doubled, and we are left with an ocean of red ink.

That is what this administration inherited. This wasn't President Obama's doing. This is what he walked into. Here is what happened to the debt and the deficit under the previous administration. They actually inherited substantial surpluses, which they rapidly turned into record deficits and then plunged the thing right off the cliff. If we are going to be fair about how we got here, I think the other side is going to have to accept an awful lot of responsibility. Here is what happened to the debt—it more than doubled, from $5.8 trillion in 2001 to $12.1 trillion in 2009.

Senator GREGG, the ranking Republican on the committee, said: I am willing to accept this short-term deficit number, not debate it, because we are in a recession and it is necessary for the Government to step in and be aggressive, and the Government is the last source of liquidity. So you can argue that this number, although horribly large, is something we will simply have to live with.

That is the ranking member of the Budget Committee. Look, I think he is entirely right. The hard reality is we have no choice but to accept, in the short-term, these large deficits as the Government seeks to provide liquidity to prevent an all-out collapse. But over time, this budget brings the spending down. I am not talking about the President's budget now. I am talking about the budget I have presented here. We take the budget—total discretionary spending—from 9.5 percent of GDP in 2010 down to 7.3 percent of GDP in the fifth year.

When you distinguish between defense and nondefense discretionary, what you see is that I am bringing them both down at about an equivalent rate. So defense, in 2010, will be 4.8 percent of GDP; at the end of the 5 years of this budget, it will be down to 3.7 percent of GDP. Similarly, nondefense discretionary will be 4.7 percent of GDP in 2010, and we take that to 3.6 percent of GDP in 2014.

On the discretionary accounts, which is about one-third of all Federal spending, on the discretionary accounts, both defense and nondefense, I am bringing them both down as a share of our national income and doing it in about the same proportion.

We are doing that because, look, we don't have a lot of options. When the President wrote his budget, he had $2.3 trillion more in revenue than we have. Now, he did his budget some time earlier, and the forecasts were more robust. Once CBO did their more recent forecast, $2.3 trillion was gone. That requires a response, if we are also going to answer the President's charge to dramatically bring down the deficit, and we have also done that—from $1.7 trillion in 2009 to just over $500 billion in 2014. That is a reduction of more than two-thirds in the deficit of the United States.

Of course, economists like to measure it in terms of a percentage of gross domestic product rather than dollar terms because that adjusts for inflation. But look what we have done in that way: We have gone from 12.2 percent of GDP in 2009 to less than 3 percent as a deficit and share of the economy in 2014—again, more than a two-thirds reduction—and we get below the magic 3 percent, which is where most economists say we stabilize the growth of the debt.

I am quite proud of what this budget has accomplished in the 5 years of its term. I am the first to acknowledge that when Senator GREGG stands and says we are not doing enough about the second 5 years, sign me up. I agree with him entirely. Certainly, the President's budget has far more debt and deficit in the second 5 years than ours, if you extended our policies. But I would say that either one of them doesn't do enough for the second 5 years. We have to do much more. That is why Senator GREGG and I have proposed a special procedure to give 16 Members the responsibility to come up with a plan, and if 12 of the 16 agree, then that plan would come to Congress for a vote.

Now, we changed the President's budget over the first 5 years by $608 billion. That is a lot of money. Madam President, 30 percent of it is on the revenue side, 31 percent on the discretionary spending. In other words, we reduced the President's spending by $167 billion over the next 5 years. Anybody who doesn't think that is a big deal, come to my office and listen to the phone calls.

The mandatory spending we reduced by 39 percent of the total $608 billion we changed from the President's budget. So we distributed the pain about equally. We did it on a proportionate basis.

Mandatory spending is the biggest part of the budget, so they took more of the reduction. Discretionary spending and revenue were done of about equal proportion. We tried to be fair. We didn't go to just one committee of jurisdiction, or two committees, and say: You take the whole burden of making these changes. We went to everybody, and we said, you know, we have to share the pain and we have to share it equally.

Again, on the question of spending in the budget that is before us—I am not talking about the President's budget. The President's budget is not before us; the budget the Budget Committee has is before this body, the budget that we are going to vote on, which nobody, it seems, wants to talk about. They want to talk about some other budget. But they don't have a budget of their own.

If our budget is so bad, where is their budget? They don't even have a budget. So if our budget is so bad, where is their budget? We don't see their budget. I just say this: On nondefense discretionary the average annual increase under the budget resolution is 2.5 percent. Some say we ought to just freeze it. I don't think that would be very wise to do. That wouldn't even offset inflation. But this is a pretty tough budget that is before us. I want my colleagues to know, nondefense discretionary spending is increased over the life of this budget on average 2.5 percent.

Let's go to that final slide, if we could.

Where are the increases in the nondefense discretionary accounts under this budget resolution? You can see, here is where they are. The biggest chunk is defense. More than one-third of the increase is in national defense. That is in part because the President, instead of hiding the costs of the war, has put the costs of the war in the budget. That is what we have done. So if you look at the nondefense discretionary increase under the budget resolution, one-third is defense.

Madam President, 14 percent is international and 10 percent is for our veterans. We have given the biggest increase for veterans health care ever—and deservedly so. They have suffered the wounds of war and they deserve to have those wounds treated and they deserve to be treated with respect when they come home. So 10 percent of the increase is there. Ten percent is education, 10 percent is income security, 8 percent is the census.

One-twelfth of the increase is the census that has to be done every 10 years. That is an extraordinary expense, but here it is. We have to deal with it and we do. Natural resources and environment are 6 percent, transportation is 3 percent, and ''other'' is 2 percent.

The discretionary increase comes in those categories. I hope my colleagues, as they discuss the budget, deal with the budget that is before us. It is substantially different than the budget the President sent us because, again, when the President wrote his budget he had $2.3 trillion more in revenue over 10 years than we do under the new scoring that was done just before we concluded work on this budget.

I think the American people would expect us to make changes when the facts change. When the revenue changes dramatically I think they would expect us to make adjustments, and that is what we have tried to do.

I am quite proud of this budget document that we have produced, this outline for the country, because we have done our level best to keep faith with the priorities established by the President. He said to me, when I told him we were going to lose $2 trillion—he said: Look, do everything you can to preserve my priorities. He said, No. 1: Please do everything you can to make sure we can reduce our dependence on foreign energy. That is not just the President's priority, that is the priority of the American people.

No. 2, he said: Do your level best to preserve my priority by focusing on excellence in education because if we are not the best educated, we are not going to be the strongest country on Earth very long—and we have done that in this budget.

No. 3, he said: Please preserve my priority on major health care reform because that is the place that is going to take us over the cliff, in terms of our long-term economic future. That is the thing that is burdening families and businesses and taxpayers, so please do everything you can to preserve my key priorities, and do it in the context of dramatically reducing the budget deficit.

We have done that in this budget. We have preserved his priorities on reducing dependence on foreign energy, on excellence in education, on major health care reform. We provided reserve funds, deficit neutral reserve funds for each one of those categories, and we have reduced the deficit by two-thirds. We have gotten it down to 3 percent of GDP, which was his charge to us. We have done it all, even though we faced a dramatic reduction in revenue available to us.

Does that mean we could just copy the President's budget? Obviously not. We had to make adjustments, and we made $608 billion of adjustments over the first 5 years. I believe that was necessary and appropriate and prudent, and I hope we can hold onto those changes as we go through the markup. I am already hearing there are people who want to come here and increase the spending. I have already heard people are going to offer amendments to take away some of these adjustments. I am told Republicans and Democrats are meeting right now, this afternoon, to figure out how to come in and change this budget, to raise the spending. I am told there are a lot of Members represented at this meeting.

Let me send a word to them: Change this at your peril. We have carefully crafted this package to be able to win majority support. I think you better think very carefully about changing what we have brought to the floor because you might move it in your direction—more spending—only to wind up with a defeat on final passage of this budget. I hope those who are meeting will think very carefully about coming to the floor and trying to increase the spending in this resolution.

I yield the floor.

Mr. GREGG. Madam President, we are awaiting a speaker, but while we await the speaker, who is on his way—I think Senator SPECTER is coming—I want to respond to a couple of points by the Senator from North Dakota.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire is recognized.

Mr. GREGG. He quoted me, with a huge chart—I always appreciate that, get my name out there; my eloquence is once again reestablished—but it is regrettable that he didn't continue the quote. The point I made in that was that in the short term there is a necessity to spend money because the Government is the last source of liquidity right now, and we need that in order to try to get the economy going. But what is inexcusable about this budget is that in the years 2011, 2012, and beyond spending continues. It goes down from 28 percent to 23 percent and then it starts to go back up to 23, 24, 25 percent of gross domestic product. It is spending done entirely by deficits—an average of trillion-dollar deficits over the next 10 years under the President's budget.

The point is, of course, you may have to spend now. We do have to spend now. The spending is not done that well. It was a total misappropriation of money. The stimulus bill was just walking around money for different interest groups in which the appropriators happen to have a vested interest. Legitimate. Most of them were very nice groups. But most of them didn't stimulate the economy. But after the stimulus event is over and the recession has abated, to continue this level of spending is unconscionable. It creates a debt that our children will have to bear, a debt that is unfair to pass on to them.

My point, of course, is, as we move into the out-years we have to try to rein in spending, try to control spending because the issue is spending. That

is the bottom line. The problem is spending.

So you have this budget that has been proposed which is dramatically increasing the size of the Government intentionally. The President said he wants to do that. He said: I intend to create prosperity by expanding the size of the Government. He does it through creating a massive amount of debt—$9.2 trillion of new debt over the next 10 years, running the size of the debt as a burden on our economy up to 80 percent of gross domestic product—which is not sustainable and which will basically throw us into a situation where our children will not be able to afford the Government that is being passed on to them.

So when the Senator quotes me—and I appreciate him quoting me—I wish he would continue the sentence or continue the paragraph or the thought because it is the rest of the thought where the issue lies. The issue doesn't lie in the short term; the issue lies in the long term. The issue lies in what we are passing on to our children. The issue lies in the fact that under this budget, as brought to us, the debt and the deficit are exploding at a rate that no country can support. None. It creates financial hardship for this Nation if we continue down this path.

On another point, the Senator from North Dakota continues to bring up these charts about how they are bringing their deficit down below 3 percent, and the President has his up at 4.5 percent. The 4.5 percent is not sustainable. Everybody agrees with that. And 3 percent of the gross domestic product is barely sustainable.

How do they get there? They get there by simply using the old-fashioned shell game around here, which has been used for years, which is not putting on the budget that which we absolutely know is going to occur. At least the President had the decency and forthrightness to put into his budget these things we absolutely know are going to be spent on.

They claim with these reserve funds: ''Oh, we are responsible by doing reserve funds.'' That is a totally disingenuous statement. The President knows these reserve funds are not legitimate, and that is why he didn't use them. He put it in the doctor's fix and scored it. They put in a doctor's fix and don't score $90 billion, approximately. It is a significant amount.

The President said we are not going to have AMT; we are going to have a permanent fix on AMT. For 3 years this budget that is brought to us doesn't score AMT as revenues, but for the last 2 years it scores it as revenues. Why do they take these revenues even though we know we are not going to get them? So they can make their numbers look better, get below this 3 percent level, which is just a game.

Health care: The President in his budget says health care in his reform is going to cost about $400 billion over these first 5 years. Is any of that in this budget? None of it. A reserve fund, which is not even subject to pay-go, is used in order to mask that number. That helps to get below the 3 percent.

I mean, it is the use of the old gimmicks, the things which we at least respect the President for having come forward and saying: They are gimmicks, and therefore I am not going to use them. So just lay the President's numbers over this budget, and you get the exact same budget. When Peter Orszag, Director of the OMB, said there is 98 percent identity between these budgets, he was right and the practical effect was right.

The budget that was brought to the Senate floor is a profligate budget. It is a budget which basically goes out and spends at a level of 22 percent of gross domestic product for as far as the eye can see and generates revenues of 18 percent, 18.5 percent if they are lucky. That is after they raise taxes on the alleged wealthy—the small businesspeople of this country, the people who create the jobs—after they have hammered the small businesspeople who create jobs with a $1.4 trillion tax increase, hit us with a national sales tax on our electric bills, taking all that money and not using it to reduce the deficit at all, just use it to expand spending—after they have done all that, they have this huge gap which runs up debt, debt which is going to be unsustainable and unaffordable for our children.

It is certainly not appropriate. But at least the President was honest about it and straightforward and did not use a bunch of gimmicks to try to hide it so we could have an open and fair debate about it.

Unfortunately, that is not the case in the budget that is brought forward here. It is a budget which uses these games. Games which for a long time, have been used too often. I probably used a few of them when I was chairman.

But it is about time, since we have a President who is willing to come forward and say: This is the way it should be done, that we follow his lead and at least have the integrity to say he was right when he was transparent.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CONRAD. Madam President, let me be very clear. I absolutely reject the notion that the budget the Budget Committee has brought before this body has gimmicks or is misleading in any way.

I tell you what we do. We say things have to be paid for. Let's talk about the reserve funds that were just criticized. The reserve funds for health care, for energy, and education have a condition attached. The condition is, if the committees of jurisdiction come forward with legislation, they have to pay for them. That is the gimmick.

In Washington, things are so screwed up they think if you require something to be paid for, it is a gimmick. I do not think it is a gimmick to require things to be paid for. We should have been doing that a long time ago.

No. 2, he referenced the docs fix. The docs fix is this. Under current law, doctors who treat Medicare patients are going to have a cut. The President said: No, they are not going to have a cut. We will put it in the budget. But he had no offset for it. We are saying: No, we do not want the docs who treat Medicare patients to get a cut either. But, committees, if you produce the savings necessary to do that, we will not have the docs cut. You know what. That is what we have been doing.

I am on the Finance Committee. We have been assuring that the doctors who treat Medicare patients do not take the cuts that are in the law. But we have paid for it. That is what this budget does. It says to the Finance Committee: Do not cut the docs, but pay for it. Do not just put it on the budget, and do not worry about sticking it on the debt.

I am proud of that. That is exactly what we should have done.

On the alternative minimum tax, we say, for the next 3 years, when we are in a time of economic weakness and vulnerability, you can fix the alternative minimum tax that will otherwise affect 24 million Americans up from 4 million today. We say: No, do not let them get hit with more taxes at a time of economic weakness. But beyond the 3 years, if we are going to fix the alternative minimum tax—and indeed we should—pay for it. Pay for it.

That is what this budget says. That is no gimmick. That is being responsible.

On health care, the reserve fund says: Yes, we should have major health care reform. But pay for it. So the administration has said, it is their intention to pay for it. That is the intention in this budget, that it be paid for.

Let me be clear. These reserve funds, the ones triggered in the legislation are paid for. They call that a gimmick. I call it responsible. I know it is a new concept in this town.

Most people here, I have to tell you, our friends on the other side, their record is not pretty. When they were in charge, they doubled the debt. They were for every tax cut and every spending initiative. The result is they exploded the debt, doubled the debt of this country, tripled foreign holdings of debt. We are saying: No, we are not going to continue on that path. We insist on a trajectory that dramatically brings down the deficit. That means we have to insist that all these good things get offset, get paid for.

Now, the argument on the other side is, it will not happen. Not going to happen. We are not going to pay for things. Well, shame on us. Shame on us if we do not. Shame on us if we do not pay for the doc fix. We have been paying for it. Why all of a sudden do we say we cannot?

The alternative minimum tax. I will be the first one to say we have not been

paying for that, against my votes, because I do not want the alternative minimum tax to be imposed. But it ought to be offset so it does not add to the deficit.

The same is true on energy. We should have significant energy legislation to reduce our dependence on foreign oil. But we ought to pay for it. I was part of a group called the Gang of 10—5 Democrats, 5 Republicans—who became the Group of 20—10 Democrats and 10 Republicans.

We came forward with major energy legislation to reduce our dependence on foreign energy, but we paid for it. We provided the offsets so it did not add to the deficit or the debt. I hope very much that is the principle we adopt.

I yield the floor and look forward to my able colleague's rejoinder.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mr. GREGG. Not to belabor the point, but if they are so devoid of gimmicks, why did they waive their own pay-go rule in the health care reserve fund? I mean, on the face of it, they lost the argument. It is their budget. It takes the pay-go rule and emasculates it, and it is their pay-go rule. They are not making them subject to their own rules of fiscal enforcement in their own budget.

So, yes, gimmicks are replete. That is just one of them. The alternative minimum tax, that is a gimmick. They know they are not going to get the revenues from AMT. They score the revenue numbers from AMT in the last 2 years. That is a total gimmick. Everybody knows that is a gimmick here. We do not account for TARP II. Now, maybe they are not going to support their President on TARP II. They do not account for it, so I guess they figure the President does not need anymore money for assisting the financial stress the country is under; the President does. We do not account for it.

Disaster costs. How do you eliminate disaster costs in the budget and claim it is not a gimmick? We all know there are disasters to fund. My goodness gracious. Clearly, there are disasters that are going to require significant funding. In an attempt to be forthright on that, the President put in a number. Taken out of this budget. Why? Because they wanted to get under this number, 3 percent.

Nothing to do with whether disasters are going to occur or not occur over the next 5 years or whether we are going to spend money on them over the next 5 years. It was purely an accounting gimmick, nothing more, nothing less than an accounting gimmick.

Health care reform. The President's own budget scores it at $372 billion. Do you think this Congress is going to step up and say to the President: Oh, we are going to pay for this, even though you do not think we should pay for it. I doubt that. I mean, another gimmick. The President was at least forthright and said it was going to cost $372 billion, and he put it in his budget. Why are they not paying for it on the other side, not because they do not think it is not going to be there, this cost, but because they want to get under this 3 percent.

Interest. My goodness. How do you gimmick interest? Well, they did it. They are not accounting for the interest, which these expenditures obviously incur. Interest is a pretty stable number. You are either going to get it and have to pay for it or you are not. The fact is, the goal was to look better than the President, even when you were doing exactly what the President wanted you to do.

It is pretty hard to come here with a straight face and claim your number is significantly different than the President's. It would be nice if it were. I wish it were. I wish it were. But it is not. What it all leads to is a massive amount of debt—a massive amount of debt. Even 3 percent is not sustainable. But, certainly, the real number, which is 4 to 5 percent, is clearly not sustainable. Even 60 percent, is not sustainable, which is the number they claim they get to. I mean, that is not sustainable. That is not an acceptable number, and, in fact, would not even get you into the European Union, it is so unsustainable.

But it is not the real number, 80 percent is the number, 80 percent of public debt to GDP. That is the projected number.

So these numbers are staggering. They should give everyone pause and cause them to say: What are we doing here? What are we doing to our kids? To our Nation? Are we going to hand them off to a country that is so deeply in debt, that is running up debt at such a significant rate, or are we going to try to kid our kids and say: Oh, well, you know, we—those numbers are not real. You are not going to get stuck with these numbers and this amount of debt.

We know we are going to stick them with these numbers and this amount of debt. I hear all about this—we have all heard this almost interminably now: Well, the last administration did this, and the last administration did that. I would point out that this Congress was controlled by the Democratic Party for the last 2 years.

So it was not just the Republican President, it was the Democratic Congress that was spending money. I have never been one to be very—to have defended the last President on the issue of spending because I thought the Presidency did not do a very good job on spending. I voted against most of the things that were passed around here that spent money.

The Part D premium, which was the worst example, $8 trillion unfunded liability. The agriculture bill, massive expansion, inappropriate. Done. Highway bill. Massive expenditure, $26 billion dollars of earmarks.

So, yes, there was failure to discipline the budget on the spending side of the ledger in the last Presidency. But there was an accomplice around here. It was called the Democratic Congress. Now, regrettably, we have a President who said very openly, he is going to spend money, and a lot of it, to promote prosperity by expanding the size of Government on all these different accounts which he deems to be worthy.

I imagine they are worthy. The only problem is we cannot afford them as a culture or as a government because the cost to our children will be a debt they cannot bear. You can try to pass a budget that covers that up through games and darts and gimmicks and shell games and various little exercises in redoing the accounting rules, such as changing pay-go.

But in the end, we all know what it is going to lead to, which is a deficit and a debt that is not sustainable and a nation put at risk as a result of that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CONRAD. Madam President, again, there are not gimmicks here. There are requirements to pay for things. I know that seems like a gimmick to some because they are not used to paying for anything in this town. But that is what this budget says ought to be the operative principle: You start paying for things. If you want to have the doc fix, and I do, you pay for it.

That is what we have been doing in the Finance Committee. We have been paying for it. The President sent a budget that says you don't have to. But then we lost $2.3 trillion. So we are back to saying: Yes, you have to pay for it.

The alternative minimum tax for 3 years, when the economy is down, we say: No, do not raise revenues some other place to offset that because that would not make good economic sense at a time of weakness.

But when the economy recovers, offset the costs. That is exactly what we are going to have to do to get the books back in balance around here. The President put into his budget over $200 billion for disasters over the next 10 years.

The Congressional Budget Office would not score it. They say it is too speculative. Nobody at this point can tell you what the disasters are going to be. Look, I am especially sensitive to this. I have a major disaster going on in my State right now. I would love to put the money in. But there is not a soul on Earth who can tell you how much it is going to be at this point in time. We do not know if the levees are going to hold or if they are going to break.

To put in a number that has no relationship to any reality, that is honest accounting? I appreciate the President's attempt, but the Congressional Budget Office would not score one thin dime of it because they said it is too speculative.

I find it so curious. The other side complains all the time about ''too

much spending, too much debt.'' You do something to reduce spending in the budget I have offered—we cut the President's budget on domestic discretionary spending by over $160 billion—and now they complain about that.

I do not know how you ever get to the end without insisting that things get paid for and reducing spending and trying to get in place an overall fiscal condition that puts you on the right glidepath.

Now, the gentleman says you do not get to 3 percent of GDP because you have these reserve funds.

The reserve funds require, before anything happens, that the reserve funds be deficit neutral. That is a condition, a requirement. So, yes, you do get to 3 percent of GDP on the deficit, because we are not going to release those reserve funds, and I am the one who has been given the responsibility to decide whether they are released. We have put in a condition, and I can't release them if they are not paid for. Hallelujah, let's start paying for things around here.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. SPECTER. Madam President, I have sought recognition to comment on the issue of reconciliation which may, according to some speculation, seek to deal with substantive legislative proposals such as health care or perhaps even education or perhaps even global warming. I believe any such effort would be a colossal mistake, to try to change Senate procedures to deal with such substantive measures on a legislative vehicle which will take 51 votes instead of allowing for the customary Senate debate which could be cut off only by 60 votes.

In this Chamber, we had a fierce debate in 2005, where the Democrats were lined up on filibustering President Bush's nominees for the Federal courts. Republicans were threatening a so-called nuclear or constitutional option. At that time the Democrats were utilizing the time-honored process of continuing the debate unless Republicans had 60 votes to invoke cloture and cut off debate, which Republicans did not have. The partisan feelings got so high that there was a plan devised where the system could be short cut, have a ruling of the Chair and have a motion to overrule the ruling of the Chair, have it decided by 51 votes. Fortunately, that did not occur.

Historically, as I spoke at some length on the issue at that time, the filibuster, the extended debate in the Senate, had guaranteed judicial independence in the impeachment proceeding of Justice Chase in about 1805, and saved the independence of the Presidency in the impeachment of Andrew Johnson in 1868. So that issue was avoided.

Now we have what may well be an effort to circumvent the 60-vote rule. The unique feature of the Senate, which has frequently been called the world's greatest deliberative body, is that any Senator can offer virtually any amendment on virtually any bill at virtually any time. That plus extended debate gives this Chamber the opportunity to acquaint people with serious problems and to build up public demand one way or another. That is an expression of speech and persuasion in a setting where there is opportunity to advance the public good. If we start to shortcut that procedure and undertake major legislative change on items such as health care or global warming or education, we will destroy a most precious aspect of Senate procedure.

According to the Congressional Research Service, reconciliation ''was created as part of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 as a way to assure compliance with the direct spending revenue and the debt limit levels set forth in the budget resolution agreed to by Congress.''

The rules governing consideration in the Senate limit debate to 20 hours and, when all amendments are considered, the bill then moves on to a final vote. The House Resolution this year instructs the Energy and Commerce Committee and the Committee on Ways and Means to produce legislation on ''Health Care Reform'' and for the Education and Labor Committee to produce legislation on ''Investing in Education.'' These committees could produce legislation on other subjects within their jurisdiction, including climate change.

Senator BYRD, in a speech on February 12, 2009, at hearings entitled ''Senate Procedures for Consideration of the Budget Resolution/Reconciliation,'' had this to say—and we all know and prize Senator BYRD's erudition as the leading Senate scholar and spokesman and also the author of the Budget Act of 1974. This is what Senator BYRD said:

> I can say with confidence that the process the Senate utilizes today hardly resembles the process envisioned in 1974. Today the reconciliation process serves as a reminder of how well-intentioned changes to the Senate rules can threaten the institution in unforeseen ways. Reconciliation can be used by a determined majority to circumvent the regular rules of the Senate in order to advance partisan legislation.

Senator BYRD decried and protested loudly and effectively against that process. Earlier this month, March 12, 33 Senators, including 8 Democrats led by Senator BYRD, wrote to the Budget Committee Chairman and Ranking Member to ''oppose using the budget reconciliation process to expedite passage of climate legislation.''

The letter stated:

> Legislation so far-reaching should be fully vetted and give appropriate time for debate, something the budget resolution process does not allow. Using this procedure would circumvent normal Senate practice and be inconsistent with the Administration's stated goals of bipartisanship, cooperation, and openness.

I think it worthwhile to focus for a moment on what President Obama has emphasized in an effort to get bipartisanship, cooperation, and openness. There are those of us on this side of the aisle who have cooperated. I think it fair to say that to misuse the reconciliation process would be a very strong blow against bipartisanship and cooperation. Obviously, it would impede future activity by the Obama administration in reaching across the aisle to get necessary Republican votes.

Senator BYRD went on to say:

> I was one of the authors of the legislation that created the budget reconciliation process in 1974, and I am certain that putting health care reform and climate change legislation on a freight train through Congress is an outrage that must be resisted.

Pretty strong words, ''freight train'' and ''outrage.''

There are eight Senators on the letter to the Chairman and Ranking Member. I ask unanimous consent that the full text of the letter be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. SENATE,
Washington, DC, March 12, 2009.

Hon. KENT CONRAD,
Chairman, Committee on Budget, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC

Hon. JUDD GREGG,
Ranking Member, Committee on Budget, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC

DEAR CHAIRMAN CONRAD AND RANKING MEMBER GREGG: We oppose using the budget reconciliation process to expedite passage of climate legislation.

Enactment of a cap-and-trade regime is likely to influence nearly every feature of the U.S. economy. Legislation so far-reaching should be fully vetted and given appropriate time for debate, something the budget reconciliation process does not allow. Using this procedure would circumvent normal Senate practice and would be inconsistent with the Administration's stated goals of bipartisanship, cooperation, and openness.

We commend you for holding the recent hearing. entitled ''Procedures for Consideration of the Budget Resolution/Reconciliation,'' which discussed important recommendations for the upcoming budget debate. Maintaining integrity in the budget process is critical to safeguarding the fiscal health of the United States in these challenging times.

Sincerely,

Mike Johanns; Robert C. Byrd; David Vitter; Blanche L. Lincoln; George V. Voinovich; Carl Levin; Johnny Isakson; Evan Bayh; Kit Bond; Mary Landrieu; James E. Risch; E. Benjamin Nelson; Lamar Alexander; Bob Casey, Jr.; Michael B. Enzi; John McCain.

Tom A. Coburn; Jim Bunning; John Barrasso; John Ensign; Bob Corker; James M. Inhofe; Chuck Grassley; Roger Wicker; Mike Crapo; Susan M. Collins; Thad Cochran; Kay Bailey Hutchison; Mark Pryor; Lisa Murkowski; Pat Roberts; Saxby Chambliss; Sam Brownback.

Mr. SPECTER. One other Senator has been quoted, one other Democratic Senator, in Politico last Tuesday, March 24, as warning that the circumvention of regular order could do ''serious damage to our bipartisan effort.''

We have the statement of Chairman CONRAD in the March 26 article in the New York Times stating:

I don't believe reconciliation was ever intended for this purpose. It doesn't work well for writing major, substantive legislation.

Senator BAUCUS, chairman of the Finance Committee, has been very outspoken in his opposition. I will quote him as follows from the Hill on March 26:

''Reconciliation would hurt healthcare reform, it would make it partisan, it would hurt, it would stymie it, it would make it very partisan.'' The reconciliation route is not designed to deal with measures such as health care. ''Healthcare reform is so large, you're going to have many provisions that are not directly related to revenue or directly related to spending.''

The article goes on to point out that Senator BAUCUS also said that putting health care reform under budget reconciliation would require that it be sunset after 5 years. Senator BAUCUS said:

It has to be term-limited five years; that's nuts.

Those are his words. Senator BAUCUS also said that the only way to pass ''sustainable'' health care reform would be to attract Republican support with which reconciliation protection would not be necessary.

Taking the eight Senators who signed the letter of March 12, adding the Senator identified in Politico from which I quoted, plus Senator BAUCUS and Senator CONRAD, adding those to the 41 Republican Senators who would likely be against misusing the reconciliation process—I don't speak for all of the other 40, but I think that is a fair inference—would be 52. That would present finding 50 Senators, plus the Vice President, if he chose to cast the 51st vote, so that the reconciliation process would not be possible.

It is important that all colleagues focus on this issue institutionally and how important it is. Whenever you cite numbers, there will always be slippage, but when you have the kind of strong language I have referred to today, there is strong reason that we should not have 51 votes somehow created in this body to misuse the reconciliation process.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CONRAD. Madam President, I yield 5 minutes to the Senator from New Mexico.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Thank you, Madam President.

I thank the chairman for his excellent presentation today on the budget. I have been listening to a lot of this debate, and one of the things we all know is that a budget reflects our values. The President and the chairman of the Budget Committee have talked about how the four major things we are trying to do in this budget are health care, education, energy, and global warming, and also reducing the deficit.

I have seen over the years the chairman work on deficit reduction, and I know this bill is a very serious bill in terms of moving us toward that goal, as the President has said, over 4 years to try to get this budget under control. I certainly appreciate his hard work.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Mr. UDALL of New Mexico pertaining to the introduction of S. 743 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CONRAD. Madam President, from Senator GREGG's time, I yield 15 minutes to the distinguished Senator from Utah, Mr. HATCH.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I rise today to express my deep concern about the tax increases—both explicit and hidden—in President Obama's budget and in the Democratic budget resolution before us today.

Erwin Griswold, the former Solicitor General under President Lyndon Baines Johnson, and also President Richard M. Nixon, once said:

We have long had death and taxes as the two standards of inevitability. But there are those who believe that death is the preferable of the two. At least, as one man said, there's one advantage about death; it doesn't get worse every time Congress meets.

Unfortunately, this budget would lead to taxes getting worse. In fact, they would get much worse, and not just for the so-called well-off and well-connected, as the budget refers to those who are targeted for explicit tax increases.

The title of President Obama's budget is ''An Era of Responsibility—Renewing America's Promise.'' However, this budget is irresponsible as to its implications for the next generations.

As I have mentioned before many times on this floor, I have 6 children, 23 grandchildren, and 3 great-grandchildren, and I am very concerned about their future and the future of all of our families throughout America, just as all of our colleagues are concerned about their posterity as well.

When I think about responsibility and the promise of America, I think about these next generations, both in my family and in the families of my constituents, and others, of course. This is why I am so concerned about this budget, and especially the tax burden this budget would place on the next generations of my fellow Utahans and all Americans.

This budget includes a number of tax increases, but I want to focus on just three of the major ones that would particularly affect these next generations.

Now, the Obama ''tax-orama:'' There will be a tax hike on America's industrial output and energy, a tax hike on America's job creation, and a tax hike on America's competitiveness.

During his address to Congress last month, President Obama promised:

[I]f your family earns less than $250,000 a year, you will not see your taxes increased a single dime. I repeat: not one single dime.

That is what he said. We have heard this promise before. However, from his first days in office, the President has proposed raising taxes and the cost of living on lower income wage earners, as well as on all Americans.

Now, how? Through the trillion-dollar-plus cap-and-trade climate change legislation that President Obama is proposing. This proposal, if enacted, would force energy and industrial companies throughout America to either pass these gargantuan costs on to their customers and employees or go out of business.

This tax on America's industrial output and energy is not even called a tax in the President's budget. Instead, it is referred to as ''climate revenues.'' However, we should not let that fool us. As the old saying goes: If it walks like a duck and quacks like a duck, it is a duck. This tax, estimated to total between $1.2 trillion and $1.9 trillion over the next 10 years, would be by far the largest tax increase in the history of the world.

It is true these new taxes might not be paid directly to the IRS or be withheld from workers' paychecks. Instead, they would be much more insidious. They would show up in the form of higher utility bills, higher costs for consumer goods, lost jobs, and a lower standard of living for everyone.

This tax hike on America's industrial output and energy—just think about it, called cap and trade—they refer to as ''climate revenues.'' Potentially, it is a $1.9 trillion tax on energy costs and an increase in the cost of living.

Well, the nasty thing about them is the American family may not even know how much they are paying—just that their standard of living has gone down.

The administration tries to tell us lower income Americans will be held harmless because the revenues from this new tax will be used to compensate them. Now, we have seen this type of compensation already from this administration, particularly in the stimulus bill.

If you look back to last year, before a Senate Finance Committee hearing, Peter Orszag, then CBO Director and now President Obama's Director of the Office of Management and Budget, admitted:

Under a cap-and-trade program, firms would not ultimately bear most of the costs of the allowances but instead would pass them along to their customers in the form of higher prices.

That was before the Senate Finance Committee on which I sit, on April 28, 2008. That is what OMB Director Orszag said about cap and trade.

Well, passing these costs on to consumers is bad enough and will cause a

great deal of hardship to families and to the economy, but my question is, what happens if the firms are not able to pass these costs on to their customers? The answer is, they will go out of business and jobs will be lost. Either way the American family loses under this proposal.

As I mentioned, the President's budget says Americans will be compensated for these higher prices. However, I think a better word for the kind of compensation this budget has in mind is ''income redistribution:'' Let's take from those who have and give to those who have not. It is the same philosophy that brought us tax cuts for people who do not pay taxes.

Well, I suggest in the name of responsibility that if we want to raise taxes on Americans, let's do it in a straightforward way, where it is visible and does less damage. Raising taxes on anyone at this time of extreme economic vulnerability is a mistake, but this proposal does exactly what the President promised never to do and then excuses it by saying this is not a tax. Now, that is a bunch of hooey.

This new tax on America's industrial output and energy would be a colossal error and could cripple the ability of the next generations to reach, let alone exceed, the standard of living we now enjoy. This would be a tragedy because seeing our children and grandchildren do better than we have done is the real promise of America.

If this new tax on our industrial output and energy were the extent of the tax increases the President's budget proposes, it would be bad enough. Unfortunately, there is more bad news. The budget goes so far as to undermine and weaken the so-called stimulus bill enacted in February by calling for an increase in taxes that will affect job creation.

As we all know, the goal of all of our colleagues is to save or create millions of jobs. The explicit tax increases called for in the budget, however, would take away the very means for the private sector to perform this job creation. It would do this through increases in taxes on capital gains taxes, dividends, carried interest, and by raising the top individual rates where most small business income is taxed.

Just ask any small business owner who reports his or her business income on their own tax returns, as most do, and they will tell you if you increase taxes for the top two rates, then they will be forced to either reduce salaries or put a freeze on new hires. With nearly 200,000 small businesses in Utah, I do not think Utah can generate substantial job growth if small businesses face these tax increases. The same is true for other States. Two-thirds of jobs and small businesses are in firms with employees numbering between 20 and 499. These small businesses are the ones owned by individuals and taxed as individuals who would be targeted by President Obama's tax increases. The Small Business Administration tells us that 70 percent of new jobs each year are created by small businesses. Why in the world would we want to harm the ability of America's job-creation engine—small businesses—to help us create or save the jobs we so badly need right now? This is sheer folly.

Time and time again, research has shown that decreasing taxes on small businesses increases employment and raises wages. On the other hand, increasing taxes on small businesses hinders investment, including employment. Research by the Tax Foundation shows that raising the marginal tax rate by 5 percentage points reduces the percentage of entrepreneurs who invest by 10.4 percent and lowers their average investment by 9.9 percent. Reducing the tax rate from 39.6 percent to 33.2 percent increases the likelihood of hiring by 12 percent and raises the median wage for those hired employees by 3.2 percent.

These tax increases, which target the so-called wealthy, will miss the mark and hurt everyone, particularly those who lose their jobs or who do not get the job that might have been. The tax hike on America's job creation: two-thirds of small business jobs are targeted by President Obama's tax increases. Seventy percent of all new jobs each year are created by small businesses. These tax increases are going to hinder job growth.

Tragically, there is even more in this budget that would attack our ability to create jobs. The third leg of this assault is on America's competitiveness in a global economy. Beyond strengthening job growth for small businesses, we must also create an environment that encourages companies to invest in the United States as well as to expand worldwide to meet growing opportunities. Academic scholarship has shown that domestic companies that invest overseas strengthen their employment at home.

Unfortunately, we are moving in the wrong direction already. According to last year's listings of the world's largest companies, the so-called Global 500, only 8 of the top 25 corporations in the world were headquartered in the United States. Forty years ago, almost all of the top 25 were headquartered in America and were American firms.

This trend has a significant impact on jobs and the economy in the United States. Just this past month, several energy companies have announced plans to move to Switzerland because of that country's low corporate tax. To be frank, after looking at President Obama's budget proposal, I do not blame them. Such a move could become a matter of corporate survival if we are not careful. In fact, our system of worldwide taxation, coupled with one of the highest tax rates in the world, is enough to cause any firm to think twice about locating its worldwide headquarters here. And this is before the changes included in the Obama budget, which make the business landscape far less friendly.

How are we supposed to be globally competitive when we have the second highest corporate tax rate in the world? Our corporate tax rate is currently at 35 percent, second only to Japan's, with the average global corporate tax rate around 26 percent. It is no wonder that many companies in the United States are looking elsewhere. These are tax hikes on America's global competitiveness. Think about that. Domestic companies that invest overseas strengthen their employment at home. The United States is one of the few major nations to tax companies on worldwide income. The average global corporate tax rate here is 35 percent. We are the second highest in the world, second only to Japan.

The President believes our Tax Code includes incentives for U.S. businesses to ship jobs overseas, and the budget includes vaguely defined proposals that would supposedly put an end to this practice. However, the evidence shows that our tax laws do not lead to U.S. job loss but to increases in U.S. employment when companies invest overseas.

In summary, the Obama budget for fiscal year 2010, along with the budget resolution before us today, is a three-pronged assault on American job creation through new taxes on America's industrial output and energy, tax increases on America's job creation for small businesses, and tax increases on America's competitiveness. This assault is a huge contradiction to the stated goals of the President to create or save 4 million jobs. I know he is sincere and believes he can do that, but not with this budget. While it is true that most of these tax increases will not hit until 2011, this is likely to be just as dangerous a time for these job-killing tax hikes as 2009 would be. Most economists believe that if we are lucky, we will just be beginning to recover from this ugly recession in 2011. Instead of these antigrowth policies, we should be enacting policies of support, investment, and growth.

The great American satirist Ambrose Bierce once described responsibility as:

> A detachable burden easily shifted to the shoulders of God, Fate, Fortune, Luck, or one's neighbor. In the days of astrology it was customary to unload responsibility upon a star.

In President Obama's budget titled the ''Era of Responsibility,'' President Obama is attempting to unload responsibility on future generations. This is the wrong way to go. I hope we can make some changes to the budget this week that will help us grow the economy instead of growing the size of the Government. A stronger economy is the best legacy we can leave to the next generation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CONRAD. Madam President, just one part of what the Senator has said do I wish to seek to clarify, and that is that while the United States does have

the second highest stated corporate rate, we have one of the lowest effective corporate rates in the industrialized world. The reason for the difference is all the exemptions and exclusions that exist in our code for corporate rates. So while we do have the second highest published or nominal rate for corporate taxes, if you look at all of the industrialized countries in the world and what their effective corporate tax rate is, you find that ours is well below average.

Now, that doesn't mean we shouldn't have tax reform because many of us believe we need thoroughgoing tax reform, but I think there is a certain amount of confusion about the difference between our statutory rates and our effective rates.

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, if the Senator will yield on that.

Mr. CONRAD. I am happy to.

Mr. HATCH. I understand the nominal rate argument. The problem is that we are talking about taxing the corporate profits that are earned overseas. No other major industrialized nation in the world does that. If they do that, they make us globally uncompetitive.

In just the last couple of weeks, I have been trying to raise money for the National Republican Senatorial Committee. As I have called around, it is amazing to me how many corporate executives have said to me: We love this country. We want our companies to grow in this country. We want to be able to stay here.

Some of them are second-generation folks. But I have had a number of them say that if we do some of the corporate tax changes and some of the tax expenses that are assessed in this bill, they will move. One in particular said: I am going to have to move my company to Switzerland because we will not be competitive if that particular budget passes.

Now, I believe we can make arguments that the nominal rate may be something that must be considered, and I think it should, but I don't think you can argue against the fact that we are doing some very stupid things in this budget. Frankly, in the end, we might wind up having a lot more difficulty and we may lose even more of our major businesses because to be competitive they will move, and a lot of them have already moved.

So let's wake up around here and let's realize that—look, I respect the distinguished Senator from North Dakota. He has one of the tougher jobs—he and our colleague, the Senator from New Hampshire, JUDD GREGG, have one of the tougher jobs in the history of the country. Doing these budgets is very difficult with some of the problems we have. But I have listed three things that are going to sock corporate America like you can't believe. Frankly, one of them is the third point on the prong, and that is taxing corporate profits overseas. It is just a matter of reality that if we do this, we are going to reap the whirlwind. It is just that simple.

Mr. DORGAN. Madam President, if my colleague from North Dakota would yield for a question on this subject.

Mr. CONRAD. I am happy to yield.

Mr. DORGAN. Our colleague from Utah, Senator HATCH, if he would just observe, this issue is not a new one. I know Senator GRASSLEY, who is on the Finance Committee, is here, and there has been a lot of discussion about this: Do we have an extraordinarily high rate of taxation on corporations or don't we? We just heard on the floor that we rank I think the second highest in tax rates on corporations. Well, this is not some arcane discussion between people who can't understand exactly what is happening. We rank, I believe, third from the bottom in the rate of taxes paid by corporations of all of the OECD countries—30-some countries, we rank third from the bottom, not from the top.

So they come out here and say: Well, we have a high rate. Our statutory rate is high, toward the top, no question about that, but that is not what corporations are paying. They are not paying the rate, they are paying the rate minus all of the deductions and loopholes. The fact is, the corporate tax burden in this country is right close to the bottom of all of the other industrialized countries. Now, this ought not be debatable. We can easily find out what the facts are. So are we competitive with respect to the corporate income tax? The answer is yes.

I understand why the Chamber of Commerce and others want to perpetuate this notion that somehow we overtax corporations, but, in fact, the taxes paid by American corporations rank right near the bottom of all of the 30 or so OECD countries, the industrialized countries—right toward the bottom, not the top. That is what they, in fact, pay. If we are going to debate public policy, let's debate it with a set of facts so that we all understand what the facts are. The fact that people are talking about this in the context of what is the tax burden on corporations? The answer is, we are toward the bottom of all of the OECD countries. Those are the facts.

Mr. CONRAD. Madam President, the Senator is correct. I am on the Finance Committee, and I have this responsibility on the Budget Committee. It is very clear, while we do have a high nominal rate—I think we are second highest in the industrialized world—the effective rate that companies actually pay, we are near the bottom.

At this point, I wish to yield 25 minutes to my colleague from North Dakota.

Mr. DORGAN. Madam President, I know this is a very important debate, this issue of the budget. This is: What are our priorities? I have said often that 100 years from now, we will all be dead and the only evidence of what our value system was right here, right know, will be evaluated by historians. Historians will be alive, and they will look back and say: What did that country believe in? What was their value system? What did they think was important? What did they invest in? So take a look at all of this and then make judgments.

We will have a debate all this week on this issue: What is important for the country? What do we believe represents our highest set of values? Kids? I have always said I know what might be in second, third, or fourth place in people's lives, but I certainly know what is in first place—their kids, right? So what about our budget with respect to health care for kids, just as an example. When we establish the priorities of what is important in our country, this is where we do it: in the budget. We debate it, we think about it, and then we say: This is what our country believes to be important. Here is what we should invest in to make this a better place in which to live.

I came to the floor to say something about the financial crisis and the financial meltdown in our country because that has a profound impact on this debate on the budget. This financial meltdown has begun to dry up the Federal revenues on the tax side. It has pushed up dramatically the expenditure side because we have what are called stabilizers in our economy. When people lose their jobs, they get unemployment checks. So we have these economic stabilizers that increase spending, even during this financial crisis when you see decreased revenue. That has a huge impact on this budget.

If this financial crisis has this kind of an impact on the budget, then we have a right to know what has caused all of this to happen, and what can we do to make sure it never happens again.

Last week, the Secretary of the Treasury announced a number of steps for financial regulatory reform, and those are a move in the right direction. He says we are going to regulate hedge funds, we are going to require the oversight of what are unregulated derivatives—these fancy, exotic financial products these days—we are going to require many of them to be regulated, although not fully. He needs to go further. But the Secretary is moving in the right direction to regulate hedge funds, to get rid of this dark money and bring derivatives and CDOs and credit default swaps and so on into the daylight. Then he talks about a powerful regulator that would be able to take a look at systemic risks and so on. I think all of that advances the ball and is in the right direction.

But this doesn't yet answer the larger question we have to answer with respect to this financial crisis and this meltdown. That larger question, using an automobile metaphor, is this: Is it time for a tuneup or is it time for a complete overhaul of the system? I come down on the side that you have to overhaul the entire system if you are going to provide the confidence needed in the American people going forward.

Now, let me explain how I see what has gone on. For the last 15, 20 years, we have had a bunch of people who were worshiping at the altar of this new type of finance—new financial instruments, new larger financial institutions, securitized credit, and selling the risk forward so that someone giving a home loan to a prospective homebuyer doesn't have to underwrite it or care so much about the risk, because they can sell that risk to an investment bank or a hedge fund, and sell it several times—these fancy, complex financial products.

I mentioned credit default swaps. There also has been a dramatic expansion of debt and leverage with almost every part of our financial enterprise in this country. Congress repealed the protections that used to exist for banks called the Glass-Steagall Act. Congress not only repealed these protections that used to protect banks so they could not invest in real estate and securities, and so on, but then allowed for the creation of the very large holding companies so they could get involved in one big financial swap—one-stop shopping. Gramm-Leach-Bliley did this, supported by the Clinton administration, I might say. These are all new-fashioned ideas. They got rid of the old-fashioned ideas, such as Glass-Steagall—just deregulate the market and don't worry about them.

Alan Greenspan chimed in, saying: I want to make a nice sound with all of this deregulation that is going on in Congress and I believe in self-regulation. We don't have to regulate. The Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, Mr. Greenspan, said that would work. The lending terms and the incomes were from outer space; the incomes were unbelievable in all of these areas. And then the lending terms were completely unsupportable, and I will describe a few of those today.

We need to overhaul all this. What do we do to overhaul this? We have to get rid of this too-big-to-fail notion. We are now allowing banks that are too big to fail to merge with troubled banks, making them, apparently, too much bigger to fail, which is bizarre. We need to get rid of the holding companies, which never should have been allowed to happen in the first place. We need to go back to Glass-Steagall and create a portion of that to separate banking from the other risk enterprises.

Until we do that and address those fundamental questions, I think it is going to be very hard to instill the kind of confidence we want to instill in the American people. The New York Times asked the question in their editorial on Sunday of this week: What is it we are trying to fix? What caused the meltdown?

If you go back to the mid-1990s, I wrote an article in the Washington Monthly Magazine that was a cover story in 1994, I believe. The title was ''Very Risky Business.'' I wrote about derivatives, and I wrote that about tens of billions in derivatives that then existed. I introduced four pieces of regulation to regulate derivatives trading. None of it was acceptable because those involved in the new, modern approach to finance felt that you don't regulate these things. They will self-regulate and everything will be fine.

Of course, it was not fine and we had not only the notion of too big to fail, but the repeal of Glass-Steagall. We had the deregulation of all of this and the fusing of banking with riskier enterprises in holding companies. Regulators came to town boasting about the fact that we were willing to be blind. We had products developed that were hard to understand for even those engaged in trading them. Coupled with that, we had an unbelievable culture of greed, and the result was a financial meltdown.

The question is, what has caused, as the New York Times said, this house of cards? What is the cause? Do we know? Well, the fact is we need to know in order to move forward. The American people need to know. There needs to be a narrative that says here is what happened. We understand a portion of what happened, and it has been a calamity. Nobody understands all of it. The Attorney General of New York is doing some investigations here and there, but there is no comprehensive investigation. I believe there ought to be a select committee of the Senate, and I have introduced such legislation, with Senator MCCAIN as a cosponsor. I believe we must do a select committee of the Senate to address these issues. I believe we also ought to have a financial crimes task force at the Justice Department to prosecute that which is discovered is illegal—a whole series of things.

We need to reconnect Glass-Steagall and decide that too big to fail is a doctrine that itself is old-fashioned, and we have to run our banks through a banking ''carwash'' of sorts, where you get rid of the bad assets and keep the good and rename them, if necessary. We need a banking system that is a circulatory system of our economy. But we cannot ignore what happened. We have to understand what happened and we have to fix it.

Let me go back to 1999, if I might, during the debate over the repeal of Glass-Steagall and passage of a bill called Gramm-Leach-Bliley. I was one of eight Senators who voted against it. On May 6, 1999, I said this bill will, in my judgment, raise the likelihood of future massive taxpayer bailouts. It will fuel the consolidation of mergers in the banking and financial services. I said that 10 years ago. I felt that would happen if we decided to let the big banks get bigger, without regulatory involvement. I said during that debate that we will, in 10 years time, look back and say we should not have done that repeal of Glass-Steagall, because we forgot the lessons of the past.

I wish this didn't happen, but it did. I wish to talk about what we do now. There are four steps. One, investigation. We need to find out what happened here. The New York Times has said—and I agree—in their questions on reform—in Sunday's editorial, it says that without an investigation, the reform effort will be, at best, hit or miss and, at worst, a charade.

Congress should start now to gear up for an investigation, using as its model the 1930s Pecora inquiry into the stock market crash, or the Watergate hearings of the 1970s. Here is a picture of Mr. Pecora, whom I described. Mr. Ferdinand Pecora was chief counsel of the Senate Banking Committee during the 1930s investigating the Wall Street banking and stock brokerage practices. He was involved in an investigation that I think was a very important one with respect to the cause and effect of the Great Depression. A real investigation is necessary and it will at least give those people who are furious about what happened an understanding and an outlet to understand and be a part of knowing what happened.

Now, I want to talk about the roots of some of this and why I think it is scandalous. The trigger of this financial crisis, I think, was the subprime scandal. Under the subprime scandal, there was so much debt and leverage that it was nearly unbelievable. We need something such as that to develop the narrative of what happened.

Let me describe the triggering mechanism with respect to the subprime lending. I went to the Internet today, and I will read a couple of invitations on the Internet. This is from speedybadcreditloans.com:

> Do you want your loan approved on the terms you desire, with easy credit and no credit check? This is the smartest and fastest way to get the money you need for a home loan. Bad credit, no credit, bankruptcy, you have been declined before? Don't worry at Speedy Bad Credit Loans we have lenders dealing with all kinds of credit loans. You will get the money you need, and fast.

That is today. They are willing to loan on those terms today.

You can go to the Internet and find a dozen of these. In fact, I will show you this. Leading up to this crash, this financial crisis, Zoom Credit said this in their advertisement:

> Credit approval is seconds away. Get on the fast track, and at the speed of light they will approve you. Even if your credit is in the tank, Zoom Credit is like money in the bank. We specialize in credit repair and debt consolidation. Bankruptcy, slow credit, no credit, who cares?

Is it a surprise that a financial system that allows this nonsense to go on somehow, at some point, collapses? That is not a surprise to me.

Here is Millenium Mortgage's advertisement:

> Twelve months, no mortgage payment. That's right, we will make your payments for the first 12 months. Our loan program may reduce your current monthly payment by as much as 50 percent and allow you to make no payments for the first 12 months. Call us today.

Countrywide, the single largest mortgage company in America—by the way,

its CEO was able to get out of this with around $140 million, or so, I am told. They said:

Do you have less than perfect credit? Do you have late mortgage payments? Have you been denied by other lenders? Call us. Are you a bad risk? Call us, we will lend you some money.

What did the biggest mortgage company in our country do? It made all these mortgages and then wrapped them up into securities—they securitized them. I have described it like the making of sausage, when they used to pack them with sawdust as filler. They packed these securities with good loans, bad loans, subprime loans, and conventional loans, and sold them to an investment bank, or a hedge fund—and, by the way, when you read about the toxic assets in the bowels of these institutions, these are the toxic assets.

Is it a surprise? This is bad business. They all made big money. They were like hogs at a trough, with unbelievable greed. They made massive amounts of money. Yet they were able to sell the risk forward, and the people in the hedge funds made money, and the people in the investment banks made money. The amount of money they made is unbelievable. Bear Stearns went belly up. Alan Schwartz, the CEO of Bear Stearns the 5 years prior, made $117 million. Jimmy Cane, the previous CEO, 5 years prior, made $128 million. At Lehman Brothers, Dick Fuld, 5 years prior to him going bankrupt, made $350 million. This was a carnival of greed. Everyone was doing well, except the economy, with this unbelievable avalanche of debt and leverage that all completely collapsed.

Now, we have a situation today where we have the American people trying to figure out what happened. I described the subprime loan scandal, which was at its roots. They were all making a lot of money by victimizing the American people. I should say some of the people were not victims. Some of these folks were willing victims because they wanted to buy a house with a special deal and flip it and make money. They got caught. They are not really victims. They were trying to profiteer. A lot of other folks were victims of this sort of scam.

I mentioned that these big investment banks took on all these assets and then got bailed out, and we now think there is $9 trillion of American taxpayers' money at risk going out through the back door of the Federal Reserve Board, Treasury, and the FDIC—$9 trillion. There has never been a hearing about that. No one has been able to get the Federal Reserve Board before a hearing to tell us where those trillions of dollars are pledged, who got the money, and how much money did they get. You cannot find out. The information we do have is pried out of the Federal Reserve Board. Bloomberg News corporation filed a lawsuit to get some of this information. That is unbelievable.

I mentioned these big financial firms that got all these bailouts. About $45 billion in TARP funds have gone to Bank of America. Bank of America got $30 billion in January of this year. Bank of America, last September, was urged to buy Merrill Lynch, a failed investment bank, by the then-Treasury Secretary Paulson. So what happened was the marriage was arranged by the Treasury Secretary and was going to be consummated in January. It turns out that in December, Merrill Lynch, which lost $27 billion in 2008, paid $3.6 billion in bonuses to their employees.

Let me say that again. An investment bank called Merrill Lynch that lost $27 billion—$15 billion in the fourth quarter alone—paid $3.6 billion in bonuses in December just prior to being taken over by Bank of America. Then Bank of America received $20 billion in TARP funds from the American taxpayers—in addition to $10 billion it had just been paid, which was initially allocated to Merrill Lynch. Pretty unbelievable.

Here are the Merrill Lynch bonuses, $3.6 billion. The top four executives got $121 million. This is for a company that lost $27 billion last year and was a failing company. Madam President, 694 executives got more than $1 million each. These are bonuses that would normally have been paid in January. They were paid in December, and my suspicion is they were paid by arrangement with Bank of America to be paid before the end of the year and before $30 billion went from the American taxpayers to Bank of America that just took over Merrill Lynch. That means, in my judgment, the American taxpayers paid bonuses to those who worked for a company that lost $27 billion in a year.

Do people have a right to be furious about this situation? You bet they do, and they should.

There are a lot of needs we have in this country to try to find a way to fix this situation so it never happens again. But as I have indicated, the first step, it seems to me, always is to try to understand what has happened and what to do about it.

The Washington Post had a story recently. In fact, I believe it was an editorial. They talked about the fact that hedge funds were not a part of the problem in this financial meltdown. I don't know about that. Let me show some examples of incomes at the hedge fund level. This is a man named James Simons. There is no implication here about being right or wrong, legal or illegal. My point is about the spectacular amount of income, what I call incomes from outer space. Mr. Simons made $2.5 billion last year—$2.5 billion. It is interesting. He runs a hedge fund.

Here is a man named John Paulson, who also runs a hedge fund. He made $2 billion last year. It seems to me he is probably profoundly disappointed because the year before, John made $3.7 billion. And, oh, by the way, my best guess is that each of them probably pays a 15-percent income tax rate, something called carried interest. But that is another story for another day. They pay income tax rates, in most cases, that would be below the marginal tax rate paid by their receptionist in their office. That is not their fault. That is the fault of the Tax Code and the fault of this Congress for not changing it.

John Paulson last year made $3.7 billion. He has a reason probably to come home and say: Honey, we need to tighten our belt here. Madam President, $3.7 billion—by the way, that is $10 million a day. In 2007, he made in 4 minutes what the average worker works for a year to make. Incomes from outer space, big old hedge funds—they play a role in this collapse. The Washington Post said they have played no role. Oh, really? Really? Where are they in the food chain of derivatives, credit default swaps, CDOs? Does the Washington Post know? Of course, it doesn't. It doesn't have the foggiest idea what role hedge funds may have played in this situation.

What we do know is there is a lot of dark money out there traded off the exchanges. Nobody knows what risk you have. That is why you have had all these big-shot bankers walking around acting like they are in some sort of seizure because nobody knows how much risk has been taken on. Every time we turn around it is more. It is billions, hundreds of billions, then trillions of dollars.

As I said earlier, we need to create a select committee in the Senate and soon. It is this body's job. We are the ones who send the money out. We are the ones who have said we are going to provide $700 billion of TARP funds. It is our responsibility to track it and to understand what has caused its need.

Second, I think there is a substantial reason—by the way, there are some attorneys general of this country, including Mr. Cuomo in New York, who are doing first-rate work in investigating. But I think there is substantial reason to believe there is a need for a national financial crimes prosecution task force.

Do I think all of this is criminal? Not at all. I think some of it is born of ignorance, some of it is born of greed, some of it is born of deliberate, willful blindness. But there are some, in my judgment, who desperately deserve to be investigated and, if necessary, prosecuted.

Finally, real reform. Real reform exists when we have real regulators, when we revisit 1999 and restore a portion of Glass-Steagall, when we decide to take down the ceilings and walls of these large holding companies, when we decide we are going to restore, once again, trust in banks.

Let me also say that in my home State, I visit with a lot of community bankers. They are not at risk. They did not do this. They did not invest in these assets. Most of them did banking the old-fashioned way. They took deposits and made loans. When they

made loans, they underwrote the loans. That is the way banking ought to be done. We need to revisit that with respect to some of the largest banking and financial enterprises in our country.

I am convinced we can fix all of this. I understand there is great anxiety. None of us have been here before. No one quite knows what is the medicine to try to address this economic illness. I understand. There is reason to be anxious. But I am also convinced we can and we will find the opportunity to put this back on track and fix what is wrong in this country. We will not fix what is wrong unless we understand the core and root cause of what has happened.

There is nothing I see—nothing I see—that is going to give us that answer. It is our responsibility. If we are required to put up the money, to try to find a way to invest in future health and so on, it is our responsibility to find out what happened and make sure it cannot happen again.

Steps are being taken in the right direction. I applaud those steps by the Treasury Secretary and others. But we are not nearly there with the giant steps that are necessary to fix that which has been existing now and growing for a decade or two.

Finally, I was telling a group the other day about Ray Charles, who used to sing that great song ''America the Beautiful,'' when he sang '' . . . spacious skies, For amber waves of grain, For purple mountains majesties. . . .'' The interesting thing about Ray Charles, who sang that song unlike anybody else could sing it, was he was blind. Somehow, to me, it always meant it wasn't so much someone being able to see this as it was to experience what the idea of America is. America is an idea. Part of this idea, born over two centuries now, is we have the capability to do almost anything if we get together and decide to work together. We can do that now. We can put this country back on track. This is a financial collapse of significant proportions, perhaps the greatest crisis we have faced since the Great Depression. But I am not despondent about that if we can begin to take the steps—not the baby steps but the big steps—in the right direction to decide to fix what went wrong. The first step to do that always is to understand what went wrong and then join together and say: We can make this right; we can make a better future happen if we decide to link arms and come up with the answers.

I am going to speak, at some point later, on the budget as well. But nothing impacts this budget in a more profound way than the financial collapse and meltdown which we have seen. It dramatically increases the need for funding for economic stabilizers, unemployment and so on and it substantially reduces the revenue. It has caused a substantial increase in deficits. Even as we debate this budget going forward for 2 years, 5 years, 10 years, the fact is we have to get this right. We have to put this economy on track, and I believe we can do that if we make the right decisions very soon.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WARNER). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GREGG. 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. GREGG. Mr. President, at this point, I yield to the Senator from Iowa, and I ask unanimous consent that upon completion of his statement, unless the Democratic membership has a speaker to intercede, the next speaker be the Senator from South Dakota, who will be recognized to offer the first amendment, which I understand on our side is going to be acceptable.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, and I will not object, the point is following the next Democratic speaker, if there is one?

Mr. GREGG. Yes.

Mr. DORGAN. I do not have an objection.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, today the Senate begins consideration of whether we should apply more or less budget discipline to record debts and deficits that my President, President Obama, inherited when he came into office January 20 of this year.

Last week, we heard a lot of revisionist fiscal history or it might best be described as heavy editing of recent budget history. Our President has alluded to it several times. I agree with the President there is a lot of revisionism in this debate. The revisionist history basically boils down to two conclusions: The first is that all the good fiscal history of the 1990s was derived somehow from a partisan tax increase bill that passed in 1993; and that, two, all the bad fiscal history of this decade to date is attributable to the bipartisan tax relief plans of 2001 and later.

Not surprisingly, nearly all the revisionists who speak generally oppose tax relief and support tax increases. The same crew generally supports spending increases and opposes spending cuts.

In the debate so far, many on this side of the aisle have pointed out some key and undeniable facts. It might surprise you, but we happen to agree with President Obama on one key fact. This President did inherit a big deficit and a lot of debt.

During the last quarter of 2008, the antirecessionary spending, together with lower tax receipts because of the recession, and the TARP activities has set a fiscal table of a deficit of $1.2 trillion. That was, in fact, on the President's desk when he took over the Oval Office on January 20 of this year. That is the highest deficit as a percentage of the economy in post-World War II history inherited by any of the Presidents since World War II.

Quite obviously, this is not a pretty fiscal picture. I have a chart that shows the history of that fiscal time, through the last administration and the big deficit at this point about which President Obama speaks.

As predicted a couple months ago, that fiscal picture got a lot uglier with the stimulus bill. For the folks who saw that bill as an opportunity to recover America, with Government taking a larger share of the economy over the long term, I say congratulations because you got what you wanted. For those Senators who voted for the stimulus bill, those Senators put us on a path to a bigger role in Government.

So let me make it clear. Those Senators who voted for the stimulus bill, you put us on a path to a bigger role in Government. Over a trillion dollars of new deficit spending was hidden in that bill. It caused some of the extra ink on this chart for the year we are in. This is what was inherited by January 20, but legislation passed since January 20 adds that much. Supporters of that bill, then, as far as I am concerned, need to own up to the fiscal course that has been charted by actions of this Congress and this President since January 20.

Now, to be sure, after the other side pushed through the stimulus bill and the second $350 billion of TARP money, the Congressional Budget Office reestimated the baseline. A portion of this new red ink upfront is due to that reestimate. The bottom line, however, is that the reestimate occurred several weeks after the President and a robust Democratic majority took over the Government. Decisions were made, and the fiscal consequences followed. Those fiscal consequences are in these red figures, above what would have been if Bush's budget had stayed in place during this period of time. That is where we would be.

Some on the other side raise this point about the March CBO reestimate. Of course, that is fine, but if they were to be consistent and intellectually honest, then they would have to acknowledge the CBO reestimate that occurred in 2001, after President Bush took office. The surplus went south because of what? Because of economic conditions. The $5.6 trillion number—so often quoted by those on the other side—was illusory. And I will say more about that in just a few minutes.

Here is where the revisionist history comes from. It is a strategy to divert, through a twisted blame game, from the facts before us. How is the history revisionist? Well, I would like to take each conclusion one by one.

The first conclusion is that all of the good fiscal history was derived from the 1993 tax increase. To knock down that falsehood, all you have to do is

take a look at this chart. And this chart is not produced by data I accumulated but data from the Clinton administration. So here we have a history put forth with data from the Clinton administration about the tax increase of 1993 and whether it did a lot of good or not so much good.

Much of the ballyhooed partisan 1993 tax increase accounts for just 13 percent—just 13 percent—of the deficit reduction that took place during all of the 1990s—again, just 13 percent.

Now let's look at what are the biggest sources of deficit reduction, because obviously it is not the tax increase.

Thirty-five percent came from a reduction in defense expenditures. Of course, that fiscal benefit originated from President Reagan, who stared down the Communist regime in Russia. The same folks on that side who opposed President Reagan's buildup somehow want to take credit for the fiscal benefit of the peace dividend—that 35 percent.

The next biggest source of deficit reduction—32 percent—came from other revenue. Basically, this was the fiscal benefit from progrowth policies, such as the bipartisan capital gains tax cut of 1997 and, of course, the free-trade agreements President Clinton, with Republican votes, established. That is the 32 percent that reduced the deficit from that point of view.

The savings from the policies that I earlier mentioned translated, obviously, into interest savings, and that interest savings is this 15 percent right here.

Now, for all the chest thumping about the 1990s, the chest thumpers who pushed for big social spending didn't bring much to the deficit reduction table of 1990. That amounted to a mere 5 percent.

What is more, the fiscal revisionists in this body tend to forget who the players were. They are correct that there was a Democratic President in the White House, but they conveniently forget that the Republicans controlled the Congress for the period where the deficit came down and turned to surplus. They tend to forget that they fought the principle of balanced budgets, which was the centerpiece of the Republican fiscal policy that led, over a 4-year period of time in the late 1990s, to paying down $570 billion on the national debt.

Now, you may remember the Government shutdowns of late 1995. Remember what that was all about? It was about a plan to balance the budget. Republicans paid a pretty high political price for forcing that issue. But in 1997, President Clinton agreed. You may recall all through the 1990s what those yearend battles were all about. On one side were congressional Democrats and the Clinton administration pushing for more spending, and on this side of the aisle congressional Republicans were pushing for tax relief. Well, what happens when you have that extreme—more spending on the one end, less spending and tax decreases on the other? Both sides end up compromising. That is the real fiscal history of the 1990s.

So now let's turn to the other conclusion of the fiscal revisionists. That conclusion happens to be that in this decade, since the year 2000, all fiscal problems are attributable to the widespread tax relief enacted in 2001, 2003, 2004, and 2006. In 2001, President Bush came into office. He inherited an economy that was careening downhill. You know, NASDAQ lost 50 percent of its value in the year 2000, not in the year 2001. That bubble burst. You may remember that starting in February 2000, we started on a 46-month decline in manufacturing, so we had a manufacturing recession already set in place. Then, of course, came the economic shock of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. And, of course, you have to add in corporate scandals to that economic environment. You will remember Enron.

It is true—very true—that as fiscal year 2001 came to a close, the projected surplus turned into a deficit, and the chart shows that right here in 2001. In just the right time, though, the 2001 tax relief plan kicked in. As the tax relief hit its full force in 2003, the deficit grew smaller. This pattern continued from 2003 through 2007.

If my comments were meant to be a partisan shot, I could say that this favorable fiscal path from 2003 to 2007 was the only period—aside from the 6 months in 2001—where Republicans controlled the White House and the Congress. But, unlike fiscal history revisionists, I am not trying to make any partisan points. I am just trying to get to the fiscal facts.

I have another chart that compares the tax receipts for 4 years after the much-ballyhooed 1993 tax increase and the 4-year period after the 2003 tax cuts. Observe this chart. On a year-to-year basis, this chart compares the change in revenues as a percentage of GDP. In 1993, the Clinton tax increase brought in more revenue as compared to the 2003 tax cut. You can see here, compared to here. That trend does reverse, as you see here, as both policies moved along. You can see how the extra revenue went up over time relative to the flat line of the 1993 tax increase.

This is the 1993 tax increase bringing in revenue and then pretty much flatlining out over a long period of time; whereas you can see the tax relief bill of 2001 went down and then very dramatically increased in revenue. This ought to disabuse people who think that every time you increase tax rates you bring in more revenue and when you decrease tax rates you bring in less revenue. This chart shows that you can decrease tax rates and bring in more revenue.

So let's get the fiscal history right. The progrowth tax and trade policies of the 1990s, along with the peace dividend, had a lot more to do with deficit reduction in the 1990s than the 1993 tax increase. In this decade, deficits went down after tax relief plans were put into full effect.

Now that is the past. We need to make sure we understand it. You have to understand the past because the past is going to be brought up the next 4 days of this week as we are on this budget resolution. And, by golly, people ought to be accurate when they state what the impact is of the 1993 tax increase versus all the blame that is given on this side of the aisle for actions taken in 2001 and beyond with those tax reductions.

What is most important is the future. People in our States send us here to deal with future policy. This budget debate should not be about Democrats flogging Republicans and vice versa. The people don't send us here to flog one another like partisan cartoon cutout characters, and do it over past policies. They do not send us here to endlessly point fingers of blame. Let's focus on the fiscal consequences of the budget that is before the Senate over the next 4 days.

President Obama rightly focused us on the future with his eloquence during his campaign. I would like to paraphrase a quote from the President's nomination acceptance speech:

> We need a President who can face the threats of the future, not grasping at the ideas of the past.

Well, President Obama was right. We need a President—and I would add Congressmen and Senators—who can face the threats of the future. This budget as currently written poses considerable threats to the fiscal future. It taxes too much, it spends too much, and it borrows too much. Grasping at ideas of the past, or playing the partisan blame game, will not deal with the threats to our fiscal future.

Let's face the honest fiscal facts. Let's not revise fiscal history as we start this critical debate about the fiscal choices ahead of us. The people who send us here have a right to expect nothing less of us.

As I noted in remarks just completed a shorttime ago, a portion of the new deficits to the Congressional Budget Office March re-estimate. CBO revised the deficit downward by $1.3 trillion over 10 years. The revision is attributable to much worse economic conditions. The bottomline, however, is that re-estimate occurred several weeks after the President and robust Democratic majorities took over the government. Decisions were made and the fiscal consequences followed.

Some on the other side raise this point about the March CBO re-estimate. That's fine, but, if they were to be consistent and intellectually honest, then they would have to acknowledge the CBO re-estimate that occurred in 2001 after President Bush took office. The surplus went South because of economic conditions and new spending needed to deal with the consequences of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The $5.6

trillion number so often quoted by those on the other side was revised within a year of President George W. Bush's presidency.

In January 2002, CBO revised the $5.6 trillion number downward to $1.6 trillion. To listen to folks on the other side, you would think all of that $4 trillion downward adjustment was attributable to the bipartisan tax relief of 2001.

In fact, the tax relief accounted for 40 percent of the adjustment. Most of the balance, $2.6 trillion, was due to factors that had noting to do with the tax relief. I am talking about the reduced revenues, increased spending for the war on terror and homeland security and other factors.

So, if folks on the other side want to be intellectually honest about the budget and fiscal history, they need to be consistent on how the CBO re-estimates are treated. If you are going to give President Obama $1.3 trillion for the post-January 20, 2009 re-estimates, then you have to give President George W. Bush credit for twice as much, $2.6 trillion. That's what CBO said in January 2002. we can't have different standards for different people and be intellectually honest.

One other point that came up was the comparative corporate tax rates. As Senator HATCH pointed out, the U.S. statutory corporate rate is very high. The Chairman of the Budget Committee agreed but then stated that the U.S. effective corporate rate is relatively low. Business taxation occurs in corporate and non-corporate form, through S corporations, partnerships, and proprietorships. If you want to compare U.S. taxation with the rest of the developed world, it is best to look at comparative business tax rates on investment. If you do so, you will find the U.S. has a higher rate than the G–7 group of comparative economies. You will find this data in an analysis prepared by former Senior Treasury Economist Robert Carroll.

This analysis is contained in an August 2008, Tax Foundation paper entitled ''Fiscal Fact Comparing International Corporate Tax Rates: U.S. Corporate Tax Rate Increasingly Out of Line by Various Measures.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon is recognized.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, this week the Senate focuses on the Federal budget and folks at home are going to hear a lot about reserve funds and reconciliation and a lot of other technical budget lingo. A reserve fund, for example, is not some kind of checking account where you can go get a bunch of money to spend on Government programs. It is more like a work plan that is used to structure how difficult policy judgments are made on important issues.

Budget reconciliation is perhaps even more incomprehensible to folks. That is why I want to spend a few minutes this afternoon talking about what it means, particularly in terms of health care reform, which we all understand is a particularly pressing domestic concern. Budget reconciliation, strictly speaking, means reconciling Government policy with budget targets. If you were to pursue health care reform using budget reconciliation, you would, under the Senate rules, need only a majority vote here in the Senate as opposed to 60 votes, which is often needed in the Senate to cut off debate. So Senators now find themselves being buttonholed by reporters for something of a health care interrogation. The question invariably is, is a Senator in favor of using reconciliation for health care reform?

The theory, I gather, is if a Senator is in favor of using budget reconciliation, the Senator is just in favor of bullying health care reform through the Senate with a narrow majority. And somehow, if a Senator is not for using reconciliation on health care reform, that Senator is not sympathetic to the cause of fixing the American health care system.

It is my view that, like most of these kinds of issues, this is vastly oversimplifying the case. In my view, I have spent more than 5 years trying to make the issue of reconciliation on health care irrelevant. Senator BENNETT and I, for example, have teamed up, now joined by 14 colleagues of both political parties, evenly divided, because we believe it is critically important to address this issue of health care reform in a bipartisan way.

Every time we talk about this issue, we talk about our desire to work with the chairman of the Finance Committee. I see the ranking minority member on the floor, Senator GRASSLEY. It is our desire to work with Chairman BAUCUS and Senator GRASSLEY and Chairman KENNEDY and our colleague from Wyoming, Senator ENZI. Everything we have worked toward in this area of health care reform has been pointed toward the goal of making reconciliation irrelevant because we wish to be part of an effort, working with Chairman BAUCUS and Senator GRASSLEY and Chairman KENNEDY and Senator ENZI, on a path to getting 68 to 70 votes here in the Senate so we can have an enduring and bipartisan coalition in place to fix American health care.

I will tell you, on the basis of visiting most of our colleagues in their office to listen to them on the issue of health care reform, I think it is possible to find a path to 60 to 70 votes on this critical domestic question. I think there is a growing consensus here in the Senate that both political parties have been right on major concerns they have about American health care. I think there is a growing awareness that our party, the Democratic Party, has been right on the issue of ensuring that all Americans have good quality, affordable coverage. If you don't do that, what happens is the people who are uninsured shift their bills to the insured and they shift the most expensive bills. So you cannot fix this system unless you get all Americans good quality, affordable coverage.

I think Republicans have had a very valid point with respect to giving flexibility to the private sector on the issue of health care. It is important, so as to not freeze innovation, to make sure there are not price controls, there are not global budgets so there are plenty of private sector choices, the way Members have with respect to this issue. It is something of a philosophical truce. Democrats have been right on the issue of making sure that you expand coverage to stop the cost shifting and deal with the question of holding down costs which is so important to American business and tough global financial markets. And Republicans have had a valid point with respect to the role of the private sector.

I think there is a growing consensus about how, if you are going to contain costs in American health care, you have to go to areas that change the incentives, that drive the behavior in American health care. Right now, most individuals don't even have a choice with respect to their health care. If they are lucky enough to have employer-based coverage, they don't get a choice. So they are already in a position, in my view, that is not fair and certainly is not in sync in a way that works for the Members of the Senate. The distinguished President of the Senate and every other Member come here and get plenty of private sector choices for their health care, and I think there is a growing sense here in the Senate that those kinds of choices ought to be available to all Americans. Fourteen Senators are behind legislation that would do that. I point out the very fine white paper offered on American health care by the distinguished chairman of the Finance Committee envisions Americans having more choices for their coverage, the way Members of Congress have.

We are going to talk about a lot of issues this week with respect to the budget. You are going to hear a lot about reserve funds and reconciliation. I hope that as colleagues go through this topic and issues related to it, the rules with respect to how you are going to pay for American health care, I hope there will be a recognition that a lot of Senators wish to make the issue of reconciliation on health care irrelevant.

Senator BENNETT and I, for example, have received a report from the Congressional Budget Office—it is on my Web site—making it clear that our proposal is revenue neutral 2 years in and in the third year starts bending the cost curve downward. The way we get those savings, in most particulars, is through approaches that Chairman BAUCUS has advocated in the white paper I have mentioned here on the floor.

There are plenty of opportunities for finding common ground on this budget, on bringing Democrats and Republicans together on key issues such as

health care, on making the whole question of reconciliation go by the boards because Democrats and Republicans have come together.

I want to close by commending Chairman CONRAD for the approach he has taken with respect to the budget and for his desire, particularly, to work in the health care area of the budget in a bipartisan way. He worked with me, for example, on the issue of suggesting in the budget that periodic reports would have to be made with respect to health cost containment. That sends a strong message that the Senate is not going to wait around for 10 years or so to see if there are any savings. Chairman CONRAD has added language to make it clear that on an ongoing basis there should be an effort to wring out savings from the existing $2.5 trillion being spent on American health care this year. Chairman CONRAD does not want to sit around and wait for 10 or 12 or 15 years to see if anybody can save some money on American health care. He has picked up, as the Congressional Budget Office said in their report to Senator BENNETT and me and our colleagues, there are savings that can be made over the next few years.

There is enough money being spent on American health care today. It is not being spent in the right places. This year we will spend $2.5 trillion on health care. There are 305 million of us. If you divide 305 million into $2.5 trillion, you can go out and hire a doctor for every seven families in the United States. You could hire a doctor for every family in the State of Virginia or Oregon or elsewhere, pay the doctor $225,000 a year, and invariably when I bring this up to physicians, they say: Where can I go to get my 7 families?

We spend enough on health care. We don't spend it in the right places. Chairman CONRAD, by approaching the health care issue as he has in this budget, allows us to first focus on the savings that can be produced out of the existing $2.5 trillion. I commend Chairman CONRAD for working with us in that fashion.

I also commend the ranking minority member for his work on health care as well. He is a cosponsor of the Healthy Americans Act and has made it very clear that he wants to work with Chairman BAUCUS and Senator GRASSLEY and Chairman KENNEDY and Senator ENZI so that we bring the Senate together in a bipartisan fashion.

There is much to work with here. As Senators do get buttonholed by reporters with respect to the issue of whether they are in favor of using reconciliation for health reform, I hope Senators will see that this is not a yes or no answer but that there is a large and bipartisan group of us who want to pass health care reform this year on President Obama's timetable—this year—but we want to do it by bringing Democrats and Republicans together and making the issue of reconciliation on the issue of health care reform irrelevant.

I yield the floor.

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. CONRAD. 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. CONRAD. On a number of previous speakers, I am afraid I had to be away from the floor to deal with some of the challenges back home with flooding. Some of the previous speakers have referenced tax increases as part of the budget I have offered my colleagues in the Senate.

Let me indicate very clearly, the budget resolution that is before us has net tax cuts, net tax cuts of $825 billion. The other assertions directed at the President's budget about tax increases—and there are tax increases in the President's budget and in my budget, but they are completely dwarfed by the tax cuts that are in our budget.

In the President's budget, over 10 years, he has $2.4 trillion of net tax cuts. In other words, if you take the tax raises that are in the President's budget and you stack them up against the tax cuts in the President's budget, he has a net of $2.4 trillion of tax cuts over 10 years.

In the budget I have offered my colleagues that has come from the Budget Committee, that is a 5-year budget instead of a 10-year budget of the President, we have net tax cuts of $825 billion.

Here is why that is so. Middle-class tax relief from 2001 and 2003 is all extended in this budget. That means the 10-percent tax, the child tax credit, the marriage penalty relief, the education incentives, all those things are extended in this budget for those earning less than $250,000 a year.

The net effect of that change alone is $601 billion tax relief. In addition, we provided relief from the alternative minimum tax for 3 years. That costs $216 billion. We have estate tax reform that takes the level of exemption to $3.5 million per person, $7 million per family. That means 99.8 percent of the people in this country will pay no estate tax. None. Zero. That costs $72 billion.

We have business tax provisions and extenders, those provisions that periodically have to be extended. They are incentives to the business community. That costs $69 billion. That is a total of $958 billion of tax reductions over 5 years. And then if you look at the offsets, the loophole closers, going after the offshore tax havens, the abusive tax shelters, that raises $133 billion for net tax reduction over 5 years of $825 billion, most of it for the middle class.

I see Senator THUNE here now. If he is ready to go, we would be ready for him to go. How much time does the Senator seek?

Mr. THUNE. Probably 15 minutes.

Mr. CONRAD. I yield 15 minutes of Senator GREGG's time to Senator THUNE.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota is recognized.

AMENDMENT NO. 731

Mr. THUNE. I thank the Senator from North Dakota for yielding. I call up an amendment I have filed at the desk and ask unanimous consent that it be made pending.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from South Dakota [Mr. THUNE] proposes an amendment numbered 731.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 731) is as follows:

(Purpose: To amend the deficit-neutral reserve fund for climate changes legislation to require that such legislation does not increase electricity or gasoline prices)

On page 33, line 21, after ''economy,'' insert ''without increasing electricity or gasoline prices,''.

Mr. THUNE. The Senate is in the process of an important fiscal debate which will set the Federal budget for the next 5 years. The budget process is particularly important as our Nation faces a prolonged recession and an ongoing financial crisis.

I think there are two primary questions facing the Congress at this time. One is, how do we help the middle class cope with the current recession. Secondly, how do we create jobs and investments that will lead us out of this recession?

The Democratically led Congress, I believe, missed a major opportunity to address the economic recession during the debate of the stimulus bill. Rather than providing significant tax relief for middle-class families and small businesses, Congress poured billions of taxpayer dollars into Government programs and pet projects.

The middle class was largely left behind in the stimulus bill. In return for an $800 billion stimulus bill, the average taxpayer gets a temporary tax break of roughly $8 per week, not even enough, in most places, to buy a cup of coffee each day.

Unfortunately, the administration's budget proposal is another missed opportunity to address the fundamental issues that are plaguing our economy. Not only does the administration's budget increase taxes on families and small business owners, it calls for a massive national sales tax on energy as well.

This sales tax, which is implemented in the name of global warming, will dramatically increase energy costs for all consumers. I wish to point out something that President Obama said with regard to that energy cap-and-trade plan. He said:

Under my plan of a cap-and-trade system, electricity rates would necessarily skyrocket.

This regressive national sales tax on energy will hit lower and middle-income households at a time when they can least afford it. Now, incidentally, the architect of the President's budget, Peter Orszag, who is the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, agrees that the President's energy tax will have a significant impact on energy prices, and lower income families will bear a greater burden on account of this tax.

Orszag testified before Congress that a cap-and-trade program would increase energy costs which will immediately be passed on to the consumer. During a House of Representatives Budget Committee hearing in 2007, Mr. Orszag stated:

> Under a cap-and-trade program, firms would not ultimately bear most of the cost of the allowances, but instead would pass them along to their customers in the form of higher prices for products such as electricity and gasoline.

Orszag is also on record saying:

> The higher prices caused by the cap would lower real wages and real returns on capital, which would be equivalent to raising marginal tax rates on those sources of income.

In September of 2008, Mr. Orszag testified before the House Committee on Ways and Means.

> The rise in prices for energy and energy-intensive goods and services would impose a larger burden relative to income on low-income households than on high-income households.

Both Mr. Orszag and President Obama, they are not the only ones who believe higher energy prices on account of climate change legislation will have a greater negative impact on low-income families.

I quote from the Wall Street Journal on March 9 of this year:

> Cap-and-trade, in other words, is a scheme to redistribute income and wealth, but in a very curious way. It takes from the working class and gives to the affluent; takes from Miami, Ohio, and gives to Miami, Florida; and takes from an industrial America that is already struggling and gives to rich Silicon Valley and Wall Street ''green-tech'' investors who know how to leverage the political class.

I would also quote from Warren Buffet.

> That tax [the cap-and-trade tax] is probably going to be pretty regressive. If you put a cost on putting carbon into the atmosphere . . . it's going to be borne by customers. And it's a tax like anything else.

Now is not the right time to place another burden on families who are struggling to make ends meet during the current recession. Many two-income families are now reduced to one. One-income families are trying to make do with reduced wages or fewer hours. Mortgage payments have become a burden too great for millions of families. In light of the unprecedented challenges that are facing the middle class, I find it unconscionable that President Obama and the Democrats in Congress want to place an indirect tax on these families through increased energy costs.

In April of 2007, MIT conducted an economic study of the Sanders-Boxer climate change bill. Interestingly enough, at that time, 2007, then-Senator Obama was a cosponsor of that bill. The proposal he has put in front of us very closely resembles that proposal.

MIT concluded in their analysis of that particular piece of legislation that the Federal Government would take in an additional $366 billion in revenue each year, which is equivalent to over $3,128 per household. That is in the year 2015.

Having said that, if you think about $366 billion coming in in additional revenue to the Federal Government, that means someone in this country is paying that tax. As I mentioned earlier, many have concluded it is not going to be the utilities, those taxes are going to be passed on and borne by power consumers, electric, fuel consumers in this country.

If the MIT study is correct, that would be equivalent to over $3,100 per household. So I think it is important to note that President Obama's cap-and-trade tax is even more stringent than the Sanders-Boxer climate change bill, which I alluded to, which the MIT study makes reference to, which would only increase the national sales tax on energy prices.

In other words, President Obama's cap-and-trade proposal is even more stringent than the one that was analyzed by researchers at MIT who concluded, again, it would cost the average household in this country over $3,100 per year.

President Obama wants to take some of the proceeds from the carbon tax revenue and give it back to families through the Making Work Pay tax credit. The Making Work Pay tax credit totals about $400 per individual and about $800 per married couple. This credit barely covers a fourth of the household costs of the energy cap-and-trade tax of $3,100 per household.

The President's message to the middle class is: Don't worry about paying the additional $3,100 each year in higher energy costs because the Government is going to refund $800 of that total in the form of the making-work-pay tax credit. That comes out to about a quarter of what the tax is going to be, the energy tax that each family will be faced with, if this particular proposal were to become law.

Additionally, a significant number of individuals and married couples making less than $250,000 a year are not going to be eligible for the making-work-pay tax credit and are still going to be hit by the national sales tax on energy. The national energy sales tax is a direct contradiction to President Obama's campaign pledge not to increase taxes on those making less than $250,000 a year. The making-work-pay tax credit does not apply to a lot of people who make under that amount. The energy tax will apply to all of the people in this country to the tune of about $3,100 a year, according to the MIT analysis.

According to a recent Washington Times article, the Obama cap-and-trade proposal could be far more costly than the estimated figures in the Obama budget blueprint. According to this article, President Obama's climate plan could cost close to $2 trillion, which would inevitably be passed on to consumers in the form of higher electricity, gas, and heating oil, as well as higher prices for other goods and services affected by higher energy costs. That is a bad deal for hard-working, taxpaying Americans, and it is the wrong solution to our economic problems.

Like many Midwest States, South Dakota is heavily dependent upon coal power to meet our energy needs. One public power utility in South Dakota analyzed what little details are available on the President's national sales tax on energy and determined that their power costs would increase by $107 million per year by 2015. That represents a 65-percent increase in annual power costs. One of the largest municipal power customers would see their annual costs go up by $13 million for a rural community of just over 20,000 residents. That community is Watertown, SD. One of the largest industrial customers of a municipal power provider would see their electric bill increase by $2 million per year.

Like many other States, South Dakota is trying to deal with the economic recession and is looking for ways to create jobs and help businesses grow. The President's proposal to tax energy will result in a new annual tax of $2 million on just one business in my State. It will kill jobs and stifle economic growth, and it should not be included in the fiscal year 2010 budget resolution.

In the words of the CEO of this South Dakota-based power public power provider:

> In plain English, [the President's climate change proposal] represents a perpetual tax increase on our electric consumers.

I want to show another power company in South Dakota, Black Hills Corporation, a diversified energy company serving customers in South Dakota, Colorado, Wyoming, Kansas, Nebraska, and Iowa. They have provided some generic examples of how a cap-and-trade proposal would impact the monthly electric bills of various types of customers. The first chart is at $50 per ton of carbon dioxide, a monthly residential bill increases from $94 to $154. That is your average residential bill. A small commercial customer would see their monthly bill increase from $4,500 to $7,500 per month. You probably can't see, because this is fairly small print, that increase, but if you look at what the estimate is, the current cost being $4,500 for a small commercial customer bill, under the proposed climate change tax, if enacted, that would go up to about $7,500 per month.

So we are looking at about a 67-percent increase per month. When you

start multiplying that out, it becomes a staggering amount of money on an annual basis.

A school customer would see their electric bill—this is the same power company, same statistics that apply to this, about $50 per ton of carbon dioxide—if they had a typical bill today of $15,000, under this particular plan they could see that electric bill go from $15,000 a month to $30,000 a month. Again, you probably can't see the small print, but essentially what it is telling us is that a current $15,000-per-month cost for electricity for a typical school in South Dakota would virtually double on a monthly basis. If you annualized that, that is $180,000 a year additional cost for a school in South Dakota which, in most cases, is struggling to provide school supplies and pay teachers fair salaries.

Finally, take a look at a large industrial customer bill, the current monthly cost for power. With the energy tax that is under consideration in the President's proposal, that would go up to about $234,000 per month under the cap-and-trade proposal.

I guess my point is, when you start looking at the kinds of costs this imposes on industries—and I used these examples from my State and information that was furnished to us by utility companies there—if you take a large industrial customer who is going to see their energy costs increase by $110,000 each month and you annualize that, you are looking at an additional $1.4 million each year on account of this proposal.

The bottom line is, the amendment I have offered would amend the reserve fund included in a future climate cap-and-trade proposal. I know several of my colleagues, Republican colleagues, will be offering amendments to strike or lessen the impact of the President's national sales tax on energy as part of the budget process.

What my amendment does is ensure that any cap-and-trade proposal drafted under this deficit-neutral reserve fund would not increase gasoline prices or electricity rates for consumers. I believe this amendment is the very least we can do for consumers dealing with the economic downturn and businesses struggling to make it through a prolonged recession.

I encourage colleagues to support the amendment. I hope we will not include, in any budget resolution or reconciliation instructions coming back from the House or wherever that might occur, any language that would in any way implement the cap-and-trade proposal. This amendment ensures that doesn't happen in a way that would increase gasoline and electricity rates for customers.

I ask that when we get to the vote, my colleagues will support the amendment.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. CONRAD. I thank the Senator from South Dakota for his amendment and indicate clearly that this budget resolution does not prejudge in any way the climate change debate. It does not assume that there will be cap and trade or that there will not be. It leaves to the committees of jurisdiction the responsibility to come up with the best possible plan and to do it in a deficit-neutral way. That is the trigger. That is the condition. Whatever plan they devise must be deficit neutral and will have to go through the legislative process.

I yield 7 minutes from Senator GREGG's time to Senator JOHANNS.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

AMENDMENT NO. 735

Mr. JOHANNS. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 735 which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to laying aside the pending amendment?

Mr. CONRAD. We have no objection.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report:

The bill clerk read as follows.

The Senator from Nebraska [Mr. JOHANNS] proposes an amendment numbered 735.

Mr. JOHANNS. I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To prohibit the use of reconciliation in the Senate for climate change legislation involving a cap and trade system)

Section 202 is amended by inserting at the end the following: ''(c) The Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget shall not revise the allocations in this resolution if the legislation provided for in subsections (a) or (b) is reported from any committee pursuant to section 310 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.''

Mr. JOHANNS. I rise to offer an amendment to the budget resolution. The amendment is simple. It inserts language that would bar the use of budget reconciliation for climate legislation. Budget reconciliation essentially fast tracks legislation. It limits debate. It circumvents normal Senate procedure and requires only a simple majority for passage.

For weeks, the House leadership, the Senate leadership, and the administration have been pushing the Senate to use reconciliation to pass cap-and-trade legislation. They certainly have not taken it off the table. This is a mistake. Members on both sides of the aisle and on both sides of the Capitol agree with me.

The Senate resolution before us does not include reconciliation instructions. That is noteworthy. It is commendable. However, it is the conference report that concerns me. It should raise a red flag for all Senators.

Let me step back for a minute and review where we are. We now know that the House budget has included reconciliation instructions to the Committee on Energy and Commerce and two other committees. Why would the House include instructions at all? The House has a Rules Committee that sets rules for debate and amendments. Reconciliation instructions in the House budget are therefore meaningless except for one purpose: to open the door to cap-and-trade policy in the final budget resolution that emerges from the conference process.

Now that we have reached the heart of the matter, let me say again: The House language is there to dictate how the Senate conducts its business. The House language is a placeholder, a Trojan horse to limit debate, amendment, transparency, and a thoughtful consideration in the Senate on cap and trade.

We know that the leadership in the Senate is already planning how it will spend the cap-and-trade revenues. How do I know this? The Senate majority leader said last week that the collection of revenues from cap and trade would be useful for other governmental spending down to the very last penny.

Budget reconciliation is actually about lowering spending and controlling the debt. So let's take a closer look at the House language. After all, that language might set the rules for debate in the Senate, unless my amendment is adopted.

The House instructions call for a savings of $3 billion. The key, though, is this: The committees could raise hundreds of billions of dollars in new taxes and fees, including cap and trade, so long as new spending is $3 billion below the total revenues collected. Cap-and-trade legislation is expected to generate almost a trillion dollars in revenues—a lot of spending. I make this point to illustrate the significance of taxing and spending that could be passed under the guise of reconciliation.

Finally, I see that the House language even provides a placeholder in the text for Senate reconciliation instructions. Section 202 provides the following:

Senate reconciliation instructions to be supplied by the Senate.

I suggest we adopt my amendment and send a clear, bipartisan message opposing the use of reconciliation for cap and trade. Cap and trade is simply too large, too significant, and too important and costly to pass under the cloak of another bill.

The senior Senator from West Virginia, a man I admire immensely, said it eloquently:

Putting climate change legislation on a freight train through Congress is an outrage that must be resisted.

Quoting again:

It is an abdication of the constitutional role of the Senate.

I cannot say it better.

Before closing, I would like to discuss the economic impacts of this cap-and-trade freight train for a moment. The President's climate proposal could cost an American family an additional $3,000 per year or about $250 a month. Most families will see much of this

extra expense show up in their electric bill, especially if the family is from a State where significant amounts of electricity are generated by coal.

That is right, everyone with a light switch will see the pain of this policy.

The rest of the additional costs could show up in all sorts of bills families struggle to pay. If a family uses natural gas to heat their home, cook or fuel their small business, the bill will go up. Higher natural gas prices drive fertilizer costs up. When these increases are coupled with higher gasoline and diesel fuel prices, the costs to our farmers in terms of production go up. That means the costs of dairy, beef, pork, and chicken producers are bound to increase. Some of those higher costs will be seen at the grocery store. Because steel and cement manufacturing would be affected, even the cost of heavy construction goes up, and that impacts our infrastructure.

Americans are on the hook for all of this, while China gains a competitive advantage.

I could go on and on, but I think I have said enough. Aren't these economic impacts significant enough to warrant an open discussion, a transparent debate? Not some parliamentary maneuver hatched in a late-night conference committee?

Well, I think they are. Our constituents deserve to understand the true impact of the decisions we debate on this floor.

To sum up, cap-and-trade legislation is complex and costly. Americans deserve, and the issue demands, a thoughtful, deliberate approach. I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

I yield the floor and yield the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I thank Senator JOHANNS for offering his amendment early on like this. I think this is the way we ought to function on a budget resolution. Let's get these amendments up and debate them and have a chance for people to get votes early in the process.

Mr. President, on our list, Senator BOND was to be next.

Mr. BOND. I am ready.

Mr. CONRAD. I ask the Senator, how much time does he need?

Mr. BOND. About 6 minutes, I would think.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I yield the Senator 6 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I appreciate the managers giving me time.

We are all concerned about our struggling families and workers during this time of economic pain. We know too many families are struggling to make ends meet, unable to pay their mortgages, bills or debts. They are struggling, out of a job or failing to find work that can support a family.

We should not impose an energy tax on our families and workers, as President Obama proposes through his budget cap-and-trade plan that will cause pain for our families and workers for years and decades to come.

While the President and his supporters say this is a cap-and-trade scheme to cut carbon, it will result in higher costs for makers and users of energy. Those higher energy prices will be passed straight to the consumer, who will feel like they are paying a new energy tax, and that is what it will be. Under the Obama energy tax, Americans would pay more for every time we turn on a light, put gas in our cars or heat our homes.

They also did not include the President's energy tax in their budget, the Democrats will claim. But the leadership keeps reminding us they are prepared to impose an energy tax through the budget reconciliation process. Therefore, it is important we confront what this will mean for our families and workers who would have to pay more for everything from power bills to grocery bills if their budget energy tax plan succeeds.

Higher energy prices will mean many must make a decision between heat or eat. I have in the Chamber this photo of a young girl in a newspaper ad for a low-income housing assistance program. Her family cannot afford the heating bills, thus, the caption: ''I have two coats. One for outside and one for inside.''

For too many families such as this girl's, higher heating bills from President Obama's energy tax will force them to decide between paying heating bills or food bills—heat or eat.

Seniors will face a tough choice too. They already pay too much for prescription drug medicines. Tragically, we know many seniors die during heat waves because they lack air-conditioning.

Higher electricity bills will force seniors on fixed incomes to choose between buying their lifesaving prescription drugs or paying for their lifesaving air-conditioning.

This is a direct impact on senior citizens throughout the Nation.

Many workers will not have a choice when they are told they are losing their family-supporting job. President Obama's energy tax will hit blue-collar workers particularly hard. Many of them depend upon energy-intensive manufacturing to support their middle class way of life. This will be a particularly heavy burden on the Midwest and the South.

Higher energy costs will kill jobs in energy-intensive manufacturing—steel, aluminum, cement, chemicals, plastics, fertilizers, and the pharmaceutical industry.

Green jobs are held out as a solution for some. But far too many will see their future go from blue collars to burgers under the Obama energy tax.

All of us will face more pain at the pump. Higher energy costs imposed on our oil refiners will translate straight to higher gasoline and diesel prices. Families who depend on affordable gas will suffer, truckers who depend on affordable diesel will suffer, farmers who depend on affordable fuel will suffer, and workers who depend on affordable commutes will suffer from an energy tax.

How bad will things be? The President was only willing to admit to the $646 billion he put in his budget. But administration officials in meetings with staff are admitting costs ''two to three'' times that amount or $1.3 trillion to $1.9 trillion to be paid by average citizens.

We have to remember this is only an 8-year total. The President wants his program to run through at least 2050, so the total new energy taxes imposed on families and workers will be much higher and continue.

Sponsors of the cap-and-trade bill we debated and defeated in the Senate last year said it would impose $6.7 trillion in higher energy costs over its lifetime. Mr. President, $6.7 trillion was an outrageous amount of money to impose on families and workers, and the Senate rightfully defeated the proposal. However, we can expect President Obama's energy tax will be even more expensive than $6.7 trillion because of his planned stricter requirements and use of price maximizing auctions.

The $6.7 trillion Lieberman-Warner bill the Senate defeated proposed to cut energy emissions by 70 percent. The President proposes an 80-percent cut.

The $6.7 trillion Lieberman-Warner bill, defeated here, required participation with a mix of no-cost approaches and auctions. On the other hand, the President is proposing a 100 percent use of auctions to set program prices.

What is an action about, after all, but a method to maximize prices? Thus, President Obama's budget energy tax will maximize higher energy prices from climate legislation. That means President Obama will force families and workers to pay even more than $6.7 trillion in higher energy bills.

President Obama's budget energy tax will drive gasoline prices even higher than the $1.40 per gallon EPA predicted for the bill we defeated, the Warner-Lieberman proposal at the $6.7 trillion number.

President Obama's budget energy tax will force electricity bills even higher than the 44-percent increase EPA predicted for the Lieberman-Warner proposal.

President Obama's budget energy tax will cost the average household even more than the $4,377 per year predicted for the Lieberman-Warner bill.

President Obama's budget will cut even more than the 3 million jobs the American Council for Capital Formation predicted for the defeated Lieberman-Warner proposal.

While I think no time is a good time to debate imposing at least $6.7 trillion in new energy taxes, we certainly should not do so now.

That is why I am filing three amendments. My first amendment will require that any climate legislation

passed by the Senate does not cause significant job losses, especially in the Midwest, Great Plains, and the South. My second amendment will ensure that any climate legislation does not increase residential electricity, natural gas or fuel oil bills for homeowners. The last amendment would protect farmers from higher fertilizer and fuel prices.

Senator THUNE has filed an amendment to prevent climate legislation from raising electricity or gasoline prices. I strongly support this amendment.

I hope we can protect our families, farmers, and workers by refusing higher energy taxes, and I ask my colleagues for their support.

I thank the Chair and I thank my colleagues.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I thank Senator BOND for the time he has given to the budget discussion tonight.

I ask Senator SESSIONS, how much time would he like?

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I would ask to be notified at 7 minutes.

Mr. CONRAD. All right.

Mr. President, I yield from Senator GREGG's time 7 minutes to the Senator, who is a member of the Budget Committee, and a very active and valued member of the committee, Senator SESSIONS.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama is recognized.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I thank the chairman of the Budget Committee. I say to the Senator, it is a pleasure to work with you. You do a great job in an exceedingly difficult situation.

But the net result so far is a budget that is thunderously irresponsible, and we cannot and should not pass it. We must not pass this budget. I think it would send a signal that we are not serious about our financial future, that the world may think, as the President of the European Union said in Europe recently, from the Czech Republic, that the United States fiscal policy is on the road to hell. That was his direct quote in the newspaper.

So this is a serious matter.

A President's budget states what the President believes in, and what he wants to see accomplished over a period of time. A 10-year budget—which he submitted—is good. Sometimes we do 5 years. It could be 5 years. Senator CONRAD and the Democratic members of the Budget Committee, unhappy with the numbers of the 10-year budget, submitted a 5-year budget, and just did not talk about the second 5 years. But there is a grim second 5 years also.

So this budget is a plan, a direction, a list of priorities of the President. What we can see with absolute certainty is that financial responsibility is not a priority for the President. It is not. In fact, the title of his budget is ''A New Era of Responsibility''—and the numbers I am going to be talking about are either numbers that come right out of his budget called ''A New Era of Responsibility,'' from the Office of Management and Budget, and it has explicit numbers about what it intends to spend, how much debt will be created and how much taxes will be imposed and how it all will play out over a 10-year period.

So the Senate Budget Committee's budget suggests it is better or at least it does not spend as much money. But I do not think that is sustainable. I think the real analysis came from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, Mr. Peter Orszag, the President's budget manager, who said it is 98 percent of what President Obama asked for.

Because there are some gimmicks in the Senate budget. And there are flaws in it that make it look better, such as not fully accounting for the cost of fixing the alternative minimum tax or the doctor fix or TARP II or some of the other things we know we are going to be spending money on.

Let me just sum up the situation with regard to the CBO analysis, the Congressional Budget Office analysis. Our Congressional Budget Office analyzes the President's budget and attempts to explain what it is. They calculate numbers just like the President did. But very truly their analysis is more realistic and more likely to be true than the President's because he took some gimmicks too—not as many, I have to admit, as some have taken, but he has quite a number of gimmicks in it. Without the gimmicks, our Congressional Budget Office gives us a reliable analysis. They work both Houses of Congress, their leadership is selected by the Democrats, and it is certainly not a Republican institution. They are proud of their nonpartisanship and their accuracy and their figures.

So this is what would happen to the debt held by the public if this budget passes and becomes reality. In 2008, debt held by the public was $5.8 trillion. That represents the entire debt of the United States of America since its founding. Under the proposed budget of President Obama, by 2013 that debt will double to $11.8 trillion. In 5 years, it will do that. In 2019, 5 more years later, it triples to $17.3 trillion. I do not believe those numbers are challengeable in any significant way.

If you take the President's budget, you make sure that the figures, calculated with legitimate expectations of the future as CBO has done—this is what they come up with. The President's proposal assumes more favorable numbers—instead of $17.3 trillion, $15-plus trillion, which is almost virtually three times the $5.8 trillion we have today. He admits that is what his budget does, with his own numbers. So that is a big question.

Here is an example of where we are with the debt. My colleagues savaged President Bush for excessive spending, and the debt held by the public did go up during his time in office, to over $5 trillion, but this is not an exaggeration, colleagues. This is what the numbers show. It is going to go up to $17 trillion.

So my first point to my colleagues and to those who might be listening is these numbers are not political numbers ginned up out of thin air; these are numbers that have been calculated from the President's own budget, entitled ''A New Era of Responsibility,'' according to the Congressional Budget Office, and that is when they score the situation to be 10 years from now.

So you say: Well, we are in an economic disaster area. We have very bad problems in the economy.

Well, maybe we do, but the President, in his expectation of income to the Government, other than this year being a year of negative growth, assumes we will have positive growth in the future.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for 3 additional minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SESSIONS. So according to his budget, in year 3, we will have 4 percent growth for 3 consecutive years and never have a recession and have good growth all 10 years, except for this year, where we will have 1.2 percent negative growth. Well, I think that is probably too optimistic. If it is too optimistic, then this figure is going to be worse. It could be far worse.

So what does that mean? Does the debt make a difference?

This is today's Wall Street Journal, an article by Mr. Mark Whitehouse in which he states that countries with mounting debt burdens will:

> Ultimately face a growing temptation to allow inflation to accelerate more than they typically would—a move that would slash the value of their debts as the prices of everything else rose.

He points out that poor demand at a U.S. Government bond auction and the failure of a separate auction in the UK added to unease about the market's willingness to support the country's heavy borrowing. So we have now not only our country going in debt, we have the UK going into debt, causing the European Union folks to get very nervous.

So who is going to buy this debt? When we go into debt, it doesn't just happen; somebody has to loan us the money. Right now, we sell Treasury bills. China has bought a whole lot of them, as well as Saudi Arabia and other countries. We are talking about selling twice as many in 5 years, three times as many in 10, and at the same time other countries are going into debt. Who is going to buy this, and what does it mean to the economy?

Mr. Whitehouse quotes Mr. Kenneth Rogoff, an economics professor at Harvard and a former chief economist of the International Monetary Fund. This is what he said in today's paper. Mr. Rogoff says annual inflation could go as high as 8 to 10 percent within 3 to 5 years in the United States and sooner

in the UK. He projects eight to ten percent inflation in 3 to 5 years, based on what we are doing today. He notes that the average inflation rate in 1 month in this country has gone up 25 percent, the projected rate of inflation.

Debt matters. There are no free lunches. Nothing comes from nothing. Debts have to be repaid—not only repaid; we have to pay interest on it, and the interest on this debt will go, according to the Congressional Budget Office, from $170 billion this year—that is what we pay out of our whole $3 trillion budget—$170 billion is the interest on the public debt—this $5 trillion. CBO is projecting that 10 years from now, we will pay in interest $800 billion—$806 billion, to be exact. We spend $100 billion on education, so we will have interest payments in just 10 years 8 times as large as the amount of money we spend on education. Our highway spending, $40 billion a year today—it will go up some, but we will be spending 20 times as much in interest. So future generations in America will be paying an incredible burden of interest, denying them money to spend on education and highways and other good things because we irresponsibly spent it now.

It is not right. It is wrong. It should not occur. We really need to have a national discussion about this and try to fix this problem.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I wish to congratulate the Senator from Alabama, who has always succinctly and effectively described what we are confronting here, which is a wall of debt, a massive wall of debt, which will overwhelm our children. So I thank him for his statement.

At this point, I think the chairman had some comments on proceeding.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that on Tuesday, March 31, when the Senate resumes consideration of the budget resolution, the statutory time remaining be 40 hours, each side controlling 20 hours.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that we come in at 10 a.m. and go to the budget resolution, with Senator PATTY MURRAY being recognized for 15 minutes; at the conclusion of her remarks, that Senator GREGG or his designee be recognized for the purpose of offering an amendment with 1 hour equally divided; that at the conclusion of that debate, Senator BOXER be recognized to offer an amendment in relationship to the Thune amendment and that there be 1 hour equally divided; also, at the end of that period, that I be recognized, or my designee, for a possible side-by-side to the Johanns amendment. We may not need that, but we may, and so I ask unanimous consent that that time be reserved as well.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CONRAD. With that, we are ready to stand in recess for the day. I think we are ready to go to closing.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NORTH DAKOTA FLOODING

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I rise on a matter of personal privilege to talk about what is going on in my State. I was just there this past Friday morning and through the weekend. As the country knows, we are facing record floods across the entire State of North Dakota. These are crests we have never seen before on river after river in North Dakota. The great Missouri was bogged down with ice dams and nearly flooded the capital city last week, but that was prevented by a demolition team that came in and set charges and blew a channel in the ice.

I was in Fargo, ND, on Friday and Saturday and Sunday—which everyone has been watching—and it is truly inspirational to see what is happening there. It is a town of 90,000, and the mayor told us yesterday that of those 90,000 people, they have 80,000 volunteers because everybody knows that everything is on the line. You go into the FARGODOME, which is a giant sports facility where NDSU plays its games, and they have thousands of volunteers, with rock music blaring. They made 3 million sandbags in 7 days. Think about that—3 million sandbags in 7 days, working 24 hours a day, around the clock. They are fully staffed around the clock, and they are doing everything that is humanly possible to save that city.

This was the headline yesterday in the Fargo Forum: ''Holding Steady.'' It shows a picture of National Guardsmen and the Coast Guard rescuing people, and you can see these massive ice chunks and the flood.

Today, we got the news that we can now anticipate another major winter storm beginning tonight, with 6, 7, or 8 inches of snow. Of greater concern, however, are the higher winds because we have miles and miles of dike—at least 38 miles of main dike. These dikes, of course, for the most part are clay dikes, and in many places those are topped over with sandbags to raise the level. Because the weather service raised the forecast level right at the end on us, we had to build the dikes up even further.

While the good news is that the river is dropping slightly—from just under 41 feet to now just over 39 feet—we know there is a wall of water headed for that river.

There is a most incredible snow wall—three times normal—out in the watershed, and all that water is headed for this river. So while we are cautiously optimistic, we all know the dikes can breach. That happened the night before last in the early hours, and we lost an entire high school campus in the middle of the night. The good thing is the contingency dikes that have been built right behind the main dikes held—and I can tell you it is an impressive site.

Remember, this river is 22 feet above flood stage. So these massive dikes that have been built all along the river, and then these contingency dikes behind them, are in preparation for a breach.

I attended early morning meetings with the city leadership. They have this organized. They have rapid strike teams, rapid response teams, they have 24-hour patrols trying to make certain the dikes don't breach, that they are not seeping. If they get a report, the report goes in, and they have four different types of rapid response teams ready to go to fill the breach. If there were ever a case of an extraordinary outpouring, this is it.

This is a picture of what I was talking about in the FARGODOME. Look at this. This is thousands and thousands of people with sand, filling bags. This is what you see throughout that facility. This is just a small part of it. It is an absolute beehive of human activity working to defend that town and to save their homes.

So far we have been remarkably successful. There has been tragedy—2 deaths, 50 injuries as of yesterday. But this has so far averted a much bigger crisis.

This is a picture of a home out in the county. You can see they have diking around that home, and you can see there is not much freeboard there. We are hoping it holds.

This is another picture that shows response of our National Guard. This is one of the rapid response teams that moved to fill a place where the levee needed to be built up. There was some seepage. So this is one of the rapid response teams that has moved in to try to prevent that dike from breaching. These guys have been absolutely heroic.

One of the things that has been interesting, there is a great rivalry between the University of North Dakota and North Dakota State. North Dakota State is in Fargo; UND is in Grand Forks. In 1997, the great flood hit Grand Forks. So this year all the sports teams from UND are down at NDSU with their rivals working together to defend these dikes.

This is a picture from yesterday. That is a 1-ton sandbag being lifted by a helicopter. They are going to put it in place to try to divert the flow of the river. The river has tremendous force behind it. Of course that force is hitting the dikes. In order to divert at a vulnerable position, yesterday they dropped about a dozen of these 1-ton sandbags to change the direction of the river.

This is a picture of what you can see all throughout Fargo, ND. They have Neighborhood Watch groups to patrol to make sure there is no seepage. If there is a place that needs to be built up, they put out a call and people turn up just like this. You can see hundreds of people here working to sandbag to try to defend their homes and defend their neighborhoods.

The thing that has kind of escaped the attention of the national media but which is so striking is, this flood threat is all across North Dakota, from the far western part of the State all across to eastern North Dakota and the Red River Valley. The Red River Valley gets most of the attention, but we landed in Valley City on Friday and in Valley City—no, this was on Saturday—the snow around the airport was 10 feet high. That is the Cheyenne River Valley. The Cheyenne River Valley will crest later than the Red. But they are anticipating record crest levels.

Again, we went to a place where they have the Winter Show, in Valley City, ND. It is a big structure. There are hundreds of volunteers there working around the clock. This is from my hometown, the Bismarck Tribune, Bismarck, ND, with the headline, simply ''Battered,'' ''Area Hit Hard by a 1–2 Punch.'' That was flooding and a blizzard; 12 to 18 inches of snow hit my hometown last week.

Last night we got another major winter storm. I am told more than 10 inches of snow hit last night. We were faced with an immediate threat of flooding.

Here you can see two guys wading. This is ice. They have broken through the ice in their hip waders, and this is all water. They are going to check on the home of a couple to make sure they are safe.

This is the kind of flooding that was in my hometown. Here is a canoe, people going from one house to another in a canoe.

It is hard to fully appreciate the magnitude of this. We have had massive snowfall in places in the State, three times average, of course leading to these record floods. We have never seen the Red River at this height before in recorded history. Never before in recorded history has it been this high.

I want to say to people who are watching, it is inspirational to see these communities come together, to work together in an all-out effort to save their homes, to save their communities. I could not be more proud of the people of North Dakota. Boy, faced with threat, they have absolutely demonstrated what I think are heroic qualities.

I was pleased the President acknowledged this in his weekend address and talked about what this demonstrates about the human spirit. Honestly, you have to be there to fully appreciate what I am talking about.

We are thinking about our friends and neighbors and families back home, wishing them the very best as this flood fight continues. The great news is the river is going down, at least the Red is going down. But we have to contend with this major winter storm that is going to hit tonight, and we also have to contend with something nobody can predict—how fast things will warm up. If it warms up too fast that water out there is going to head for the river. We know we ought to keep up our guard, and that is what everybody intends to do.

I also want to acknowledge the local leadership: Mayor Walaker, Deputy Mayor Tim Mahoney—what outstanding leadership they are providing in that community. These guys are not working any 8-hour days. It is round the clock and it could not be better. They are out there urging their citizenry on. They have said: If we go down, we are going to go down swinging.

I tell you, I don't think they are going to go down. I think they are going to win.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

CORPORAL MICHAEL OUELLETTE

Mr. GREGG. I rise this morning on behalf of Kathy and myself to express our deepest sympathies to the family of CPL Michael Ouellette. Corporal Ouellette died in Afghanistan last week, and his funeral is today. I have spoken with his mother, and, of course, he was an exceptional individual. These young men who serve us in the military are all exceptional. He served two tours of duty in Iraq, was decorated, and then went to Afghanistan to serve again.

On behalf of the people of New Hampshire and our Nation, I thank his parents for having raised such an extraordinary child. We appreciate and thank them for the service he has given this Nation, and we obviously express our deepest concern during this extremely difficult period.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I wish to say on behalf of the people I represent that we, too, send our condolences to the family of the soldier who was lost. My State has suffered many losses in Iraq and Afghanistan, and we understand the extraordinary sacrifice these families make. We wish to say to the people of New Hampshire, and especially the family of the soldier, that our thoughts and prayers are with them as well.

AMENDMENTS TO REGULATIONS ADOPTED BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I wish to inform all Senators that on Friday, March 27, 2009, the Committee on Rules and Administration adopted amendments to the following regulations:

Regulations Governing Allocation and Acquisition of Equipment for Senators, Committees, Officers, and Employees of the United States Senate;

Smoking Policy—Rule X, Rules for Regulation of Senate Wing;

Ticket Preparation Fees—Senate Travel Regulations;

Regulations Governing Rates Payable to Commercial Reporting Firms for Preparation of Transcripts of Hearings in the Senate;

Signature/Documentation Provisions—Regulations Governing Senators' Official Personnel and Office Expense Accounts; and

Advance Payment Regulations.

These regulations as amended are effective immediately.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a document summarizing these updates and the text of the regulations as amended be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

SUMMARIES OF PROPOSED AMENDED REGULATIONS

(1) Regulations Governing Allocation and Acquisition of Equipment for Senators, Committees, Officers, and Employees of the United States Senate

The updated regulations change the manner by which offices are provided computer and office equipment. Offices will be given a single economic allocation to purchase supported computer and office equipment. This will ensure that offices are better equipped in a manner that is ''revenue neutral'' to the Senate. The regulations ensure that each employee or detailee gets one workstation and access to appropriate office equipment.

(2) Smoking Policy—Rule X, Rules for Regulation of Senate Wing

The limited exception of approved indoor smoking space in the Senate Wing of the Capitol and the Senate Office Buildings has been removed due to the closing of all indoor smoking rooms under the control of the Rules Committee. The proposed text of Rule X deletes the exception for smoking rooms in the Senate that no longer exist.

(3) Ticket Preparation Fees—Senate Travel Regulations

The proposed amendment removes the dollar amount from the Senate Travel Regulations and authorizes the Rules Committee to set a rate for ticket preparation fees. This will permit the periodic adjustment of the fee by the Rules Committee without necessitating a change in the regulations.

(4) Regulations Governing Rates Payable to Commercial Reporting Firms for Preparation of Transcripts of Hearings in the Senate

These regulations were last updated in 1990 and include reimbursement to transcription companies that are well below market rate. The proposed amended regulations authorize the Rules Committee to publish and periodically update a schedule of reimbursement rates for transcription services.

(5) Signature/Documentation Provisions—Regulations Governing Senators' Official Personnel and Office Expense Accounts

The provisions for authorized signature(s) were originally adopted in 1979 and amended in 1992 to permit a designated staff member to certify vouchers and the Senator to approve them. An amendment in 2003 increased the threshold of the receipt amount to $50. However, the 2003 amendment used the 1979 version of the regulations instead of the 1992 updated version. The proposed change will update the signature/documentation provisions to include the 1979, 1992, and 2003 amendments, in accordance with the current practices used throughout the Senate. If approved, this regulation will be reprinted in

the Senate Travel Regulations for the sake of convenience.

(6) Advance Payment Regulations

Language is being added at the request of Senate office managers to clarify the obligation of funds at the end of a fiscal year. There has been confusion over the years regarding which funding period should be used for certain types of expenses. The new language provides the necessary explanation and is in accordance with the practices used throughout the Senate. The regulation will also be amended to permit Senate Officers to make advance payments.

APPENDIX II–A: REGULATIONS GOVERNING ALLOCATION AND ACQUISITION OF EQUIPMENT FOR SENATORS, COMMITTEES, OFFICERS, AND EMPLOYEES OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE

SEC. 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

(This section shall be effective March 27, 2009.)

The Economic Allocation Fund shall be established and maintained by the Senate Sergeant at Arms with the approval of the Committee on Rules and Administration.

The Sergeant at Arms of the Senate is authorized and directed to furnish to Senators, committees, and officials of the Senate equipment in quantities not to exceed the allowance in their economic allocation fund.

Equipment shall be furnished upon written request of the Senator, Chairman of a committee, or Senate official. Equipment accountability and inventory control will be governed by the Regulations on Equipment Accountability issued by the Committee on Rules and Administration. Equipment provided will be charged, in the case of a Senator, to either his/her economic allocation fund or those funds within the official office expense accounts for other official expenses (10 percent discretionary funds). In the case of a committee or official, charges will be made to economic allocation funds of the committee or official.

The Sergeant at Arms is authorized to evaluate and test equipment which he deems to be best suited to the needs of the Senate and shall notify the Rules Committee of any changes in the authorized office equipment list. To the extent possible, the Sergeant at Arms shall standardize or limit variety of office equipment to provide for greater utilization and interchange between offices, and ease of maintenance of equipment. Specialized equipment not included in these regulations shall be furnished only upon the recommendation of the Sergeant at Arms and with the prior approval of the Committee on Rules and Administration.

Acquisition of equipment is to be conducted according to the Procurement Regulations of the United States Senate. The Sergeant at Arms shall have the authority to either purchase or lease equipment in the best interests of economical procurement.

Equipment presently assigned to offices which is deemed in excess of their needs shall revert to the control of the Sergeant at Arms for reassignment.

The Committee chairman shall ensure that each full-time employee and full-time, authorized detailee on the committee is provided with a workstation and have appropriate access to related office equipment.

SEC. 2. GENERAL OFFICE EQUIPMENT

(This section shall be effective March 27, 2009.)

(a) All general office equipment used in Senate offices shall be issued and maintained by the Sergeant at Arms of the Senate. The Sergeant at Arms shall maintain a schedule in which available equipment is identified according to the classes set forth below:

TABLE 11–1: CLASS OF EQUIPMENT AND MINIMUM LIFE

Class	Description	Minimum Life
I	Letter Folder	10 Years
	Letter Inserter.	
	Letter Sealer.	
	Paper Cutter w/stand.	
	Signature Signing Machine.	
II	Typewriters—Electric	10 Years
III	Calculators—Desk or Hand-held Copy Holders.	6 Years
	Noise Suppressors.	
	Pencil Sharpeners (Electric).	
	Recorders and Transcribers—Desk.	
	Combination or Portable.	
	Staplers (Electric).	
	Tape Recorders.	
	Time Recorders.	

Allocations

Sec. 2. (b) The Sergeant at Arms is authorized to issue general office equipment upon receipt of requests from Senators, committee chairmen, and heads of Senate offices, up to the limits set forth by the availability of their economic allocation funds.

Sec. 2. (c)(1) The Sergeant at Arms may sell to a Senator who is leaving office or otherwise ceasing to be a Senator (except by expulsion) any item of office equipment located in such Senator's Washington, DC or state offices, subject to the restrictions set forth in paragraph (2).

Sec. 2. (c)(2) Paragraph (1) of this subsection shall apply to equipment which has reached its expected useful life and has been declared surplus to the needs of the Senate. Such sales may be made only when such Senator submits a written request to the Sergeant at Arms, at least thirty days prior to leaving office, setting forth the item or items he or she desires to purchase. Whenever compliance with a provision of this paragraph would create an undue hardship or would not be in the public interest, such provision may be waived by the Sergeant at Arms.

SEC. 3. PHOTOCOPIERS AND DUPLICATING EQUIPMENT

(This section shall be effective March 27, 2009)

Section 3(a) amended January 12, 1983, to increase collating capacity on Class IIB copiers from 15 to 20 bins. Sections 3(c)(2)(B) and (C) deleted March 18, 1983, to eliminate plate making charges for printed work and the per copy costs for photocopy work in the central reproduction facility. Section 3(c)(2) amended September 26, 1984, to be effective October 1, 1984, to provide a graduated ''extra copy'' charge for Senators'' offices based on population.)

Sec. 3. (a) All copying equipment used in Senate offices shall be issued and maintained by the Sergeant at Arms of the Senate. All copier locations must meet manufacturers' space and electrical requirements. The Sergeant at Arms shall maintain a schedule in which available copy machines are classified according to the classes set forth below:,

TABLE 11–2: CLASSES OF COPY MACHINES AND DESCRIPTIONS

Class	Class description	Copier description
I	Low volume convenience w/document feeders.	Personal convenience copiers are table top machines with low operating speeds.
II	Office convenience	Office convenience copiers are floor model or table top.
III	Committee convenience	Committee convenience copiers are higher volume machines and have faster operating speeds than Class II copiers and have finishing capabilities.

Allocations

Sec. 3. (b) The Sergeant at Arms is authorized to issue copy equipment upon receipt of requests from Senators, committee chairmen, and heads of Senate offices, up to the limits set forth by the availability of their economic allocation funds.

Washington offices

(1) The recommended levels for copy machines in Senators' offices in Washington, DC are:

(A) For those Senators whose state population is 7 million or more (based on the most recent census figures), one Class IIA and two Class I, or one Class IIB and one Class I copier in the principal suite assigned to the Senator, or;

for those Senators whose state population is less than 7 million (based on 1980 census figures, revised to 1987), one Class IIA and one Class I, or one Class IIB copier in the principal suite assigned to the Senator.

(B) One class I copier in one additional location assigned to the Senator provided:

(i) the location is in another building, or is in the same building but not adjacent to another location containing a copier assigned to the Senator; and

(ii) the location is not in an annex building.

State offices

(2) The recommended levels for copy machines in Senators' offices in their home states are one class II copier in each of two principal state offices and one class I copier in each of five other state offices, except that a class II copier may be provided in lieu of a class I copier to a third office located in a state with a population greater than 21 million.

Committee offices

(3) The recommended levels for copy machines in committee offices are:

(A) One class II or class III copier in the principal suite assigned to the committee, as determined by the Sergeant at Arms based on a requirements analysis. The requirements analysis shall consider (but shall not be limited to) the nature of the work of the office, the size of the office, and the proximity of alternate copy facilities.

(B) One class I or class IIA copier in each additional location assigned to the committee provided:

(i) the location is in another building, or is in the same building but not adjacent to another location containing a copier assigned to the committee; and

(ii) the location is not in an annex building.

Leadership offices, policy committees, and administrative offices

(4) The recommended levels for copy machines in leadership offices, policy committees, and administrative offices are one or more class I, II, or III copiers, as determined by the Sergeant at Arms based on a requirements analysis. The requirements analysis shall consider (but shall not be limited to) the nature of the work of the office, the size of the office, and the proximity of alternate copy facilities.

Cost distribution

Sec. 3. (c)(1) The Sergeant at Arms shall pay the monthly maintenance fee for owned equipment and the rental for rented equipment. Offices shall pay for the supplies (paper, toner, developer, etc.) used with assigned copiers.

(2) Offices shall reimburse the Sergeant at Arms for extra copy costs on convenience copiers, whether owned by the Senate or rented, at the rate of 2 cents per copy for copies in excess of the amounts set forth in the following table, except that Senators will not be charged a copy cost on Senate owned Class IIA machines that were installed in such Senators' Washington offices on May 1, 1981:

TABLE 11–3: FREE COPIES PER MONTH (IN THOUSANDS)

[Senators representing States in the following population ranges (in millions)]

Class	Under 4	4 to 7	7 to 12	12 to 21	Over 21	Other offices
I	2	2	3	4	5	2
II	11	12	14	15	16	11
III	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	20

Copy Centers

Sec. 3. (d) The Sergeant at Arms is authorized to establish, maintain, and operate copy centers when demand for the establishment of a center is justifiable on a cost basis.

The Sergeant at Arms is authorized, if he deems appropriate, to install devices on copy machines in copy centers and in the central reproduction center which automatically record the number of copies made for each user at the time copies are prepared, and the activation of which are necessary for the operation of copy machines.

SECTION 4. MICROGRAPHIC EQUIPMENT

(Effective March 27, 2009)

Sec. 4. (a) All micrographic equipment used in Senate offices shall be issued and maintained by the Sergeant at Arms of the Senate. All micrographic equipment locations must meet manufacturers' space and electrical requirements.

Classes of Equipment

Sec. 4. (b) Micrographic equipment is classified in three groups:

(1) Cartridge/Cassette Roll Film Viewers/Printers

(2) Microfiche Viewers/Printers

(3) Microfiche Viewers

The Sergeant at Arms shall maintain a schedule in which micrographic equipment that meets the performance requirements of the Senate is classified according to the classes set forth above and from which users may make specific selections.

Allocations

Sec. 4. (c) The Sergeant at Arms is authorized to issue micrographic equipment upon receipt of requests from Senators, committee chairmen, and heads of Senate offices, up to the limits set forth by the availability of their economic allocation funds.

Replacement

Sec. 4. (d) Microfilm equipment anticipated expectancies are:

TABLE II–4: MICROFILM EQUIPMENT LIFE EXPECTANCY

Class	Years
Cartridge/Cassette Viewers/Printers	8
Microfiche Viewers/Printers	8
Microfiche Viewers	10

SEC. 5. ALLOCATION OF TELECOPIER AND FACSIMILE EQUIPMENT TO SENATE OFFICES

(Effective March 27, 2009)

Sec. 5 (a) All facsimile equipment within the funding levels contained in these regulations used in Senate offices shall be issued and maintained by the Sergeant at Arms of the Senate. All equipment locations must meet manufacturers' space and electrical requirements. The Sergeant at Arms shall maintain a list of machines of equivalent capacity that meet Senate cost and performance standards from which users may select a specific machine.

Sec 5(b) The Sergeant at Arms is authorized to issue equipment upon receipt of requests from Senators, committee chairmen, and heads of Senate offices, up to the limits set forth by the availability of their economic allocation funds.

RULES FOR REGULATION OF SENATE WING

RULE X

SMOKING POLICY

(Adopted March 27, 2009)

Smoking is prohibited in all public places and unassigned space within the Senate Wing of the Capitol and the Senate Office Buildings. Senators and Chairmen of Committees in consultation with the Ranking Member may each establish smoking policies for office space assigned to them in the Senate Wing of the Capitol and the Senate Office Buildings.

U.S. SENATE TRAVEL REGULATIONS

SECTION II—TRANSPORTATION EXPENSES, SUBSECTION I–D, TICKET PREPARATION FEES (HANDBOOK, APPENDIX IV–D, PAGE IV–65)

D. Ticket Preparation Fees: Each Chairman, Senator, or Officer of the Senate may, at his/her discretion, authorize in extenuating circumstances the reimbursement of penalty fees associated with the cancellation of through fares, special fares, commutation fares, excursion, reduced-rate round trip fares and fees for travel arrangements, provided that reimbursement of such fees does not exceed the rates prescribed by the Committee on Rules and Administration.

REGULATIONS GOVERNING RATES PAYABLE TO COMMERCIAL REPORTING FIRMS FOR PREPARATION OF TRANSCRIPTS OF HEARINGS IN THE SENATE

Adopted—January 23, 1990

Amended and Adopted—March 27, 2009.

Pursuant to the authority vested in it by the act of June 27, 1956 (70 Stat. 360; 2 U.S.C. 68c), the Committee on Rules and Administration approves the following revised regulations, effective March XX, 2009, governing payment from the contingent fund of the Senate to commercial reporting firms for the preparation of verbatim transcripts of hearings, markups, and related meetings held before Senate committees, subcommittees, and certain joint committees.

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

These regulations establish the technical and procedural requirements for commercial reporting firms providing and receiving reimbursement for verbatim transcripts of hearings, markups, and related meetings held before Senate committees, subcommittees, and certain joint committees.

Each transcript shall be provided electronically to the requesting committee in accordance with Section II of these regulations.

Except as provided in Section III of these regulations, all vouchers shall be supported and accompanied by a Secretary of the Senate page count. Each electronic transcript submitted must contain only one day or one session of a hearing. The Secretary of the Senate will include a separate count for material inserted in the transcript.

The Secretary of the Senate page count shall be considered final and conclusive on all parties, and shall be calculated through the following process:

1. Determine total number of characters in transcript.

a. A character is a key stroke. It includes any alpha-numeric and word processing command.

2. Divide total number of characters by 1,300.

3. The result in Step 2 rounded to the next whole number shall be the number of pages in the transcript.

To assist the Secretary of the Senate in conducting accurate page counts, commercial reporting firms shall utilize software tools provided by the Secretary of the Senate.

Hard copy transcripts will be supplied only upon agreement between committees and vendors and subject to the requirements of Section II.

Fifth Business day copy (transcripts delivered within five business days) will be supplied unless same day, next day, or second business day copy is specifically requested by the chairman of the committee.

II. FORMAT OF TRANSCRIPTS

Electronic—All electronic transcripts must conform to the technical specifications established by the Committee on Rules and Administration. Electronic transcripts supplied shall contain 25 lines of characters to the page. The lines must be double spaced and contain 10 letters to the inch. The paging of the transcript shall be in a single series of consecutive numbering, exclusive of inserted material. Committees and vendors shall agree in advance upon the file type, or types, to be provided (ex. Word, Word Perfect, PDF, E-Transcript, ASCII, etc . . .).

The following technical specifications will be used by reporting companies when supplying electronic hearing transcripts for committees of the Senate:

1. The media and data must be unblocked and the electronic transcript shall contain the full verbatim record.

2. The electronic file must contain the following identifying information in the document's meta-data:

Reporting Company name
Company Representative
Phone number
The words "U.S. Senate"
The Committee and/or Subcommittee for whom the tape is produced
Title of Meeting
Date(s) of Meeting

Hard copy—All hard copy transcripts shall be an original letter quality produced on 20-lb. white writing paper or equivalent white paper, one side only, in a size of 8.5 × 11 inches with margin of 1.75 inches at the left side. All pages shall contain 25 lines of typewriting to the page. The lines must be double spaced and contain 10 letters to the inch. The paging of the transcript shall be in a single series of consecutive numbering, exclusive of inserted material.

The entire hard copy record shall be drilled or punched with three holes, 4.25 inches center to center on the left side, fastened with heavy paper of good quality. A cover sheet containing the following identifying information shall be included with the hard copy transcript:

Reporting Company name
Company Representative
Phone number
The words "U.S. Senate"
The Committee and/or Subcommittee for whom the tape is produced
Title of Meeting
Date(s) of Meeting

III. EXCEPTION TO PAGE COUNT REQUIREMENT

In cases where, for reasons of security, the committee chairman determines a copy of the transcript shall not be forwarded to the Secretary of the Senate for a page count, a voucher will be honored if supported on its face by an affidavit by an official of the commercial reporting firm, setting forth the page count and including a statement by the committee chairman to the effect that no page count is desired for reasons of security.

IV. REIMBURSEMENT RATES

The Senate Committee on Rules and Administration will publish, and periodically update, a schedule of reimbursement rates for transcription services. The amounts in the schedule shall represent the maximum reimbursement rates for the listed services.

V. PRIOR REGULATIONS FOR REPORTORIAL SERVICES RESCINDED

All previous rules and regulations of the Committee on Rules and Administration governing rates payable to commercial reporting firms for preparation of transcripts of hearings in the Senate are hereby canceled and rescinded.

VI. EFFECTIVE DATE OF THESE REGULATIONS

These regulations are effective on March 27, 2009.

REGULATIONS GOVERNING SENATORS' OFFICIAL PERSONNEL AND OFFICE EXPENSE ACCOUNTS

(Adopted by the Committee on Rules and Administration Pursuant to Senate Resolution 170 agreed to September 19, 1979, as amended May 22, 1992, further amended November 3, 2003, further amended March 27, 2009.)

Section 1. For the purposes of these regulations, the following definitions shall apply:

a. Documentation means invoices, bills, statements, receipts, or other evidence of expenses incurred, approved by the Committee on Rules and Administration.

b. Official expenses means ordinary and necessary business expenses in support of the Senators' official and representational duties.

Section 2. No reimbursement will be made from the contingent fund of the Senate for any official expenses incurred under a Senator's Official Personnel and Office Expense Account, in excess of $50, unless the voucher submitted for such expenses is accompanied by documentation, and the voucher is certified by the properly designated staff member and approved by the Senator.

Section 3. Official expenses of $50 or less must either be documented or must be itemized in sufficient detail so as to leave no doubt of the identity of, and the amount spent for, each item. Items of a similar nature may be grouped together in one total on a voucher, but must be itemized individually on a supporting itemization sheet.

Section 4. Travel expenses shall be subject to the same documentation requirements as other official expenses, with the following exceptions:

a. Hotel bills or other evidence of lodging costs will be considered necessary in support of per diem.

b. Documentation will not be required for reimbursement of official travel in a privately owned vehicle.

Section 5. No documentation will be required for reimbursement of the following classes of expenses, as these are billed and paid directly through the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper:

a. Official telegrams and long distance calls and related services;

b. Stationery and other office supplies procured through the Senate Stationery Room for use for official business.

Section 6. The Committee on Rules and Administration may require documentation for expenses incurred of $50 or less, or authorize payment of expenses incurred in excess of $50 without documentation, in special circumstances.

Section 7. Vouchers for the reimbursement of official travel expenses to a Senator, employee, detailee pursuant to section 503(b)(3) of PL 96–465, or individual serving on a nominee recommendation panel pursuant to 2 USC 58(h) shall be accompanied by an ''Expense Summary Report—Travel'' signed by such person. Vouchers for the reimbursement to any such individual for official expenses other than travel expenses shall be accompanied by an ''Expense Summary Report—Non-Travel'' signed by such person.

CHANGES TO THE SENATE TRAVEL REGULATIONS TO REFLECT CHANGES WITHIN THE UPDATED SIGNATURE REGULATIONS

II. Regulations Governing Senators' Official Personnel and Office Expense Accounts Adopted by the Committee on Rules and Administration Pursuant to Senate Resolution 170 agreed to September 19, 1979, as amended.

Section 1. For the purposes of these regulations, the following definitions shall apply:

a. Documentation means invoices, bills, statements, receipts, or other evidence of expenses incurred, approved by the Committee on Rules and Administration.

b. Official expenses means ordinary and necessary business expenses in support of the Senators' official and representational duties.

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c. Hotel bills or other evidence of lodging costs will be considered necessary in support of per diem.

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The proposed update specifies that the obligation date on a voucher is the transaction date on a third party vendor (Visa Card) monthly statement or invoice. The current regulations will be amended by the addition of the highlighted language.

COMMITTEE REGULATIONS GOVERNING ADVANCE PAYMENT

(Adopted by the Committee on Rules and Administration, October 30, 1997, Amended on September 30, 1998, Further Amended on March 27, 2009)

Under the authority granted by Sec. 1(b) for P.L. 105–55, the FY98 Legislative Branch Appropriations bill and using these regulations—

The term ''advance payment'' means any expense authorized, by the Committee on Rules and Administration, pursuant to P.L. 105–55.

By the above definition of advance payment and following the enactment of the FY98 Legislative Branch Appropriations bill, in addition to subscriptions, the following items are for advance payment:

a) Rental of water coolers (cooler units only/not for water)

b) Monthly maintenance on equipment that is either non-standard and/or above the $500 limit

c) Cable TV services (including basic satellite service where needed)

d) Online services (for official use by the Senator only)

e) Rental booths at State Fairs, rent for space to be used during town hall meetings and associated costs (not to include insurance)

f) Conference and seminar fees (not to include meals charged separately)

g) Payments on leased equipment

h) Paging service

i) Clipping services

j) Yellow page listings (not to include the classified yellow pages)

k) State office rents, up to 1 year in advance

l) Metro subsidy, one week in advance of the new month

m) Pre-paid cellular and telephone communications

The date of transaction will determine the fiscal year for payments of government authorized charge cards or reimbursements to Members and staff. Additionally, for a charge card statement that crosses fiscal years, the transaction dates will be used to determine the fiscal year, which could require submitting two separate vouchers for one statement. If an office has documentation proving the transaction took place in a different fiscal year than the statement stipulates, that documentation will determine the fiscal year.

All Senate Offices (Member Offices, Committees, and Officers of the Senate) are authorized to voucher the initiation or renewal of subscriptions (print and digital) based on the obligation or transaction date.

With respect to charges for on-line services, paging services, clipping services, and equipment maintenance, advance payment shall only be made in the cases of ''flat fee services.''

Also, no advance payment will be allowed in instances where cancellation fees may be incurred. Time limitation on the obligation of funds is restricted to a Member's six-year term of office and a Committee's biennial funding period, or for Officers of the Senate, the term of a Congress.

COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, earlier this month, the Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence released a report, ''Exporting Gun Violence,'' that documents how Mexican drug gangs are exploiting weak U.S. gun laws and corrupt gun sellers in the U.S. to amass arsenals of high powered guns. These guns have been used to kill thousands in Mexico and pose an increasingly grave security threat to both Mexico and the United States.

Mexican law enforcement officials are increasingly being outgunned by

drug gangs bearing military-style assault weapons, .50 caliber sniper rifles and other high powered weapons that originate from the United States. According to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, ATF, more than 7,770 guns recovered from crime scenes in Mexico were traced back to gun dealers in the U.S. during 2008, up from 3,300 in 2007. The ATF has warned that an ''iron river of guns is streaming across the border at such a pace that some are being recovered in Mexico within days after their purchase in the U.S.''

According to the U.S. Department of State's latest International Narcotics Control Strategy report, ''U.S.-purchased or stolen firearms account for an estimated 95 percent of Mexico's drug related killings.'' Unlike Mexico's tougher gun laws, unlicensed sellers in the U.S. are allowed to sell guns without a background check, civilians are permitted to purchase military-style assault weapons, and there are no limits on the quantity of guns that can be sold at any given time. In the U.S., a trafficker can purchase as many guns they want from an unlicensed seller, no questions asked.

On March 17, 2009, both ADM James Stavridis, commander of the U.S. Southern Command, and GEN Gene Renaurt, commander of the U.S. Northern Command, testified during a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing, which I chaired, that the large flow of guns into Mexico and Central America from the U.S. is having a destabilizing impact in those countries. Many believe this destabilization could pose a significant national security threat to the U.S. According to the report, Mexican Attorney General Medina Mora has stated that, before the assault weapons ban in the U.S. was allowed to expire, only 21 percent of the weapons seized from traffickers were assault rifles, while today, it is more than half.

President Obama has called for a comprehensive approach to the growing level of violence in Mexico. However, unless existing gun laws are strengthened, drug cartels and criminals in Mexico and the United States will continue to build their arsenals. We must act to close the gun show loophole, reinstate the assault weapons ban and enact other commonsense gun safety legislation.

OMNIBUS PUBLIC LANDS ACT

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I was pleased to attend today's Presidential signing ceremony for the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act of 2009, H.R. 146. In signing the act into law, President Obama underscored the Nation's commitment to serve as a responsible steward of our public lands and cultural and natural resources.

As a bipartisan package of more than 160 individual bills, the enactment of this act culminates many hours of congressional hearings, deliberation, and debate. As the former chairman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks, I was proud to have chaired hearings on individual measures in the act and to have worked with my colleagues in the House and Senate to put together a public lands package that confirms our Nation's desire to ensure that future generations will enjoy and benefit from the preservation of natural resources and historic sites.

I join those who have praised this momentous act for setting aside more than 2 million acres of land as protected wilderness and more than 1,000 miles of wild and scenic rivers. It is important to note that this act also is invaluable in protecting, preserving, and memorializing our country's cultural heritage and natural resources. This act contains four provisions that I sponsored during the 110th Congress which acknowledge the historical contributions made by Native Hawaiians as well as the need to preserve Hawaii's unique heritage and biodiversity for future generations: H.R. 3332, the Kalaupapa Memorial Act; S. 1728, the Na Hoa Pili O Kaloko-Honokohau Advisory Commission Reauthorization Act; S. 2220, the Outdoor Recreation Act of 1963 Amendments Act; and S. 320, the Paleontological Resource Preservation Act, which preserves fossils across the Nation. In addition, it includes a bill that I cosponsored, S. 1680, the Izembek and Alaska Peninsula Refuge Enhancement Act of 2008, which addresses the needs of a rural and indigenous Alaska Native community.

Section 7108 authorizes a memorial to be established at Kalaupapa National Historical Park, which is located on a remote peninsula on the island of Molokai. This long overdue memorial will honor and perpetuate the memory of those Hansen's disease patients who were forcibly relocated to the Kalaupapa community, many of whom were buried with no marked grave. This measure authorizes a nonprofit organization, Ka 'Ohana O Kalaupapa, consisting of the remaining Kalaupapa residents and the family and friends of current and past residents, to establish a memorial at a suitable location in the Park for the 8,000 residents who lived at the Kalaupapa and Kalawao communities. This monument empowers the people of Kalaupapa to share their story and the lessons learned as the community came together to overcome their hardships. Previously only recognized as a place of isolation, this monument will transform Kalaupapa into a place of healing, education, and contemplation connecting families to their ancestors.

The Na Hoa Pili O Kaloko-Honokohau Advisory Commission Reauthorization Act, section 7401, extends the authorization for the National Park's advisory commission through 2018. Located on the western coast of the island of Hawaii, Kaloko-Honokohau National Historical Park was established in 1978 to provide for the preservation, interpretation, and perpetuation of the Park's cultural and natural features. The Advisory Commission has played an integral role in advising the National Park Service to provide for the education, enjoyment, and appreciation of traditional Native Hawaiian activities and culture within the Park.

The Kaloko-Honokohau Park is a unique part of the Hawaii National Park System as it is home to two types of fish ponds, as well as the 'Ai 'opio fish trap, a 1.7-acre pond comprised of a manmade stone and coral wall along the naturally curving shoreline. These are treasured sites not only from a cultural stand point demonstrating the ingenuity of Native Hawaiians in engineering these fishponds but also from a resource management perspective on how in the 21st century we can utilize such traditional knowledge to enhance our understanding and shape our management practices today.

Recognizing the importance of the 'Ai 'opio fish trap, in 2008 the National Park Service Save America's Treasure program awarded a $350,000 grant to Project Ola 'Ai 'opio, a Park Service initiative to restore the fish trap. Ocean waves and erosion have endangered the structural integrity of the trap and the grant will be used to methodically stabilize the kuapa—fish trap walls—over a 12-month period. This award not only aids in preservation of the fish trap but also ensures that visitors will be able to appreciate Hawaii's unique historical and cultural heritage into the future.

Section 13006 of the act contains my bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal years 2008 through 2017 in the amount of $5 million for the operation and maintenance of the National Tropical Botanical Garden. A congressional charter established the National Tropical Botanical Garden in 1964 to foster horticultural research, education, and plant preservation. This authorization enables the National Tropical Botanical Garden to meet its Federal mandate and preserve unique species found only in Hawaii for the benefit of future generations. The National Tropical Botanical Garden has proven itself to be a significant national and international resource. The tranquil beauty offered by its gardens, collection of rare and endangered plant life, focused library and herbarium collections, scientific research, conservation initiatives, and education programs have all benefited the United States.

The National Tropical Botanical Garden is expressly mandated to foster and encourage research of tropical flora in agriculture, forestry, horticulture, medicine, and other sciences for the benefit of all the people in the United States. It is a national resource for biological science. Most recently, in 2008, it discovered Bilirubin, an animal pigment, in plants. This important discovery documented for the first time that an animal pigment is naturally occurring in the seed of the white bird of paradise tree.

The National Tropical Botanical Garden is a national resource for education and career development. Over four decades, it has developed a full spectrum of educational offerings that provide opportunities for the next generation of scientists. Over 5,000 school-aged children are educated each year in conservation principles and practices. The Horticultural Internship Program trains undergraduates in horticulture, botany, and conservation.

In addition, the National Tropical Botanical Garden is a national resource for medical research. Its researchers have developed and hold patents on a potential anti-HIV drug called Prostratin that is currently going through clinical trials and are also working to find the cause for Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases. Once a year, it holds a course accredited by the American Medical Association that provides 16 credits to medical professionals in herbal remedies derived from plants. By enacting this provision into law, I am hopeful that the National Tropical Botanical Garden will be able to continue with its important work for years to come.

The Paleontological Resources Preservation Act, title VI, subtitle D, helps protect and preserve the Nation's important fossil resources that are found on Federal lands for the benefit of our citizens. As a matter of clarification, this bill covers only paleontological remains on Federal lands and in no way affects archaeological or cultural resources under the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 or the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act.

The provision to preserve paleontological resources, in its original and amended form, never intended to undermine the current practice of casual collecting that is being enjoyed on Federal lands. Notwithstanding the educational benefits and the major fossil discoveries made by amateur collectors and curio hunters, this title addresses the increasing problem of intentional fossil theft on Federal lands. Vertebrate fossils are rare and important natural resources that have become increasingly endangered due to an increase in the illegal collection of fossil specimens for commercial sale. Recognizing that there was no unified policy regarding the treatment of fossils by Federal land management agencies, I worked to include this provision in the act to help protect and conserve fossil specimen, a valuable scientific resource. This act will provide uniformity to the patchwork of statutes and regulations that previously existed. Further, it will create a comprehensive national policy for preserving and managing fossils and other artifacts found on Federal land, and will prevent future illegal trade.

Title VI, subtitle E, the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge Land Exchange, addresses the needs of a rural and indigenous Alaska Native community. This subtitle allows developing a road that would provide dependable and safe year-round access for the residents of King Cove in Alaska to the nearby Cold Bay Airport. I believe that the 800 residents of King Cove, most of which are native Aleut, have an absolute right to a reliable means of transport that is accessible under all weather conditions. This provision will help address many of the community's safety, health, and medical concerns. The United States has a responsibility to its indigenous people, and I am proud this provision will enable this community and appropriate State and Federal stakeholders to move forward on this initiative.

Passage of this act was an extensive, challenging, but ultimately fulfilling journey, and I am pleased with today's enactment of the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act of 2009 into law. I am confident this act will promote and strengthen opportunities to preserve Hawaii's and the Nation's environmental and cultural heritage. This landmark Act will serve as a stable foundation for us to continue to build upon.

HOUSING AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY ACT

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I have sought recognition to discuss S. 253, a bill introduced by Senator JOHNNY ISAKSON to expand the home buyer tax credit. I support this legislation and have asked to be added as a cosponsor.

A robust home buyer tax credit will spur consumer demand and help to stop the fall in home values, which continues to affect millions of Americans. This decline is destroying the savings and net worth of Americans, whose homes are their most valuable asset. Many now have mortgages that exceed the value of their homes.

The Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 created a tax credit for first-time home buyers of $7,500 through June of 2009. However, taxpayers were required to repay the tax credit in equal installments over 15 years, which greatly reduced its effectiveness. The 2009 Stimulus bill waived the repayment requirement for purchases made in 2009, increased the value of the credit to $8,000, and extended eligibility for purchases made through November of 2009.

Further improvements are necessary, in my judgement, to bring about a recovery in the housing market that will ultimately contribute to the turnaround of the broader economy. First, S. 253 would increase the value of the credit to 10 percent of the home price capped at 3.5 percent of Federal Housing Administration loan limits. These limits are geographically dependent and would yield a credit ranging between approximately $10,000 and $22,000.

Second, S. 253 would make the home buyer tax credit available to any individual who purchases a home, not just first-time home buyers. Doing so would stimulate demand for the entire range of homes on the market.

Finally, S. 253 would increase the income eligibility threshold to individuals earning up to $125,000, or $250,000 in the case of a joint return. Currently, the credit is reduced for individuals with modified adjusted gross income, AGI, of more than $75,000—$150,000 for joint filers—and is zero for those individuals with modified AGI in excess of $95,000—$170,000 for joint filers. Again, doing so would stimulate demand for the entire range of homes on the market.

The need for a robust home buyer tax credit is clear. According to the National Association of Realtors, pending home sales hit a record low in January 2009. The pending home sales index, which measures the number of sales contracts signed each month, fell 7.7 percent to 80.4, the lowest mark since 2001 when tracking began.

At the same time, the housing affordability index rose 13.6 percentage points to a record high of 166.8. A value of 100 means that a family with the country's median income has exactly enough income to qualify for a mortgage on a median-priced existing single-family home. The higher the index, the better housing affordability is for buyers.

These two figures, taken together, demonstrate that a robust home buyer tax credit is needed to spur demand from Americans that are hesitant to buy homes for fear that prices will not stabilize.

IDAHOANS SPEAK OUT ON HIGH ENERGY PRICES

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, in mid-June, I asked Idahoans to share with me how high energy prices are affecting their lives, and they responded by the hundreds. The stories, numbering well over 1,200, are heartbreaking and touching. While energy prices have dropped in recent weeks, the concerns expressed remain very relevant. To respect the efforts of those who took the opportunity to share their thoughts, I am submitting every e-mail sent to me through an address set up specifically for this purpose to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. This is not an issue that will be easily resolved, but it is one that deserves immediate and serious attention, and Idahoans deserve to be heard. Their stories not only detail their struggles to meet everyday expenses, but also have suggestions and recommendations as to what Congress can do now to tackle this problem and find solutions that last beyond today. I ask unanimous consent to have today's letters printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

The rising cost of fuel along with the slowdown of the housing industry has had a big effect on my family. My husband is a residential contractor who builds homes all over the valley. There are days when he spends

more time in his vehicle than at the office. With the housing market slump plus the rising cost of gas we have already had to take pay cuts which will now put us in jeopardy of being able to pay all of our bills. We have also reduced the comfort level (temperature) of our home so that we can continue to pay our electricity and natural gas bills.

The most difficult thing I encounter is to my weekly trips to the grocery store. We have four growing children and it is not cheap to feed them and ourselves. Each week I purchase fewer groceries, yet my food bill does not diminish. Because of the interest in bio-fuels, essentials like vegetable oil, flour, and wheat are skyrocketing. The cost of vegetable oil has more than doubled in the last six months.

My biggest source of frustration is the lack of action the government is taking. It upsets me to no end that as a nation we are paying trillions of dollars every year for oil to nations that would very much like to destroy us. I believe that other methods for fuel need to be looked into, but first we need to be independent from outside oil. Let's use our resources and pay Americans to find, drill, and to refine our own oil! Let's help our economy by keeping the trillions of dollars we are pouring into the Middle East inside our own country. Not only would we keep our money here, but we could employ thousands of Americans as well. I feel like the leaders of this nation have lost sight of what is important to the people. Get rid of the laws that are restricting our prosperity, remember that the well being of human beings is more important than animals, fish, bugs etc. and accomplish something that will bring relief to hard working families.

Thank you for your time and for this opportunity to express my feelings and concerns. I have felt so powerless for so long when it comes to what is happening in this world, and I have prayed to know how I can make a difference. I hope that this will help you and that it will be an answer to my prayers as well. I appreciate the service you give to our State and Country.

SARAH, *Meridian*.

Like all Americans I am disturbed by the current state of affairs in this country that are due to energy costs. There are a number of things I believe the federal government can do to either ease the burden in the short term, or to urge the country forward to a much more independent state.

Short term suggestions:

Let us allow oil exploration in the currently prohibited coastal areas, the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge, the Rocky Mountains etc. A policy which ensures reasonable protections for the environment yet provides the energy the American people need, cannot be beyond the capacity of Congress to develop.

Encourage President Bush to direct all Executive Agencies to allow work shifts of four 10 hour days per week, for as many employees as possible. He and Congress should further encourage all employers in this country to do the same where possible. A 20% reduction in commuting fuel use for employees will help not only them, but reduce congestion, and therefore fuel use, for everyone else as well. Those employers who can shut down their operation for a day per week as well, will save substantially in overhead energy costs. If it is possible to implement an incentive for employers to do this the federal government should provide one.

Longer term suggestions:

The US Postal Service has a very large fleet of vehicles which would benefit from regenerative braking systems. I'm specifically speaking of the Grumman Long Life Vehicles (LLV's). They are on the road six days a week, for a substantial portion of the day, and spend the majority of that day stopping and going repeatedly. Eaton Corporation is currently in partnership with Peterbuilt to produce garbage trucks with hydraulic regenerative braking systems (http://www.greencarcongress.com/2004/10/eaton_and_peter.html). A group from UCLA has made substantial progress in using compressed air as a storage medium in passenger cars. As the USPS LLVs are all basically the same, a system could be retrofitted to them at a reasonable cost, and it would substantially lessen their fuel consumption. The Eaton system is designed for trucks in excess of 7000 pounds, and UCLA's system is not fully flushed out at this time. Nevertheless, I see this as an area the federal government can take the lead in, assisting in the proving of the technology, and in getting to the necessary economy of scale needed to bring these systems into the mainstream. I believe the USPS will be able to break even on the investment in a short enough period of time to make this viable.

The fleet of vehicles used by most government agencies is diverse. Including a choice for full electric vehicles is appropriate. While clearly a BLM ranger in Idaho won't be able to function with an electric car with a 100 mile range, I'm sure there are a number of applications for that same vehicle in the DC area. GSA's vehicle contracts should bring these vehicles into being within a few years.

We have the Renewable Fuels Standard (RFS), law on the books now, but it is not as good a law as it should be. It is written to reward industry for per gallon production of biofuels. The easiest fuel for them to produce is ethanol, which has about half the energy of gasoline, cannot be run in unmodified engines, and has such an affinity for water that we cannot use the existing fuel pipelines to transport it. (It absorbs any water it encounters so it must be reprocessed to remove that water.) This law should be modified to reward industry for the production of readily usable fuels, and do so on a gasoline energy equivalency scale. This will encourage more production of biodiesel, and butanol. Butanol is a 4 carbon alcohol (ethanol has two carbon atoms), it can be run in unmodified engines in much higher concentrations than ethanol, it is energy density is close to that of gasoline and it has nowhere near the affinity for water that ethanol has. Biodiesel is roughly equal to petroleum based diesel in energy, and requires very little if any modification of standard engines.

My understanding is that part of our gasoline price problem is due to the limited number of refineries in this country. Further the oil companies are not building new ones due to the onerous environmental regulations which apply to new facilities. (The older ones being grandfathered in with lower requirements.) I'm having difficulty separating the truth from the propaganda on this issue. If the preceding statements are indeed correct, we need to reevaluate the standards which a refinery must meet, and produce legislation which encourages the creation of new facilities. As an example, allow one refinery to be built which meets a lower pollution standard for each two new ones which meet the current requirements. Or allow a new refinery to meet lower standards for the first three years of operation, before it must be brought up to the higher standard. Or allow a new refinery to meet the lower standards, but require it only be built in areas which can tolerate the impact more readily.

The Federal Government needs to initiate an effort on par with the Apollo program or the Manhattan Project to relieve us from dependence on foreign oil. We need research into better batteries, capacitors with higher energy density, hydrogen storage systems with higher energy density, more efficient solar cells, inexpensive cellulase enzyme production, and other technologies which will allow this country to declare our independence again. I wouldn't mind if the financing came by reducing the foreign aid to countries which are not acting as our friends at this time. I sincerely hope that you, and your fellow Senators and Congressmen can help move the country forward from this untenable state,

STEVE, *Boise*.

With the higher energy prices, we are allocating more money for fuel and less to other items which in the long run will slow different parts of the economy...we have less money to use on discretionary items. We are becoming part of a nation that will only be able to work and will no longer be able to enjoy any free time to vacation or buy needed things that wear out because we cannot afford them. Only work and work—nothing else.

(1) I am for opening all aspects of drilling and we have the technology and expertise to drill responsibly. Drill offshore and open all venues to drill for the oil we have.

(2) Suspend production of different blends of fuel, one blend with different octane ratings for gas will free up production. Pick a blend and stay with it throughout the U.S.

(3) Streamline in months not years the application process for nuclear plants.

(4) This should be #1...remove all fuels and food products from the hands of big speculators. These were developed to hedge farm, and oil field production, let us get it back that way and smaller speculators can still supply liquidity to the market.

(5) If #4 does not work, then have safety valves by government intervention in order to keep undue hardship from befalling most Americans from high food and fuel prices?

(6) Urge Mr. Bernanke to raise interest rates to strengthen the dollar.

(7) Use monies sent overseas to other countries to pay off national debt to strengthen dollar.

(8) Raise taxes on people making over $200,000 to help pay off national debt to strengthen dollar. We paid it off once. Let us do it again the same way. No need to re-invent the wheel; just get it done!

(9) Quit [partisan] bickering. These policies can help everyone; poverty knows no party. We need solutions and we need them now!

(10) Hefty windfall profits tax to companies that are exploiting us and jail time to the people that are making large profits from things that are necessities of life. Some are not eating, some are not heating their homes, some are dying because of it. Shame on them, and our seniors who are lifelong taxpayers are being shunned and left to die.

JIMMY.

I am a large fish farmer from the Magic Valley. Our energy costs have escalated over the past few years and unfortunately we deal with very perishable food. Our trout must be shipped directly to buyers without changing hands so we must cope with the huge cost of fresh transport across the nation. Idaho is a fabulous place to live and what makes it so nice are the wide open spaces between us all. So, just like having to send fish in a hurry, the citizens of Idaho must travel large distances. I grew up in Iowa, and there is a town

every five to ten miles. Here we must travel sometimes 50 to 80 miles between towns. Sometimes farther to purchase items from larger cities.

I think it is wise to look at the bigger picture and try to figure out where we can save fuel and where we cannot. I think that shipping products by rail is one very, very efficient way to use fuel. Unfortunately for most shippers the slow movement of products by rail discourages most of us from using this efficient means of transportation. If our government provided railroads with the funds needed to improve their infrastructure by double, triple, or even quadruple tracking the most efficient corridors, we may divert the thousands of inefficient trucks from using so much diesel fuel. It is possible to move products by rail nearly as fast as trucks can. This may in turn reduce demand and thus reduce the cost of fuel for the average citizens of Idaho.

DIRK.

I think that the oil companies should increase the production because it is putting our nation's truck drivers out of business and without truck drivers who will carry our freight.

CHARLIE, *Boise*.

I am from Burley, but am presently teaching English in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. I am sure you know that these gasoline prices Americans are now paying have been this high, or generally, much higher, in Europe, Asia, and Africa. We Americans do not have any room to whine, but rather we simply need to learn how to cope, like the rest of the world. Gas is ten bucks a gallon in the UK. Thailand is around the same, as is Japan. I say let us Americans experience what the rest of the world has been experiencing for many years.

BOB.

I am a retired federal employee, after 40 years of federal service as an air traffic controller, and six years military. I feel I have a voice as to what should happen in my retirement. My fuel costs have now exceed my food costs, which means less food. Having a small retirement fixed income means sacrifices in food, medical treatment, and other necessary expenses. The irony of it all is it is not necessary. Stop China's offshore drilling into our oil, authorize ANWR, stop exporting our Alaskan oil, listen intently to the Governor of Alaska and her solutions for some of our energy problems. Get all of our alternative energy systems up and running now, not next year, now. Just because other governments have failed, is it just fashionable that we should cause ours to fail??? Also, we as a people should be very embarrassed, with the way we have conducted our political fiasco the last few months. It has been a total disgrace.

GENE.

I am sending you this email in response to your questions on how energy prices are affecting me. I have a family of eight. We cannot downsize to a more fuel-efficient vehicle. We will have driven about 5,000 miles this summer just for family vacation, family reunions, and church camps. That is about $1,300 in gas, assuming it averages $4.00 per gallon. In addition, we are the kids' taxi for soccer, piano, guitar, dance, scouts, and other activities. Rising energy prices are causing a noticeable rise in the food prices for a family of 8. I am also a small business owner struggling to keep my business going. I have to travel. Airplane and rental car prices have gone up noticeably.

To address this issue, I think first priority is to increase drilling in the Gulf and ANWR and build new domestic refineries. We know how to do that—we can do it relatively quickly. Once our foreign oil sources see that we are serious about domestic production, they will lower the prices to get us to forget about it and be complacent again. It will be a few years before our new oil rigs and refineries come online but the message to the world will be clear. Do not let the government impact big oil with extra taxes or limits. Nuclear and other alternative energy sources are good but will take too long to come online and have an impact. But we need to foster companies to develop those sources. Conservation by getting people to change their behavior is impractical and temporary. Conservation by developing new technologies will help our energy situation. I am helping develop technology with a client, Green Plug (www.greenplug.us), that will conserve electrical energy. In summary, let big oil and other energy companies flourish. Let capitalism work its wonders.

GARY, *Boise*.

My husband and I returned from Arizona yesterday, after being away from home for six weeks. The reason that we went to Arizona was to visit the Mayo Clinic, since the ailment my husband had was unable to be treated here. We are blessed to have family in the Phoenix area, so we were able to stay with them. The very big expense was the price we had to pay for fuel going and coming back. We live in McCall, and any time we need to see a specialist we have to drive to Boise which is a 100 miles away. Again the price of gas is choking us. It is sad to know that we have oil available in this country, but that Congress does everything to stop us from getting it. We listened to President Bush's speech today, and agree wholeheartedly with what he said. Our view is also that we need to develop nuclear power, and any other means of keeping this country self reliant.

LOUISE, *McCall*.

I am writing concerning the high cost of fuel, and in hopes that you and your fellow Senators will act and do something to give us relief. My husband and I own a small business doing demolition and excavation. We own one tractor truck and several pieces of heavy equipment. We are a ''one-man'' operation. Just the other day we paid $4.34 a gallon for off-road diesel. On road diesel is even higher. It takes almost $1,000 to fill the tanks on the truck. Because of the slowdown in the building market around here, jobs are hard to come by. We can only afford to raise our rates so much—then we lose the business all together.

On a different note, my mother and sister have both been unemployed for a few months. They both just got jobs in another city about 15 miles away. They both get paid $9.00 an hour and work about 30 hours a week. We are very excited that they are now able to stop receiving government aid. However, with the price of gasoline over $4 a gallon in the end they will hardly make enough to pay their rent and other bills. (They work in different places doing one-on-one care for special needs children and are unable to carpool either.) This, to me, is a sad state of affairs when people should be excited about supporting themselves, but are still unsure of whether they can.

I grew up in Texas during the oil boom in the 80s. Drilling for oil there did not hurt anyone I knew. I am sure that technologies have improved over the past two decades, so any environmental concerns should be taken care of. I do not understand why we are not taking advantage of the resources we have in our own country to provide for ourselves as well as provide much needed jobs for our citizens. Please lift the ban on off-shore exploration, oils shale production, and drilling in ANWR. Also, has the idea of suspending the federal fuel tax for period of time been dismissed? This would provide immediate short-term relief. Please encourage your counterparts to consider the working class of America. We need a break!

SHELLI.

I am very concerned about ever-increasing energy costs. I completely agree with your policy of searching for alternative sources of energy. Also, [I am concerned that Congress is out of touch with regular Americans] Please talk to your peers about doing whatever it takes to get things going on alternative means of energy and increasing exploration and refining facilities for oil.

ROBERTO, *Payette*.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES DURING ADJOURNMENT OF THE SENATE

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of March 26, 2009, the following reports of committees were submitted on March 27, 2009:

By Mr. CONRAD, from the Committee on the Budget, without amendment:

S. Con. Res. 13. An original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2010, revising the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal year 2009, and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2011 through 2014.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS DURING ADJOURNMENT OF THE SENATE

On March 27, 2009, under the authority of the order of the Senate of March 26, 2009, the following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. CONRAD:

S. Con. Res. 13. An original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2010, revising the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal year 2009, and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2011 through 2014; from the Committee on the Budget; placed on the calendar.

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 Mr. AKAKA (for himself, Mr. BAUCUS, and Mr. BEGICH):

S. 734. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the capacity of the Department of Veterans Affairs to recruit and retain physicians in Health Professional Shortage Areas and to improve the provision of health care to veterans in rural areas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. BAUCUS (for himself and Mr. GRASSLEY):

S. 735. A bill to ensure States receive adoption payments for fiscal year 2008 in accordance with the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. AKAKA (for himself and Mr. VOINOVICH):

S. 736. A bill to provide for improvements in the Federal hiring process and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. UDALL of Colorado):

S. 737. A bill to amend the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 to authorize the Secretary of Energy to conduct research, development, and demonstration to make biofuels more compatible with small nonroad engines, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself, Mr. BOND, Mr. BROWNBACK, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. JOHNSON, and Mr. ROBERTS):

S. 738. A bill to amend the Consumer Credit Protection Act to assure meaningful disclosures of the terms of rental-purchase agreements, including disclosures of all costs to consumers under such agreements, to provide certain substantive rights to consumers under such agreements, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. NELSON of Florida (for himself and Ms. LANDRIEU):

S. 739. A bill to require the Consumer Product Safety Commission to study drywall imported from China in 2004 through 2007, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. SPECTER:

S. 740. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand the homebuyer tax credit, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. SPECTER:

S. 741. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to impose a flat tax only on individual taxable earned income and business taxable income, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CHAMBLISS (for himself, Mr. ISAKSON, and Mr. PRYOR):

S. 742. A bill to expand the boundary of the Jimmy Carter National Historic Site in the State of Georgia, to redesignate the unit as a National Historical Park, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. UDALL of New Mexico:

S. 743. A bill to require air carriers to provide training for flight attendants and gate attendants regarding serving alcohol, recognizing intoxicated passengers, and dealing with disruptive passengers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. BURR (for himself, Mrs. BOXER, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. HATCH, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. WICKER, Mr. ROBERTS, and Mr. COCHRAN):

S. Res. 89. A resolution expressing support for designation of a ''Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day''; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. KERRY (for himself, Mr. LUGAR, Mr. DODD, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. NELSON of Florida):

S. Res. 90. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the Fifth Summit of the Americas, held in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, April 17, 18, and 19, 2009; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. NELSON of Florida (for himself and Ms. LANDRIEU):

S. Res. 91. A resolution calling on the Consumer Product Safety Commission, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to take action on issues relating to drywall imported from China; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mrs. LINCOLN (for herself and Mr. BARRASSO):

S. Con. Res. 14. A concurrent resolution supporting the Local Radio Freedom Act; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 42

At the request of Mr. ENSIGN, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 42, a bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to preserve and protect Social Security benefits of American workers and to help ensure greater congressional oversight of the Social Security system by requiring that both Houses of Congress approve a totalization agreement before the agreement, giving foreign workers Social Security benefits, can go into effect.

S. 146

At the request of Mr. KOHL, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was withdrawn as a cosponsor of S. 146, a bill to amend the Federal antitrust laws to provide expanded coverage and to eliminate exemptions from such laws that are contrary to the public interest with respect to railroads.

At the request of Mr. KOHL, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 146, supra.

S. 148

At the request of Mr. KOHL, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 148, a bill to restore the rule that agreements between manufacturers and retailers, distributors, or wholesalers to set the minimum price below which the manufacturer's product or service cannot be sold violates the Sherman Act.

S. 253

At the request of Mr. SPECTER, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 253, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand the application of the homebuyer credit, and for other purposes.

S. 254

At the request of Mrs. LINCOLN, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 254, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the coverage of home infusion therapy under the Medicare Program.

S. 372

At the request of Mr. AKAKA, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 372, a bill to amend chapter 23 of title 5, United States Code, to clarify the disclosures of information protected from prohibited personnel practices, require a statement in nondisclosure policies, forms, and agreements that such policies, forms, and agreements conform with certain disclosure protections, provide certain authority for the Special Counsel, and for other purposes.

S. 388

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WEBB) was added as a cosponsor of S. 388, a bill to extend the termination date for the exemption of returning workers from the numerical limitations for temporary workers.

S. 414

At the request of Mr. DODD, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 414, a bill to amend the Consumer Credit Protection Act, to ban abusive credit practices, enhance consumer disclosures, protect underage consumers, and for other purposes.

S. 423

At the request of Mr. AKAKA, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) and the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. HAGAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 423, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize advance appropriations for certain medical care accounts of the Department of Veterans Affairs by providing two-fiscal year budget authority, and for other purposes.

S. 428

At the request of Mr. DORGAN, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was withdrawn as a cosponsor of S. 428, a bill to allow travel between the United States and Cuba.

At the request of Mr. DORGAN, the names of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO), the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) and the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) were added as cosponsors of S. 428, supra.

S. 448

At the request of Mr. SPECTER, the names of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) were added as cosponsors of S. 448, a bill to maintain the free flow of information to the public by providing conditions for the federally compelled disclosure of information by certain persons connected with the news media.

S. 455

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 455, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition of 5 United States Army Five-Star Generals, George Marshall, Douglas MacArthur, Dwight Eisenhower, Henry ''Hap'' Arnold, and Omar Bradley, alumni of the United States Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, to coincide with the celebration of the 132nd Anniversary of the founding of the United States Army Command and General Staff College.

S. 469

At the request of Mr. VOINOVICH, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 469, a bill to amend chapter 83 of title 5, United States Code, to modify the computation for part-time service under the Civil Service Retirement System.

S. 473

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. BURRIS) were added as cosponsors of S. 473, a bill to establish the Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Foundation.

S. 475

At the request of Mr. BURR, the names of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BAYH), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) and the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) were added as cosponsors of S. 475, a bill to amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to guarantee the equity of spouses of military personnel with regard to matters of residency, and for other purposes.

S. 478

At the request of Mr. DEMINT, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 478, a bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act to ensure the right of employees to a secret-ballot election conducted by the National Labor Relations Board.

S. 486

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 486, a bill to achieve access to comprehensive primary health care services for all Americans and to reform the organization of primary care delivery through an expansion of the Community Health Center and National Health Service Corps programs.

S. 496

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the names of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) were added as cosponsors of S. 496, a bill to provide duty-free treatment for certain goods from designated Reconstruction Opportunity Zones in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and for other purposes.

S. 503

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) was added as a cosponsor of S. 503, a bill to authorize the exploration, leasing, development, and production of oil and gas in and from the western portion of the Coastal Plain of the State of Alaska without surface occupancy, and for other purposes.

S. 511

At the request of Mr. BROWNBACK, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 511, a bill to amend part B of title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for an exemption of pharmacies and pharmacists from certain Medicare accreditation requirements in the same manner as such exemption applies to certain professionals.

S. 535

At the request of Mr. NELSON of Florida, the names of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WEBB) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. KAUFMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 535, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to repeal requirement for reduction of survivor annuities under the Survivor Benefit Plan by veterans' dependency and indemnity compensation, and for other purposes.

S. 599

At the request of Mr. CARPER, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 599, a bill to amend chapter 81 of title 5, United States Code, to create a presumption that a disability or death of a Federal employee in fire protection activities caused by any certain diseases is the result of the performance of such employee's duty.

S. 614

At the request of Mrs. HUTCHISON, the names of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER), the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) and the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) were added as cosponsors of S. 614, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the Women Airforce Service Pilots (''WASP'').

S. 632

At the request of Mr. BAUCUS, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 632, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require that the payment of the manufacturers' excise tax on recreational equipment be paid quarterly.

S. 643

At the request of Mr. LAUTENBERG, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 643, a bill to amend title I of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, title XXVII of the Public Health Service Act, and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to prohibit preexisting condition exclusions for children in group health plans and health insurance coverage in the group and individual markets.

S. 651

At the request of Mr. BAUCUS, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI), the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) and the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 651, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to impose an excise tax on excessive bonuses paid by, and received from, companies receiving Federal emergency economic assistance, to limit the amount of nonqualified deferred compensation that employees of such companies may defer from taxation, and for other purposes.

S. 653

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 653, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the bicentennial of the writing of the Star-Spangled Banner, and for other purposes.

S. 654

At the request of Mr. BUNNING, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 654, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to cover physician services delivered by podiatric physicians to ensure access by Medicaid beneficiaries to appropriate quality foot and ankle care.

S. 677

At the request of Mr. ENSIGN, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 677, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to require wealthy beneficiaries to pay a greater share of their premiums under the Medicare prescription drug program.

S. 708

At the request of Mr. AKAKA, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. DORGAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 708, a bill to express the policy of the United States regarding the United States relationship with Native Hawaiians, to provide a process for the reorganization of a Native Hawaiian government and the recognition by the United States of the Native Hawaiian government, and for other purposes.

S. 714

At the request of Mrs. HAGAN, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 714, a bill to establish the National Criminal Justice Commission.

At the request of Mr. WEBB, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. BINGAMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 714, supra.

S. 717

At the request of Mr. KENNEDY, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 717, a bill to modernize cancer research, increase access to preventative cancer services, provide cancer treatment and survivorship initiatives, and for other purposes.

S. 718

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 718, a bill to amend the Legal Services Corporation Act to meet special needs of eligible clients, provide for technology grants, improve corporate practices of the Legal Services Corporation, and for other purposes.

S. 729

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. BINGAMAN), the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), the Senator from

Washington (Mrs. MURRAY), the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) were added as cosponsors of S. 729, 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. CON. RES. 11

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the names of the Senator from Florida (Mr. MARTINEZ), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. KAUFMAN), the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) were added as cosponsors of S. Con. Res. 11, a concurrent resolution condemning all forms of anti-Semitism and reaffirming the support of Congress for the mandate of the Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 9

At the request of Mr. KAUFMAN, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 9, a resolution commemorating 90 years of U.S.-Polish diplomatic relations, during which Poland has proven to be an exceptionally strong partner to the United States in advancing freedom around the world.

S. RES. 20

At the request of Mr. VOINOVICH, the names of the Senator from Florida (Mr. MARTINEZ) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. KAUFMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 20, a resolution celebrating the 60th anniversary of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

S. RES. 56

At the request of Mr. LUGAR, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 56, a resolution urging the Government of Moldova to ensure a fair and democratic election process for the parliamentary elections on April 5, 2009.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. AKAKA (for himself, Mr. BAUCUS, and Mr. BEGICH):

S. 734. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the capacity of the Department of Veterans Affairs to recruit and retain physicians in Health Professional Shortage Areas and to improve the provision of health care to veterans in rural areas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I am today introducing legislation to make various improvements to VA rural health care. I am pleased to be joined in this effort by Senators MAX BAUCUS and MARK BEGICH. The legislation is designed to bring more doctors into small communities; promote the use of volunteer counselors to help with mental health issues; expand telemedicine services; and create incentives for VA's community partners to provide high quality services to veterans.

As the drawdown of forces in Iraq begins, VA must be prepared to meet the health care needs of veterans upon their return.

Many veterans live in small towns and communities. This includes a large number of Guard members and Reservists who have served in such an integral role in Iraq and Afghanistan. Members of the Guard and Reserve face challenges that are different than those faced by their active duty counterparts, who return to military bases with the support of their unit and programs geared toward re-acclimating them to life outside of the combat zone. When members of the Guard or Reserves return home, they often are isolated from their units, leaving them to reintegrate back into their communities without a strong VA or DoD presence or support system.

When health care is needed, a rural community may not have providers who offer mental health services, such as group counseling, and may not be familiar with treating combat-related disorders.

I believe strongly that there is an obligation to care for all veterans in need, regardless of where they live. We must ensure that adequate resources are available to serve those who live in rural communities, and that VA works closely with local health care providers to help meet the need for care. It is critical that VA reach out to veterans living in rural communities so that they receive the care they need. Every resource must be united in the effort to care for wounded warriors, whether in a community hospital or VA clinic. When there is no VA presence in a community, VA may need to pay community providers for the reasonable costs of care.

Last month, the Committee on Veterans' Affairs held a hearing on health care for veterans in rural areas. We heard from the chief executive officer of a community hospital, from a former director of a rural health clinic, and from outreach organizations who work to bridge the gap between VA and community health care systems. These witnesses testified about how hard it is for veterans who live in rural areas to find health care in the communities where they live, and about how difficult it is for community hospitals and clinics to provide quality services with the limited resources available to them.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs staff also conducted an oversight visit to Hawaii and saw firsthand the needs of veterans living in rural communities on the neighbor islands. Many of those veterans find it hard to access VA health care because of travel restrictions and a shortage of services in their communities. Committee staff found that technology was not being used to bridge this gap; indeed, the use of telemedicine is actually declining in Hawaii.

The legislation we are introducing today would help address the needs of veterans living in rural communities in a number of ways.

First, the bill would bring more doctors to targeted communities by repaying their student loans while they work for VA. Currently, VA's loan repayment program is capped at an amount that is less than ⅓ the average cost of medical school. This bill would remove the cap, allowing VA to offer full loan repayment so as to provide a much more effective recruitment tool.

In addition, this bill would encourage VA and HHS to use the National Health Service Corps Scholarship Program to recruit physicians for VA facilities located in underserved areas. The National Health Service Corps pays for medical school up front in exchange for a doctor's agreement to work in an underserved area after graduation.

To address the shortage of mental health providers in many communities, this legislation would also allow VA to shorten the credentialing and privileging process for licensed volunteer counselors who could provide mental health services to our veterans.

The legislation would also create a pilot program to place VA doctors in community hospitals so as to enable them to provide more continuous care for veterans. Under this pilot, VA doctors working in communities without a VA hospital would be able to follow their patients when admitted to the local hospital. Participating VA doctors would earn additional compensation for assuming these responsibilities, thereby creating financial incentives for doctors to stay within VA. Since many non-VA hospitals do not have mental health providers or other providers experienced in the treatment of conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder that disproportionately affect veterans, this would also bring needed expertise into other care communities.

This bill would also allow VA to monitor the quality of care provided in non-VA facilities. Currently, there is no way for VA to do such quality assurance in a systematic way. This bill would encourage VA's community partners to participate in quality programs like peer review, or to seek accreditation by an outside organization.

This bill also would bring new technologies to rural communities. By modifying VA's internal mechanism for distributing funds, the legislation would provide incentives for VA hospitals and clinics to use telehealth technologies. VA currently bases the distribution of funds to its facilities on workload and does not currently count all telehealth visits in a facility's workload. By requiring VA to give hospitals and clinics credit for telehealth

visits, this bill will promote the natural expansion of these services to our veterans.

Finally, for those veterans who must travel by air to obtain their health care—because of their health status, geography or other barriers—this bill would allow VA to pay beneficiary travel benefits for airfare to those veterans who cannot afford it. In recognition of the cost of airfare, a different income eligibility standard from that used for ground transportation would be used in connection with reimbursement of the costs of air travel.

I urge our colleagues to work with me and the other members of the Veterans' Affairs Committee to improve access to health care for veterans who live in rural areas.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be placed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 734

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 Veterans Health Care Access and Quality Act of 2009''.

SEC. 2. ENHANCEMENT OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS EDUCATION DEBT REDUCTION PROGRAM.

(a) ENHANCED MAXIMUM ANNUAL AMOUNT.—Paragraph (1) of section 7683(d) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking ''$44,000'' and all that follows through ''fifth years of participation in the Program'' and inserting ''the total amount of principle and interest owed by the participant on loans referred to in subsection (a)''.

(b) NOTICE TO POTENTIAL EMPLOYEES OF ELIGIBILITY AND SELECTION FOR PARTICIPATION.—Section 7682 of such title is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(d) NOTICE TO POTENTIAL EMPLOYEES.—In each offer of employment made by the Secretary to an individual who, upon acceptance of such offer would be treated as eligible to participate in the Education Debt Reduction Program, the Secretary shall, to the maximum extent practicable, include the following:

''(1) A notice that the individual will be treated as eligible to participate in the Education Debt Reduction Program upon the individual's acceptance of such offer.

''(2) A notice of the determination of the Secretary whether or not the individual will be selected as a participant in the Education Debt Reduction Program as of the individual's acceptance of such offer.''.

(c) SELECTION OF EMPLOYEES WHO RECEIVE NOTICE OF SELECTION WITH EMPLOYMENT OFFER.—Section 7683 of such title is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(e) SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS.—(1) The Secretary shall select for participation in the Education Debt Reduction Program each individual eligible for participation in the Education Debt Reduction Program who—

''(A) the Secretary provided notice with an offer of employment under section 7682(d) of this title that indicated the individual would, upon the individual's acceptance of such offer of employment, be—

''(i) eligible to participate in the Education Debt Reduction Program; and

''(ii) selected to participate in the Education Debt Reduction Program; and

''(B) accepts such offer of employment.

''(2) The Secretary may select for participation in the Education Debt Reduction Program an individual eligible for participation in the Education Debt Reduction Program who is not described by subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (1).''.

SEC. 3. INCLUSION OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FACILITIES IN LIST OF FACILITIES ELIGIBLE FOR ASSIGNMENT OF PARTICIPANTS IN NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE CORPS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall transfer $20,000,000 from accounts of the Veterans Health Administration to the Secretary of Health and Human Services to include facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs in the list maintained by the Health Resources and Services Administration of facilities eligible for assignment of participants in the National Health Service Corps Scholarship Program.

SEC. 4. OFFICE OF RURAL HEALTH FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN.

(a) STRATEGIC PLAN.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Rural Health of the Department of Veterans Affairs shall develop a five-year strategic plan for the Office of Rural Health.

(b) CONTENTS.—The plan required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) Specific goals for the recruitment and retention of health care personnel in rural areas, developed in conjunction with the Director of the Health Care Retention and Recruitment Office of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(2) Specific goals for ensuring the timeliness and quality of health care delivery in rural communities that are reliant on contract and fee basis care, developed in conjunction with the Director of the Office of Quality and Performance of the Department.

(3) Specific goals for the expansion and implementation of telemedicine services in rural areas, developed in conjunction with the Director of the Office of Care Coordination Services of the Department.

(4) Incremental milestones describing specific actions to be taken for the purpose of achieving the goals specified under paragraphs (1) through (3).

SEC. 5. ENHANCEMENT OF VET CENTERS TO MEET NEEDS OF VETERANS OF OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM AND OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM.

(a) VOLUNTEER COUNSELORS.—Subsection (c) of section 1712A of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking ''The Under Secretary'' and inserting ''(1) The Under Secretary'';

(2) in paragraph (1), as designated by paragraph (1), by striking '', and, in carrying'' and all that follows through ''screening activities''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

''(2) In carrying out this section, the Under Secretary may utilize the services of the following:

''(A) Paraprofessionals, individuals who are volunteers working without compensation, and individuals who are veteran-students (as described in section 3485 of this title) in initial intake and screening activities.

''(B) Eligible volunteer counselors in the provision of counseling and related mental health services.

''(3) For purposes of this subsection, an eligible volunteer counselor is an individual—

''(A) who—

''(i) provides counseling services without compensation at a center;

''(ii) is a licensed psychologist or social worker;

''(iii) has never been named in a malpractice action; and

''(iv) has never had, and has no pending, disciplinary action taken with respect to any license of the individual in any State; or

''(B) who is otherwise credentialed and privileged to perform counseling services by the Secretary.

''(4) Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of the Rural Veterans Health Care Access and Quality Act of 2009, the Secretary shall establish expedited credentialing and privileging procedures for eligible volunteer counselors for the provision of counseling and related mental health services under this section.

''(5) For each application received by the Secretary for credentialing and privileging of an eligible volunteer counselor under this subsection, the Secretary shall complete the credentialing and privileging process for such volunteer not later than 60 days after receiving such application.''.

(b) OUTREACH.—Subsection (e) of such section is amended—

(1) by striking ''The Secretary'' and inserting ''(1) The Secretary''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(2) Each center shall develop an outreach plan to ensure that the community served by the center is aware of the services offered by the center.''.

SEC. 6. TELECONSULTATION AND TELEMEDICINE.

(a) TELECONSULTATION AND TELERETINAL IMAGING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''§ 1709. Teleconsultation and teleretinal imaging

''(a) TELECONSULTATION.—(1) The Secretary shall carry out a program of teleconsultation for the provision of remote mental health and traumatic brain injury assessments in facilities of the Department that are not otherwise able to provide such assessments without contracting with third party providers or reimbursing providers through a fee basis system.

''(2) The Secretary shall, in consultation with appropriate professional societies, promulgate technical and clinical care standards for the use of teleconsultation services within facilities of the Department.

''(b) TELERETINAL IMAGING.—(1) The Secretary shall carry out a program of teleretinal imaging in each Veterans Integrated Services Network (VISN).

''(2) In each fiscal year beginning with fiscal year 2010 and ending with fiscal year 2015, the Secretary shall increase the number of patients enrolled in each teleretinal imaging program under paragraph (1) by not less than five percent from the number of patients enrolled in each respective program in the previous fiscal year.

''(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) The term 'teleconsultation' means the use by a health care specialist of telecommunications to assist another health care provider in rendering a diagnosis or treatment.

''(2) The term 'teleretinal imaging' means the use by a health care specialist of telecommunications, digital retinal imaging, and remote image interpretation to provide eye care.''.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 17 of such title is amended by inserting after the item related to section 1708 the following new item:

''1709. Teleconsultation and teleretinal imaging.''.

(b) TRAINING IN TELEMEDICINE.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall require each

Department of Veterans Affairs facility that is involved in the training of medical residents to work with each university concerned to develop an elective rotation in telemedicine for such residents.

(c) ENHANCEMENT OF VERA.—

(1) INCENTIVES FOR PROVISION OF TELECONSULTATION, TELERETINAL IMAGING, TELEMEDICINE, AND TELEHEALTH SERVICES.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall modify the Veterans Equitable Resource Allocation system to provide incentives for the utilization of teleconsultation, teleretinal imaging, telemedicine, and telehealth coordination services.

(2) INCLUSION OF TELEMEDICINE VISITS IN WORKLOAD REPORTING.—The Secretary shall modify the Veterans Equitable Resource Allocation system to require the inclusion of all telemedicine visits in the calculation of facility workload.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) The terms ''teleconsultation'' and ''teleretinal imaging'' have the meanings given such terms in section 1720G of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a).

(2) The term ''telemedicine'' means the use by a health care provider of telecommunications to assist in the diagnosis or treatment of a patient's medical condition.

(3) The term ''telehealth'' means the use of telecommunications to collect patient data remotely and send data to a monitoring station for interpretation.

SEC. 7. OVERSIGHT OF CONTRACT AND FEE BASIS CARE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 1703 the following new section:

''§ 1703A. Oversight of contract and fee basis care

''(a) CONSOLIDATION OF COMMUNITY BASED OUTPATIENT CLINIC CONTRACTING.—For each Veterans Integrated Services Network (VISN), the Secretary shall, acting through the Under Secretary for Health and to the maximum extent practicable, negotiate with each party that has contracts to provide services at more than one community based outpatient clinic in such Network to consolidate such contracts.

''(b) RURAL OUTREACH COORDINATORS.—The Secretary shall designate a rural outreach coordinator at each Department community based outpatient clinic at which not less than 50 percent of the veterans enrolled at such clinic reside in a highly rural area. The coordinator at a clinic shall be responsible for coordinating care and collaborating with community contract and fee basis providers with respect to the clinic.

''(c) INCENTIVES TO OBTAIN ACCREDITATION OF MEDICAL PRACTICE.—(1) The Secretary shall adjust the fee basis compensation of providers of health care services under the Department to encourage such providers to obtain accreditation of their medical practice from recognized accrediting entities.

''(2) In making adjustments under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall consider the increased overhead costs of accreditation described in paragraph (1) and the costs of achieving and maintaining such accreditation.

''(d) INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATION IN PEER REVIEW.—(1) The Secretary shall adjust the fee basis compensation of providers of health care services under the Department that do not provide such services as part of a medical practice accredited by a recognized accrediting entity to encourage such providers to participate in peer review under subsection (e).

''(2) The Secretary shall provide incentives under paragraph (1) to a provider of health care services under the Department in an amount equal to the amount the Secretary would provide to such provider under subsection (c) if such provider provided such services as part of a medical practice accredited by a recognized accrediting entity.

''(e) PEER REVIEW.—(1) The Secretary shall provide for the voluntary peer review of providers of health care services under the Department who provide such services on a fee basis as part of a medical practice that is not accredited by a recognized accrediting entity.

''(2) Each year, beginning with the first fiscal year beginning after the date of the enactment of this section, the Chief Quality and Performance Officer in each Veterans Integrated Services Network (VISN) shall select a sample of patient records from each participating provider in the Officer's Veterans Integrated Services Network to be peer reviewed by a facility designated under paragraph (3).

''(3) The Chief Quality and Performance Officer in each Veterans Integrated Services Network shall designate Department facilities in such network for the peer review of patient records submitted under this subsection.

''(4) Each year, beginning with the first fiscal year beginning after the date of the enactment of this section, each provider who elects to participate in the program shall submit the patient records selected under paragraph (2) to a facility selected under paragraph (3) to be peer reviewed by such facility.

''(5) Each Department facility designated under paragraph (3) that receives patient records under paragraph (4) shall—

''(A) peer review such records in accordance with policies and procedures established by the Secretary;

''(B) ensure that peer reviews are evaluated by the Peer Review Committee; and

''(C) develop a mechanism for notifying the Under Secretary for Health of problems identified through such peer review.

''(6) The Under Secretary for Health shall develop a mechanism by which the use of fee basis providers of health care are terminated when quality of care concerns are identified.

''(7) The Chief Quality and Performance Officer in each Veterans Integrated Services Network shall be responsible for the oversight of the program in that network.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 17 of such title is amended by inserting after the item related to section 1703 the following new item:

''1703A. Oversight of contract and fee basis care.''.

SEC. 8. TRAVEL BENEFITS FOR BENEFICIARIES IN REMOTE LOCATIONS.

(a) COVERAGE OF COST OF TRANSPORTATION BY AIR.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (a) of section 111 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the first sentence the following new sentence: ''Actual necessary expense of travel includes the reasonable costs of airfare if travel by air is the only practical way to reach a Department facility.''.

(2) ELIMINATION OF LIMITATION BASED ON MAXIMUM ANNUAL RATE OF PENSION.—Subsection (b)(1)(D)(i) of such section is amended by inserting ''who is not traveling by air and'' before ''whose annual''.

(3) DETERMINATION OF PRACTICALITY.—Subsection (b) of such section is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(4) In determining for purposes of subsection (a) whether travel by air is the only practical way for a veteran to reach a Department facility, the Secretary shall consider the medical condition of the veteran and any other impediments to the use of ground transportation by the veteran.''.

(b) MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT RATE FOR TRAVEL BY AIR.—Subsection (g)(1) of such section is amended by inserting after ''is available)'' the following: ''or the mileage reimbursement rate for airplanes if travel by airplane is the only practical method of travel''.

SEC. 9. PILOT PROGRAM ON INCENTIVES FOR PHYSICIANS WHO ASSUME INPATIENT RESPONSIBILITIES AT COMMUNITY HOSPITALS IN HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SHORTAGE AREAS.

(a) PILOT PROGRAM REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a pilot program to assess the feasability and advisability of each of the following:

(1) The provision of financial incentives to eligible physicians who obtain and maintain inpatient privileges at community hospitals in health professional shortage areas in order to facilitate the provision by such physicians of primary care and mental health services to veterans at such hospitals.

(2) The collection of payments from third-party providers for care provided by eligible physicians to non-veterans while discharging inpatient responsibilities at community hospitals in the course of exercising the privileges described in paragraph (1).

(b) ELIGIBLE PHYSICIANS.—For purposes of this section, an eligible physician is a primary care or mental health physician employed by the Department of Veterans Affairs on a full-time basis.

(c) DURATION OF PROGRAM.—The pilot program shall be carried out during the three-year period beginning on the date of the commencement of the pilot program.

(d) LOCATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The pilot program shall be carried out at not less than five community hospitals in each of not less than two Veterans Integrated Services Networks (VISNs). The hospitals shall be selected by the Secretary utilizing the results of the survey required under subsection (e).

(2) QUALIFYING COMMUNITY HOSPITALS.—A community hospital may be selected by the Secretary as a location for the pilot program if—

(A) the hospital is located in a health professional shortage area; and

(B) the number of eligible physicians willing to assume inpatient responsibilities at the hospital (as determined utilizing the result of the survey) is sufficient for purposes of the pilot program.

(e) SURVEY OF PHYSICIAN INTEREST IN PARTICIPATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall conduct a survey of eligible physicians to determine the extent of the interest of such physicians in participating in the pilot program.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The survey shall disclose the type, amount, and nature of the financial incentives to be provided under subsection (h) to physicians participating in the pilot program.

(f) PHYSICIAN PARTICIPATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall select physicians for participation in the pilot program from among eligible physicians who—

(A) express interest in participating in the pilot program in the survey conducted under subsection (e);

(B) are in good standing with the Department; and

(C) primarily have clinical responsibilities with the Department.

(2) VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION.—Participation in the pilot program shall be voluntary. Nothing in this section shall be construed to

require a physician working for the Department to assume inpatient responsibilities at a community hospital unless otherwise required as a term or condition of employment with the Department.

(g) ASSUMPTION OF INPATIENT PHYSICIAN RESPONSIBILITIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Each eligible physician selected for participation in the pilot program shall assume and maintain inpatient responsibilities, including inpatient responsibilities with respect to non-veterans, at one or more community hospitals selected by the Secretary for participation in the pilot program under subsection (d).

(2) COVERAGE UNDER FEDERAL TORT CLAIMS ACT.—If an eligible physician participating in the pilot program carries out on-call responsibilities at a community hospital where privileges to practice at such hospital are conditioned upon the provision of services to individuals who are not veterans while the physician is on call for such hospital, the provision of such services by the physician shall be considered an action within the scope fo the physician's office or employment for purposes of chapter 171 of title 28, United States Code (commonly referred to as the ''Federal Tort Claims Act'').

(h) COMPENSATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall provide each eligible physician participating in the pilot program with such compensation (including pay and other appropriate compensation) as the Secretary considers appropriate to compensate such physician for the discharge of any inpatient responsibilities by such physician at a community hospital for which such physician would not otherwise be compensated by the Department as a full-time employee of the Department.

(2) WRITTEN AGREEMENT.—The amount of any compensation to be provided a physician under the pilot program shall be specified in a written agreement entered into by the Secretary and the physician for purposes of the pilot program.

(3) TREATMENT OF COMPENSATION.—The Secretary shall consult with the Director of the Office of Personnel Management on the inclusion of a provision in the written agreement required under paragraph (2) that describes the treatment under Federal law of any compensation provided a physician under the pilot program, including treatment for purposes of retirement under the civil service laws.

(i) COLLECTIONS FROM THIRD PARTIES.—In carrying out the pilot program for the purpose described in subsection (a)(2), the Secretary shall implement a variety and range of requirements and mechanisms for the collection from third-party payors of amounts to reimburse the Department for health care services provided to non-veterans under the pilot program by eligible physicians discharging inpatient responsibilities under the pilot program.

(j) INPATIENT RESPONSIBILITIES DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''inpatient responsibilities'' means on-call responsibilities customarily required of a physician by community hospital as a condition of granting privileges to the physician to practice in the hospital.

(k) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act and annually thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the pilot program, including the following:

(1) The findings of the Secretary with respect to the pilot program.

(2) The number of veterans and non-veterans provided inpatient care by physicians participating in the pilot program.

(3) The amounts collected and payable under subsection (i).

(l) HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SHORTAGE AREA DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''health professional shortage area'' has the meaning given the term in section 332(a) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254e(a)).

By Mr. AKAKA (for himself and Mr. VOINOVICH):

S. 736. A bill to provide for improvements in the Federal hiring process and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, today I introduce the Federal Hiring Process Improvement Act to help agencies fix the broken recruitment and hiring process in the Federal Government. I am pleased to be joined by my good friend Senator VOINOVICH in this effort.

The Federal Government is the largest employer in the U.S., but every day talented people interested in Federal service walk away because the hiring process is longer and more complicated than that of other employers. Too many Federal agencies have built entry barriers for new workers, done too little to recruit the right candidates, and invented an evaluation process that discourages qualified candidates.

In the private sector, many employers post job vacancies through a variety of online and other venues and require only a resume and cover letter to apply. Applying to the federal government should be similarly accessible and easy. However, agencies often require substantial essays and other documentation at the initial application stage.

Agencies need to adapt, just as the private sector has, to take advantage of modern technology to boost recruitment efforts and streamline the hiring process to make it more user friendly. Inexpensive outlets such as social networking sites offer agencies an opportunity to expand their profile and post job opportunities without emptying their wallets. It is easier than it was in the past to submit and track application materials during the application process. Agencies should accept candidate-friendly applications such as resumes and cover letters for the initial application and ask for additional information only as needed. Likewise, technology makes it possible to provide automated information to candidates, so candidates should receive timely and informative feedback about the application process.

Additionally, more employees with advanced and technical skills are needed in the modern federal workforce, so more pipelines into colleges and technical schools need to be developed to recruit candidates from diverse backgrounds.

Last year, I chaired a hearing of the Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia, where witnesses testified to the need for reforms in the hiring process. The Government Accountability Office testified to the broad failures of agencies to address such problems as passive recruitment strategies, unclear job vacancy announcements, and imprecise candidate assessment tools. Witnesses testified that young people are greatly interested in Federal Government service, but agencies need to meet them where they are. Developing broader recruitment strategies, using online resources and streamlining the hiring process are essential to attracting the next generation of Federal employees.

In response to the hearing, the Office of Personnel Management, OPM, developed the End-to-End Hiring Roadmap initiative that provides agencies a streamlined 80-day model from the time a manager seeks to fill a position to the time an offer is made. This initiative addresses strategic workforce planning, targeted recruitment, clear job announcements, and hiring flexibilities. The initiative also advocates accepting resumes and cover letters over the lengthy and onerous knowledge, skills, and abilities essays, KSAs, required for many Federal jobs.

This initiative includes many positive steps, but many agencies are not adopting them. OPM does not have the authority to require agencies to do so. Congress must step in.

The Federal Hiring Process Improvement Act requires agencies to develop strategic workforce plans, including hiring projections and critical skills gaps analyses of the workforce; post brief, clear job announcements in plain writing; Allow submission of resumes and cover letters and no longer require KSAs; provide timely notification to applicants of the status of their application; take no more than 80 days from the time a manager decides to fill a vacancy to the time an offer is made; keep an inventory of all applicants who elect to be considered for other Federal vacancies; and measure the effectiveness of hiring efforts and reforms.

Agencies must make reforming the recruitment and hiring process a top priority, and this bill furthers the discussion. The Federal Hiring Process Improvement Act will require agencies to abandon their stale recruitment and hiring processes and develop streamlined hiring practices that attract high-quality candidates. The future of the Federal workforce is depending on it.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 736

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 ''Federal Hiring Process Improvement Act of 2009''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITION.

In this Act, the term ''agency''—

(1) means an Executive agency as defined under section 105 of title 5, United States Code; and

(2) shall not include the Government Accountability Office.

SEC. 3. STRATEGIC WORKFORCE PLAN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) DEVELOPMENT OF PLAN.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act and in every subsequent year, the head of each agency, in consultation with the Chief Human Capital Officers Council, shall develop a strategic workforce plan as part of the agency performance plan required under section 1115 of title 31, United States Code, to include—

(A) hiring projections, including occupation and grade level;

(B) long-term and short-term strategic human capital planning to address critical skills deficiencies;

(C) recruitment strategies to attract highly qualified candidates from diverse backgrounds; and

(D) streamlining the hiring process to conform with the provisions in this Act.

(2) INCLUSION IN PERFORMANCE PLAN.—Section 1115(a) of title 31, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in paragraph (5), by striking ''and'' after the semicolon;

(B) in paragraph (6), by striking the period and inserting ''and''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(7) include the strategic workforce plan developed under section 3 of the Federal Hiring Process Improvement Act of 2009.''.

(b) HIRING PROJECTIONS.—Agencies shall make hiring projections made under strategic workforce plans available to the public.

(c) SUBMISSION TO THE OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT.—Each agency strategic workforce plan shall be submitted to the Office of Personnel Management.

SEC. 4. FEDERAL JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENTS.

(a) TARGETED ANNOUNCEMENTS.—In consultation with the Chief Human Capital Officers Council, the head of each agency shall—

(1) take steps necessary to target highly qualified applicant pools with diverse backgrounds before posting job announcements;

(2) clearly and prominently display job announcements in strategic locations convenient to such targeted applicant pools; and

(3) seek to develop relationships with targeted applicant pools to develop regular pipelines for high-quality applicants.

(b) PUBLIC NOTICE REQUIREMENTS.—The requirements of subsection (a) shall not supersede public notice requirements.

(c) PLAIN WRITING REQUIREMENT.—

(1) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term ''plain writing'' means writing that the intended audience can readily understand and use because that writing is clear, concise, well-organized, and follows other best practices of plain writing.

(2) REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, all Federal job announcements for competitive positions shall be written in plain writing.

SEC. 5. APPLICATION PROCESS AND NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS.

(a) APPLICATION PROCESS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act and in consultation with the Chief Human Capital Officers Council, the head of each agency shall develop processes to—

(1) ensure that vacancy announcements are open for a reasonable period of time as determined by the head of the agency to allow targeted, highly qualified applicants from diverse backgrounds time to submit an application;

(2) ensure that vacancy announcements include contact information for applicants who seek further information about the announcement;

(3) review and revise the hiring process of the agency to create a streamlined and timely system for hiring decisions;

(4) allow applicants to submit a cover letter, resume, and answers to brief questions, such as questions relating to United States citizenship and veterans status, to complete an application;

(5) allow applicants to submit application materials in a variety of formats, including word processing documents and portable document format;

(6) not require any applicant to provide a Social Security number or any other personal identifying information unnecessary for the initial review of an applicant for a position;

(7) not require lengthy writing requirements such as knowledge, skills, and ability essays as part of an initial application;

(8) not require the submission of additional material in support of an application, such as educational transcript, proof of veterans status, and professional certifications, unless necessary to complete the application process;

(9) ensure that applicants are given a reasonable amount of time after the closing date of the job announcement to provide additional necessary information; and

(10) include the hiring manager in all parts of the application process, including—

(A) targeted recruitment;

(B) drafting the job announcement;

(C) review of the initial applications;

(D) interviewing the applicants; and

(E) the final decisionmaking process.

(b) NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In consultation with the Chief Human Capital Officers Council, the head of each agency shall develop mechanisms under which each applicant for a Federal job vacancy shall receive timely notification of the status of their applications or provide the applicant the ability to check on the status of their applications.

(2) CONTENTS OF NOTIFICATION.—A notification to an applicant under this subsection shall include—

(A) notice of receipt of an application not later than 5 business days after the application was received by the employing agency;

(B) an explanation of the hiring process and an estimated timeline of the next actions in the process;

(C) notice the qualification and status of an applicant after all applications for the applicable position have been initially reviewed and ranked;

(D) notice of the qualifications and status of the applicant after all interviews for the applicable position are completed;

(E) for all applicants selected for an interview, notice of the ongoing process if selected, including the process for any needed security clearance or suitability review, not later than the date of the interview; and

(F) notice to nonaccepted applicants that the applicable position is not open not later than 10 business days after the date on which—

(i) the selected candidate has accepted an offer of employment; or

(ii) the job announcement has been cancelled.

SEC. 6. APPLICANT INVENTORY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3330 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (e) and (f) as subsections (f) and (g), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (d) the following:

''(e)(1) The Office of Personnel Management shall establish and keep current a comprehensive inventory of individuals seeking employment in the Federal Government.

''(2) The inventory under this subsection shall—

''(A) be made available to agencies for use in filling vacancies;

''(B) contain information voluntarily provided by applicants for employment, including—

''(i) the resume and contact information provided by the applicant; and

''(ii) any other information which the Office considers appropriate;

''(C) retain information for no longer than 1 calendar year;

''(D) not include information relating to—

''(i) the application of the applicant for a specific vacancy announcement; or

''(ii) any other information relating to vacancy announcements; and

''(E) shall provide for a mechanism to allow—

''(i) applicants to update resume contact information; and

''(ii) agency officials to search information in the inventory by agency and job classification.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 7. TRAINING.

Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act—

(1) in consultation with the Chief Human Capital Officers Council, the Office of Personnel Management shall develop and notify agencies of a training program for human resources professionals to implement the requirements of this Act; and

(2) each agency shall develop and submit to the Office of Personnel Management a plan to implement the training program.

SEC. 8. REDUCTION IN THE LENGTH OF THE HIRING PROCESS.

(a) AGENCY PLANS.—In consultation with the Chief Human Capital Officers Council, the head of each agency shall develop a plan to reduce the length of the hiring process.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—To the extent practical, the plan shall require that each agency fill identified vacancies not later than an average of 80 calendar days after the date of identification of the vacancy.

(c) REPORTS.—Each agency shall submit an annual report to Congress on the period of time required to fill each vacancy, and whether vacancies are cancelled or reopened.

SEC. 9. MEASURES OF FEDERAL HIRING EFFECTIVENESS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Each agency shall measure and collect information on indicators of hiring effectiveness with respect to the following:

(1) RECRUITING AND HIRING.—

(A) Ability to reach and recruit well-qualified talent from diverse talent pools.

(B) Use and impact of special hiring authorities and flexibilities to recruit most qualified applicants.

(C) Use and impact of special hiring authorities and flexibilities to recruit diverse candidates, including veteran, minority, and disabled candidates.

(D) The age, educational level, and source of applicants.

(E) Length of time between the time a position is advertised and the time a first offer of employment is made.

(F) Length of time between the time a first offer of employment for a position is made and the time a new hire starts in that position.

(G) Number of internal and external applicants for Federal positions.

(2) HIRING MANAGER ASSESSMENT.—

(A) Manager satisfaction with the quality of new hires.

(B) Manager satisfaction with the match between the skills of newly hired individuals and the needs of the agency.

(C) Manager satisfaction with the hiring process and hiring outcomes.

(D) Mission-critical deficiencies closed by new hires and the connection between mission-critical deficiencies and annual agency performance.

(3) APPLICANT ASSESSMENT.—Applicant satisfaction with the hiring process (including clarity of job announcement, reasons for withdrawal of application should that apply, user-friendliness of the application process, communication regarding status of application, and timeliness of hiring decision).

(4) NEW HIRE ASSESSMENT.—

(A) New hire satisfaction with the hiring process (including clarity of job announcement, user-friendliness of the application process, communication regarding status of application, and timeliness of hiring decision).

(B) Satisfaction with the onboarding experience (including timeliness of onboarding after the hiring decision, welcoming and orientation processes, and being provided with timely and useful new employee information and assistance).

(C) New hire attrition.

(D) Investment in training and development for employees during their first year of employment.

(E) Other indicators and measures as required by the Office of Personnel Management.

(b) REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Each agency shall submit an annual report of the information collected under subsection (a) to the Office of Personnel Management.

(2) AVAILABILITY OF RECRUITING AND HIRING INFORMATION.—Each year the Office of Personnel Management shall provide the information under subsection (c)(1) in a consistent format to allow for a comparison of hiring effectiveness and experience across demographic groups and agencies to—

(A) Congress before that information is made publicly available; and

(B) the public on the website of the Office.

(c) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 180 days of the date of enactment of this Act, the Office of Personnel Management shall prescribe regulations directing the methodology, timing, and reporting of the data described in subsection (a).

SEC. 10. REGULATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided under section 9(c), not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall prescribe regulations as necessary to carry out this Act.

(b) CONSULTATION.—The Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall consult the Chief Human Capital Officers Council in the development of regulations under this section.

SEC. 11. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary for the Office of Personnel Management to carry out this Act for fiscal year 2009 and for each subsequent fiscal year.

Mr. VOINOVICH. Mr. President, I am pleased to join my good friend and partner in Federal workforce issues, Senator DANIEL K. AKAKA, to introduce the Federal Hiring Process Improvement Act of 2009.

When we discuss hiring, we discuss a process that affects every individual employed by the government today. Making the right hiring decisions affects the current workforce's ability to continue doing their jobs. It also is the same process these employees must go through when pursuing new opportunities within the Government, including promotions.

Additionally, we need to convey to the thousands of men and women at all stages of their career that the Federal Government is more than just an employer, but a place where Americans can utilize and grow their skills in service to their Nation.

As the old cliché goes, ''You never get a second chance to make a first impression.'' We need to convey to these Americans that the Federal Government wants them. If we do not, someone else will.

The Baby Boomers are retiring at a time when needs and demands on Government continue to grow. The Office of Personnel Management has identified certain areas of critical hiring importance: air traffic controllers, border patrol officers, engineers, food inspectors, human resources specialists, nurses, visa examiners, patent examiners, scientists, veterinarians, accountants, and acquisition professionals. In addition, the Partnership for Public Service has estimated the Federal Government will lose approximately 530,000 employees over the next 5 years, including many mission critical jobs.

We know the challenges confronting the Federal Government. Now we must make sure our processes result in hiring the right person, at the right place, at the right time, to get the job done.

Over and over, we hear of the problems in the Federal hiring process. It takes too long; it is too burdensome, and so forth. The quality of technology has improved, but our processes have not. This does nothing to dispel any preconceived notions that the Federal Government is nothing but a bureaucratic system.

Accordingly, Senator AKAKA and I are introducing legislation to streamline the hiring process. The Federal Hiring Process Improvement Act brings together commonsense solutions to a government-wide management challenge. Our legislation would require job announcements to be written in plain language; guarantee agencies provide feedback to applicants at a minimum of four key points during the process; and ensure individual hiring decisions are made within 80 days or less. In addition, our legislation would require agencies to improve their workforce planning and make hiring projections available to the public.

Too often, we have heard that processes exist for what I believe to be unacceptable reasons, such as, that is how it always has been done. But to be an employer of choice, the government must understand what the competition is doing and adapt to the changing environment. This legislation is an important first step in meeting that goal.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. UDALL of Colorado):

S. 737. A bill to amend the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 to authorize the Secretary of Energy to conduct research, development, and demonstration to make biofuels more compatible with small nonroad engines, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, today I, along with Senator UDALL of Colorado, am introducing legislation that would amend the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 to expand on a research, development, and demonstration program, authorized in that bill, to include efforts to make biofuels more compatible with small non-road engines.

The Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007, directed the Secretary of the Department of Energy, DOE, in coordination with the Secretary of the Department of Transportation, DOT, and in consultation with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, EPA, to carry out a program of research and development regarding the impact that biofuels, like ethanol, may have on existing fuel storage and delivery infrastructure used for petroleum-based fuels. It is critical that these biofuels also are safe to use in operating small non-road engines. My bill requires these agencies to expand their research program to include small engines such as those in snowmobiles, boats, lawnmowers, and chainsaws.

Previous testing done through DOE shows that increased ethanol content in smaller engines creates a leaner burning mixture, which may increase idle speed on some small engines, creating unanticipated clutch engagement on equipment such as chainsaws and handheld trimmers. Also, ethanol is more corrosive and less efficient than traditional gasoline blends. During these difficult economic times, equipment damage due to ethanol-gasoline fuel blends only adds to the many challenges facing Maine's farmers, fishermen, independent woodsmen, and recreational industry.

As we pursue strategies to lessen our dependence on foreign oil, we must also take action to ensure that ethanol fuel blends are safe and efficient for small engines. I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 737

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

SECTION 1. BIOFUELS DISTRIBUTION AND ADVANCED BIOFUELS INFRASTRUCTURE.

Section 248 of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17054) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''and new alternative distribution infrastructure'' and inserting '', new alternative distribution infrastructure, and effects on small engines''; and

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (8), by striking ''and'' after the semicolon at the end;

(B) by redesignating paragraph (9) as paragraph (10); and

(C) by inserting after paragraph (8) the following:

''(9) problems associated with the use of biofuels in small nonroad engines; and''.

By Mr. SPECTER:

S. 740. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand the homebuyer tax credit, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I have sought recognition to introduce legislation to further expand the home buyer tax credit.

A robust home buyer tax credit will spur consumer demand and help to stop the fall in home values, which continues to affect millions of Americans. This decline is destroying the savings and net worth of Americans, whose homes are their most valuable asset. Many now have mortgages that exceed the value of their homes.

The Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 created a tax credit for first-time home buyers of $7,500 through June of 2009. However, taxpayers were required to repay the tax credit in equal installments over 15 years, which greatly reduced its effectiveness. The 2009 Stimulus bill waived the repayment requirement for purchases made in 2009, increased the value of the credit to $8,000, and extended eligibility for purchases made through November of 2009.

Further improvements are necessary, in my judgment, to bring about a recovery in the housing market that will ultimately contribute to the turnaround of the broader economy. First, this bill would amend the Stimulus bill and raise the value to $15,000, or 10 percent of the value of the home, whichever is less.

Second, this bill would make the home buyer tax credit available to any individual who purchases a home, not just first-time home buyers. Doing so would stimulate demand for the entire range of homes on the market.

Finally, this bill would remove the income eligibility threshold. Again, doing so would stimulate demand for the entire range of homes on the market. Currently, the credit is reduced for individuals with modified adjusted gross income, AGI, of more than $75,000, $150,000 for joint filers, and is zero for those individuals with modified AGI in excess of $95,000, $170,000 for joint filers.

The need for a robust home buyer tax credit is clear. According to the National Association of Realtors, pending home sales hit a record low in January 2009. The Pending Home Sales Index, which measures the number of sales contracts signed each month, fell 7.7 percent to 80.4, the lowest mark since 2001 when tracking began.

At the same time, the housing affordability index rose 13.6 percentage points to a record high of 166.8. A value of 100 means that a family with the country's median income has exactly enough income to qualify for a mortgage on a median-priced existing single-family home. The higher the index, the better housing affordability is for buyers.

These two figures, taken together, demonstrate that a robust home buyer tax credit is needed to spur demand from Americans that are hesitant to buy homes for fear that prices will not stabilize.

Recent reports indicate a 13-month supply of unsold new homes, compared with a 4-month supply under more normal circumstances. Add to that a continually increasing number of foreclosed homes. According to the RealtyTrac 2008 Year-End Foreclosure Market Report, a total of 3.2 million foreclosure filings—default notices, auction sale notices and bank repossessions—were reported on 2.3 million U.S. properties during 2008, an 81 percent increase in total properties from 2007 and a 225 percent increase in total properties from 2006.

Jobs across all industries have been lost as a result of the housing crisis. According to a March 2, 2009, op-ed in the Washington Post by Robert J. Samuelson, ''Since late 2007, housing-related jobs—carpenters, real estate agents, appraisers—have dropped by 1 million, a quarter of all lost jobs.''

I applaud the efforts of Senator JOHNNY ISAKSON, who has been the leader on this issue in the Senate. I cosponsored his legislation in the 110th Congress to create a home buyer tax credit. In the 111th Congress, I supported his amendment to the Stimulus bill to make improvements to the credit and I have decided to join him as a cosponsor of S. 253, which seeks to make further improvements.

The bill I am introducing is different from S. 253 in three main ways. First, my bill would improve the home buyer credit using the 2009 Stimulus bill as a starting point. Second, my bill would increase the value of the credit to $15,000, or 10 percent of the home value, whichever is less, whereas S. 253 would increase the credit amount to 10 percent of the home price capped at 3.5 percent of Federal Housing Administration loan limits. These limits are geographically dependent and would yield a credit ranging between approximately $10,000 and $22,000. Finally, my bill would remove income limitations on the credit, whereas S. 253 limits the credit for individuals earning up to $125,000, or $250,000 in the case of a joint return.

I believe it is important for both bills to be pending so that additional ideas can be debated. To that end, I look forward to working with Senator ISAKSON to build consensus and support for further improvements. As long as forecasts predict that home prices are falling and that the economy will remain weak, a large fraction of potential homebuyers may choose to remain on the sidelines without a robust tax credit in place.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, or the legislation introduced by Senator ISAKSON, to make further improvements to the home buyer tax credit.

By Mr. SPECTER

S. 741. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to impose a flat tax only on individual taxable earned income and business taxable income, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, American taxpayers face another Federal income tax deadline. The date of April 15 stabs fear, anxiety, and unease into the hearts of millions of Americans. Every year during ''tax season,'' millions of Americans spend their evenings pouring over page after page of IRS instructions, going through their records looking for information and struggling to find and fill out all the appropriate forms on their Federal tax returns. Americans are intimidated by the sheer number of different tax forms and their instructions, many of which they may be unsure whether they need to file. Given the approximately 582 possible forms, not to mention the instructions that accompany them, simply trying to determine which form to file can in itself be a daunting and overwhelming task. According to the 2008 annual report to Congress, released on January 7, 2009 by the National Taxpayer Advocate for the IRS, U.S. taxpayers and businesses spend about 7.6 billion hours a year complying with the filing requirements of the Internal Revenue Code. This figure does not include the millions of additional hours that taxpayers must spend when they are required to respond to an IRS notice or audit. Much of this time is spent burrowing through IRS laws and regulations which fill over 17,000 pages and have grown from 744,000 words in 1955 to 7.1 million words in 2005. By contrast, the Pledge of Allegiance has only 31 words, the Gettysburg Address has 267 words, the Declaration of Independence has about 1,300 words, and the Bible has only about 1,773,000 words.

The majority of taxpayers still face filing tax forms that are far too complicated and take far too long to complete. According to the IRS's most available data, the average time burden for all taxpayers filing a 1040, 1040A, or 1040EZ in 2006 was 26.4 hours, with an average cost of $207 per return. Taxpayers filing 1040 forms had an average burden of approximately 34 hours. Moreover, this complexity is getting worse each year. According to the estimated preparation time listed on the forms by the IRS, the 1999 Form 1040 was estimated to take 12 hours and 51 minutes to complete. Thus, the time it now takes to fill out these tax forms has more than doubled over an eight year period.

It is no wonder that more than 80 percent of individual taxpayers pay transaction fees to help file tax returns. Well over half of all taxpayers, 61 percent according to a recent survey, now hire an outside professional to prepare their tax returns for them. However, the fact that only about 35 percent of individuals itemize their deductions shows that a significant percentage of our taxpaying population believes that the tax system is too

complex for them to deal with. We all understand that paying taxes will never be something we enjoy, but neither should it be cruel and unusual punishment. Further, the pace of change to the Internal Revenue Code is brisk. Since the beginning of 2001, there have been more than 3,250 changes to the tax code, an average of more than one a day, including more than 500 changes in 2008 alone. And we are far from being finished. Year after year, we continue to ask the same question—isn't there a better way?

My flat tax legislation would make filing a tax return a manageable chore, not a seemingly endless nightmare, for most taxpayers. My flat tax legislation will fundamentally revise the present tax code, with its myriad rates, deductions, and instructions. This legislation would institute a simple, flat 20 percent tax rate for all individuals and businesses. This proposal is not cast in stone, but is intended to move the debate forward by focusing attention on three key principles which are critical to an effective and equitable taxation system: simplicity, fairness, and economic growth.

My flat tax plan would eliminate the kinds of frustrations I have outlined above for millions of taxpayers. This flat tax would enable us to scrap the great majority of the IRS rules, regulations and instructions and delete most of the 7.1 million words in the Internal Revenue Code. Instead of billions of hours of non-productive time spent in compliance with, or avoidance of, the tax code, taxpayers would spend only the small amount of time necessary to fill out a postcard-sized form. Both business and individual taxpayers would thus find valuable hours freed up to engage in productive business activity or for more time with their families, instead of pouring over tax tables, schedules, and regulations.

My flat tax proposal is dramatic, but so are its advantages: a taxation system that is simple, fair, and designed to maximize prosperity for all Americans. A summary of the key advantages are:

A 10-line postcard filing would replace the myriad forms and attachments currently required, thus saving Americans up to 7.6 billion hours they currently spend every year in tax compliance.

The flat tax would eliminate the lion's share of IRS rules, regulations and requirements, which have grown from 744,000 words in 1955 to 7.1 million words currently. It would also allow us to slash the mammoth IRS bureaucracy of approximately 87,000 employees, creating opportunities to put their expertise to use elsewhere in the government or in private industry.

Economists estimate a growth due to a flat tax of over $2 trillion in national wealth over 7 years, representing an increase of approximately $7,500 in personal wealth for every man, woman and child in America. This growth would also lead to the creation of 6 million new jobs.

Investment decisions would be made on the basis of productivity rather than simply for tax avoidance, thus leading to even greater economic expansion.

Economic forecasts indicate that interest rates would fall substantially, by as much as two points, as the flat tax removes many of the current disincentives to savings.

Americans would be able to save or invest the $265 billion they currently spend every year in tax compliance.

As tax loopholes are eliminated and the tax code is simplified, there will be far less opportunity for tax avoidance and fraud. Currently, the IRS is estimating a tax gap of $300 billion a year.

Simplification of the tax code will allow us to save significantly on the $10 billion annual budget currently allocated to the Internal Revenue Service.

The most dramatic way to illustrate the flat tax is to consider that the income tax form for the flat tax is printed on a postcard—it will allow all taxpayers to file their April 15 tax returns on a simple 10-line postcard. This postcard will take 15 minutes to fill out..

This is a win-win situation for America because it lowers the tax burden on the taxpayers in the lower brackets. For example in the 2006 tax year, the standard deduction is $5,150 for a single taxpayer, $7,550 for a head of household and $10,300 for a married couple filing jointly, while the personal exemption for individuals and dependents is $3,300. Thus, under the current tax code, a family of four which does not itemize deductions would pay taxes on all income over $23,500—that is personal exemptions of $13,200 and a standard deduction of $10,300. By contrast, under my flat tax bill, that same family would receive a personal exemption of $30,000, and would pay tax on income over that amount.

The tax loopholes enable write-offs of some $393 billion a year. What is eliminated under the flat tax are the loopholes, the deductions in this complicated code which can be deciphered, interpreted, and found really only by the $500-an-hour lawyers. That money is lost to the taxpayers. $120 billion would be saved by the elimination of fraud because of the simplicity of the Tax Code, the taxpayer being able to find out exactly what they owe.

This bill is modeled after a proposal organized and written by two very distinguished law professors from Stanford University, Professor Hall and Professor Rabushka. Their model was first introduced in the Congress in the fall of 1994 by Majority Leader Richard Armey. I introduced the flat tax bill—the first one in the Senate—on March 2, 1995, Senate bill 488. On October 27, 1995, I introduced a Sense of the Senate Resolution calling on my colleagues to expedite Congressional adoption of a flat tax. The Resolution, which was introduced as an amendment to pending legislation, was not adopted. I reintroduced my legislation in the 105th Congress with slight modifications to reflect inflation-adjusted increases in the personal allowances and dependent allowances. I re-reintroduced the bill on April 15, 1999, Tax Day, in a bill denominated as S. 822. I then introduced my flat tax legislation as an amendment to S. 1429, the Tax Reconciliation bill; the amendment was not adopted. During the 108th Congress, I introduced my flat tax legislation once again on April 11, 2003. On May 14, 2003, I offered an amendment to the Tax Reconciliation legislation urging the Senate to hold hearings and consider legislation providing for a flat tax; this amendment passed by a vote of 70 to 30 on May 15, 2003. I then testified on this issue at a subsequent hearing held by the Joint Economic Committee on November 5, 2003. On April 15, 2005 and again on April 10, 2007, I again reintroduced my flat tax legislation in a bill denominated as S. 812 and S. 1081 respectively.

Over the years and prior to my legislative efforts on behalf of flat tax reform, I have devoted considerable time and attention to analyzing our nation's tax code and the policies which underlie it. I began the study of the complexities of the tax code over 40 years ago as a law student at Yale University. I included some tax law as part of my practice in my early years as an attorney in Philadelphia. In the spring of 1962, I published a law review article in the Villanova Law Review, ''Pension and Profit Sharing Plans: Coverage and Operation for Closely Held Corporations and Professional Associations,'' 7 Villanova L. Rev. 335, which in part focused on the inequity in making tax-exempt retirement benefits available to some kinds of businesses but not others. It was apparent then, as it is now, that the very complexities of the Internal Revenue Code could be used to give unfair advantage to some. Einstein himself is quoted as saying ''the hardest thing in the world to understand is the income tax.''

The Hall-Rabushka model envisioned a flat tax with no deductions whatsoever. After considerable reflection, I decided to include in the legislation limited deductions for home mortgage interest for up to $100,000 in borrowing and charitable contributions up to $2,500. While these modifications undercut the pure principle of the flat tax by continuing the use of tax policy to promote home buying and charitable contributions, I believe that those two deductions are so deeply ingrained in the financial planning of American families that they should be retained as a matter of fairness and public policy—and also political practicality. With those two deductions maintained, passage of a modified flat tax will be difficult, but without them, probably impossible.

In my judgment, an indispensable prerequisite to enactment of a modified flat tax is revenue neutrality. Professor Hall advised that the revenue neutrality of the Hall-Rabushka proposal, which uses a 19 percent rate, is

based on a well-documented model founded on reliable governmental statistics. My legislation raises that rate from 19 percent to 20 percent to accommodate retaining limited home mortgage interest and charitable deductions.

This proposal taxes business revenues fully at their source, so that there is no personal taxation on interest, dividends, capital gains, gifts or estates. Restructured in this way, the tax code can become a powerful incentive for savings and investment—which translates into economic growth and expansion, more and better jobs, and raising the standard of living for all Americans.

The key advantages of this flat tax plan are threefold: First, it will dramatically simplify the payment of taxes. Second, it will remove much of the IRS regulatory morass now imposed on individual and corporate taxpayers, and allow those taxpayers to devote more of their energies to productive pursuits. Third, since it is a plan which rewards savings and investment, the flat tax will spur economic growth in all sectors of the economy as more money flows into investments and savings accounts.

Professors Hall and Rabushka have projected that within seven years of enactment, this type of a flat tax would produce a 6 percent increase in output from increased total work in the U.S. economy and increased capital formation. The economic growth would mean a $7,500 increase in the personal income of all Americans. No one likes to pay taxes. But Americans will be much more willing to pay their taxes under a system that they believe is fair, a system that they can understand, and a system that they recognize promotes rather than prevents growth and prosperity. My flat tax legislation will afford Americans such a tax system.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a copy of my flat tax postcard, a variety of specific cases that illustrate the fairness and simplicity of this flat tax, and an example flat tax table be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be placed in the RECORD, as follows:

2008 INDIVIDUAL TAX RETURN

ARLEN SPECTER FLAT TAX

Form 1—Individual Wage Tax—2008

Your full name with initial (if joint return, also give spouse's name and initial)	Your social security number
Home address (number and street including apartment number or rural route)	Spouse's social security number
City, town, or post office, state, and ZIP code	
1. Wages, salary, pension and retirement benefits	1_____
2. Personal allowance (enter only one) —$25,000 for married filing jointly —$12,500 for single —$18,750 for single head of household	2_____
3. Number of dependents, not including spouse, multiplied by $6,250	3_____
4. Mortgage interest on debt up to $125,000 for owner-occupied home	4_____
5. Cash or equivalent charitable contributions (up to $3,125)	5_____
6. Total allowances and deductions (lines 2, 3, 4 and 5)	6_____
7. Taxable compensation (line 1 less line 6, if positive; otherwise zero)	7_____
8. Tax (20% of line 7)	8_____
9. Tax withheld by employer	9_____
10. Tax or refund due (difference between lines 8 and 9)	10_____

A variety of specific cases illustrate the fairness and simplicity of this flat tax:

CASE #1—Married couple with two children, rents home, yearly income $35,000:

Under Current Law:	
Income	$35,000
Four personal exemptions	$14,000
Standard deduction	10,900
Taxable income	10,100
Child Tax Credit	1,000
Tax due under current rates	$10
Marginal rate	10.0%
Effective tax rate	.03%
Under Flat Tax:	
Personal allowance	$25,000
Two dependents	$12,500
Taxable income	$0
Tax due under flat tax	[1] $0
Effective tax rate	0%

[1] Decrease of $10

Case #2—Single individual, rents home, yearly income $50,000.

Under Current Law:	
Income	$50,000
One personal exemption	$3,500
Standard deduction	5,450
Taxable income	$41,050
Tax due under current rate	$6,606.25
Marginal rate	25.0%
Effective rate	13.2%
Under Flat Tax:	
Personal allowance	$12,500
Taxable income	$37,500
Tax due under flat tax	[1] $7,500
Effective rate	15.0%

[1] Increase of $893.75

CASE #3—Married couple with no children, $150,000 mortgage at 9%, yearly income $75,000:

Under Current Law:	
Income	$75,000
Two personal exemptions	$7,000
Home mortgage deduction	$13,500
State & local taxes	$3,000
Charitable deduction	$1,500
Taxable income	$50,000
Tax due under current rates	$6,697.50
Marginal rate	15.00%
Effective tax rate	8.93%
Under Flat Tax:	
Personal allowance	$25,000
Home mortgage deduction	$11,250
Charitable deduction	$1,500
Taxable income	$37,250
Tax due under flat tax	$7,450
Effective tax rate	9.93%

[1] Increase of $752.50

CASE #4—Married couple with three children, $250,000 mortgage at 9%, yearly income $125,000:

Under Current Law:	
Income	$125,000
Five personal exemptions	$17,500
Home mortgage deduction	$22,500
State & local taxes	$5,000
Retirement fund deductions	$6,000
Charitable deductions	$2,500
Taxable income	$71,500
Child Tax Credit	$2,250
Tax due under current rates	$8,312.50
Marginal rate	25.00%
Effective tax rate	6.65%
Under Flat Tax:	
Personal allowance	$25,000
Three dependents	$18,750
Home mortgage deduction	$11,250
Charitable deduction	$2,500
Taxable income	$67,500
Tax due under flat tax	$13,500
Effective tax rate	10.8%

[1] Increase of $5,187.50***

ANNUAL TAXES UNDER 20% FLAT TAX FOR MARRIED COUPLE WITH TWO CHILDREN FILING JOINTLY

Income	Home mortgage	Deductible mtg interest	Charitable contribution	Personal allowance (w/ children	Taxable income	Effective tax rate (percent)	Taxes owed
$30,000					0	0	None
30,000	$60,000	$5,400	$600	$30,000	0	0	None
40,000	80,000	7,200	800	30,000	$2,000	1	$400
50,000	100,000	9,000	1,000	30,000	10,000	4	2,000
60,000	120,000	9,000	1,200	30,000	19,800	6.6	3,960
70,000	140,000	9,000	1,400	30,000	29,600	8.6	5,920
80,000	160,000	9,000	1,600	30,000	39,400	9.9	7,880
90,000	180,000	9,000	1,800	30,000	49,200	10.9	9,840
100,000	200,000	9,000	2,000	30,000	59,000	11.8	11,800
125,000	250,000	9,000	2,500	30,000	83,500	13.4	16,700
150,000	300,000	9,000	2,500	30,000	108,500	14.5	21,700
200,000	400,000	9,000	2,500	30,000	158,500	15.9	31,700
250,000	500,000	9,000	2,500	30,000	208,500	16.7	41,700
500,000	1,000,000	9,000	2,500	30,000	458,500	18.3	91,700

ANNUAL TAXES UNDER 20% FLAT TAX FOR MARRIED COUPLE WITH TWO CHILDREN FILING JOINTLY—Continued

Income	Home mortgage	Deductible mtg interest	Charitable contribution	Personal allowance (w/ children	Taxable income	Effective tax rate (percent)	Taxes owed
1,000,000	2,000,000	9,000	2,500	30,000	958,500	19.2	191,700

*Assumes home mortgage of twice annual income at a rate of 9% and charitable contributions up to 2% of annual income.

By Mr. UDALL, of New Mexico:

S. 743. A bill to require air carriers to provide training for flight attendants and gate attendants regarding serving alcohol, recognizing intoxicated passengers, and dealing with disruptive passengers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the Airline Personnel Training Enhancement Act of 2009 and to ask for Senators' support for this important measure to improve safety in the air and on the ground.

The story of this legislation begins with a tragedy. On November 11, 2006, Paul and Renee Gonzales were driving back from a soccer tournament with four of their daughters. They were roughly 1 hour from their home in Las Vegas, NM, when they saw Dana Papst's vehicle. Papst had been driving on the wrong side of I–25 for about 5 miles before his car collided with the Gonzales's minivan at 60 to 75 miles per hour. Five of the six members of the Gonzales family were killed. Papst later died at the hospital.

I cannot say for certain whether this tragedy could have been prevented by a change in laws. But I do know this: A few hours before Dana Papst took six lives, including his own, he was flying back to Albuquerque after a business trip. On that flight, he was noticeably intoxicated. Yet he was served alcohol by airline personnel. When his truck collided with the Gonzales's minivan, his blood-alcohol level was four times the legal limit.

When I heard about Dana Papst and the Gonzales family, I began to look for legislation that could prevent tragedies like this in the future. I learned that under existing law, Papst should not have been served alcohol on his flight. In fact, somebody as drunk as Papst never should have been allowed on that flight. But airlines are not required to teach their personnel how to handle an intoxicated passenger.

To address this problem, I introduced the Airline Personnel Training Enhancement Act in the other body during the last Congress. I am introducing it again today.

This legislation requires air carriers to train their employees on recognizing and dealing with drunk or disruptive passengers. This training will help employees make informed decisions when allowing people to board flights, when deciding whether a passenger should be served alcohol, and when dealing with belligerent passengers. Many States require people who serve alcohol in restaurants and bars to be properly trained. This legislation simply closes a large and potentially deadly loophole. I hope it will lead to fewer deaths on our roads.

New Mexico, like so many other States, has too many crosses on its highways, too many stories of loss and regret. Drunk driving claimed 155 New Mexico lives the year Paul and Renee Gonzales were killed. It claimed 188 the year before, and 211 the year before that. We have the power to help reduce these numbers. I hope we will use it.

But my legislation is not just about drunk driving. As I began to study the training of airline personnel, I discovered a large and frightening threat to the traveling public. Outbursts by belligerent passengers are more and more common. But airline personnel are rarely trained on how to handle these situations.

Incidents of ''air rage'' increased 400 percent since 2000. There are an estimated 10,000 cases each year in the United States alone. Airline security experts estimate that alcohol is the underlying cause of the majority of incidents. These incidents can pose a serious threat to passengers and personnel. In some cases, flights have been diverted from their destination in order to land where threatening passengers could be arrested.

Airline personnel are on the front line for ensuring flight safety. Gate attendants are in the best position to keep drunk or belligerent passengers off flights. Today, flight attendants are often the only personnel capable of maintaining order in a plane's cabin.

Before 9/11, a flight's captain or copilot would leave the cockpit to assist the flight crew when a passenger made threats or became abusive. Today, the cockpit door is locked for safety. Flight attendants have more responsibility for keeping passengers safe.

Unfortunately, airlines do not have to give their employees the skills to meet their responsibilities. One study found that ''the lack of attention paid by the aviation community to the importance of the flight attendant's role in a commercial flight has led to recurring instances of abuse of cabin crew by passengers and the inability of the cabin crew to restrain violent passenger[s]. . . .''

The Airline Personnel Training Enhancement Act will help remedy this unsafe and unacceptable situation. This legislation is supported by the Association of Flight Attendants and Mothers Against Drunk Driving. It is also a commonsense response to a serious problem. It will make our skies and our roads safer. I hope Senators will support it.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS DURING ADJOURNMENT OF THE SENATE

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 13—SETTING FORTH THE CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET FOR THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2010, REVISING THE APPROPRIATE BUDGETARY LEVELS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2009, AND SETTING FORTH THE APPROPRIATE BUDGETARY LEVELS FOR FISCAL YEARS 2011 THROUGH 2014

Mr. CONRAD from the Committee on the Budget; submitted the following concurrent resolution, which was placed on the calendar:

S. CON. RES. 13

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring),

SECTION 1. CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2010.

(a) DECLARATION.—Congress declares that this resolution is the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2010 and that this resolution sets forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2009 and 2011 through 2014.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this concurrent resolution is as follows:

Sec. 1. Concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2010.

TITLE I—RECOMMENDED LEVELS AND AMOUNTS

Sec. 101. Recommended levels and amounts.
Sec. 102. Social Security.
Sec. 103. Postal Service discretionary administrative expenses.
Sec. 104. Major functional categories.

TITLE II—RESERVE FUNDS

Sec. 201. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to transform and modernize America's health care system.
Sec. 202. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to invest in clean energy and preserve the environment.
Sec. 203. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for higher education.
Sec. 204. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for child nutrition and WIC.
Sec. 205. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for investments in America's infrastructure.
Sec. 206. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to promote economic stabilization and growth.
Sec. 207. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for America's veterans and wounded servicemembers.
Sec. 208. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for judicial pay and judgeships and postal retiree assistance.
Sec. 209. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for defense acquisition and contracting reform.
Sec. 210. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for investments in our Nation's counties and schools.
Sec. 211. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for the Food and Drug Administration.
Sec. 212. Deficit neutral reserve fund for bipartisan congressional sunset commission.

Sec. 213. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to improve domestic fuels security.
Sec. 214. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for a comprehensive investigation into the current financial crisis.
Sec. 215. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for increased transparency at the Federal Reserve.
TITLE III—BUDGET PROCESS
Subtitle A—Budget Enforcement
Sec. 301. Discretionary spending limits, program integrity initiatives, and other adjustments.
Sec. 302. Point of order against advance appropriations.
Sec. 303. Emergency legislation.
Sec. 304. Point of order against legislation increasing short-term deficit.
Sec. 305. Point of order against provisions of appropriations legislation that constitute changes in mandatory programs affecting the Crime Victims Fund.
Subtitle B—Other Provisions
Sec. 311. Oversight of government performance.
Sec. 312. Budgetary treatment of certain discretionary administrative expenses.
Sec. 313. Application and effect of changes in allocations and aggregates.
Sec. 314. Adjustments to reflect changes in concepts and definitions.
Sec. 315. Debt disclosure requirement.
Sec. 316. Debt disclosures.
Sec. 317. Exercise of rulemaking powers.

TITLE I—RECOMMENDED LEVELS AND AMOUNTS

SEC. 101. RECOMMENDED LEVELS AND AMOUNTS.

The following budgetary levels are appropriate for each of fiscal years 2009 through 2014:

(1) FEDERAL REVENUES.—For purposes of the enforcement of this resolution:

(A) The recommended levels of Federal revenues are as follows:

Fiscal year 2009: $1,506,196,000,000.
Fiscal year 2010: $1,620,072,000,000.
Fiscal year 2011: $1,918,926,000,000.
Fiscal year 2012: $2,123,586,000,000.
Fiscal year 2013: $2,286,601,000,000.
Fiscal year 2014: $2,489,829,000,000.

(B) The amounts by which the aggregate levels of Federal revenues should be changed are as follows:

Fiscal year 2009: –$26,374,000,000.
Fiscal year 2010: –$45,914,000,000.
Fiscal year 2011: –$169,705,000,000.
Fiscal year 2012: –$236,806,000,000.
Fiscal year 2013: –$228,736,000,000.
Fiscal year 2014: –$143,829,000,000.

(2) NEW BUDGET AUTHORITY.—For purposes of the enforcement of this resolution, the appropriate levels of total new budget authority are as follows:

Fiscal year 2009: $3,668,049,000,000.
Fiscal year 2010: $2,853,966,000,000.
Fiscal year 2011: $2,799,858,000,000.
Fiscal year 2012: $2,812,313,000,000.
Fiscal year 2013: $2,990,082,000,000.
Fiscal year 2014: $3,164,644,000,000.

(3) BUDGET OUTLAYS.—For purposes of the enforcement of this resolution, the appropriate levels of total budget outlays are as follows:

Fiscal year 2009: $3,355,533,000,000.
Fiscal year 2010: $2,981,026,000,000.
Fiscal year 2011: $2,937,215,000,000.
Fiscal year 2012: $2,856,956,000,000.
Fiscal year 2013: $3,003,162,000,000.
Fiscal year 2014: $3,152,972,000,000.

(4) DEFICITS.—For purposes of the enforcement of this resolution, the amounts of the deficits are as follows:

Fiscal year 2009: $1,849,337,000,000.
Fiscal year 2010: $1,360,954,000,000.
Fiscal year 2011: $1,018,289,000,000.
Fiscal year 2012: $733,370,000,000.
Fiscal year 2013: $716,560,000,000.
Fiscal year 2014: $663,142,000,000.

(5) PUBLIC DEBT.—Pursuant to section 301(a)(5) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the appropriate levels of the public debt are as follows:

Fiscal year 2009: $12,067,919,000,000.
Fiscal year 2010: $13,298,235,000,000.
Fiscal year 2011: $14,394,517,000,000.
Fiscal year 2012: $15,303,842,000,000.
Fiscal year 2013: $16,175,508,000,000.
Fiscal year 2014: $17,022,970,000,000.

(6) DEBT HELD BY THE PUBLIC.—The appropriate levels of debt held by the public are as follows:

Fiscal year 2009: $7,754,355,000,000.
Fiscal year 2010: $8,817,043,000,000.
Fiscal year 2011: $9,702,393,000,000.
Fiscal year 2012: $10,345,439,000,000.
Fiscal year 2013: $10,919,379,000,000.
Fiscal year 2014: $11,471,742,000,000.

SEC. 102. SOCIAL SECURITY.

(a) SOCIAL SECURITY REVENUES.—For purposes of Senate enforcement under sections 302 and 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the amounts of revenues of the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund are as follows:

Fiscal year 2009: $653,117,000,000.
Fiscal year 2010: $668,208,000,000.
Fiscal year 2011: $694,864,000,000.
Fiscal year 2012: $726,045,000,000.
Fiscal year 2013: $766,065,000,000.
Fiscal year 2014: $802,166,000,000.

(b) SOCIAL SECURITY OUTLAYS.—For purposes of Senate enforcement under sections 302 and 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the amounts of outlays of the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund are as follows:

Fiscal year 2009: $513,029,000,000.
Fiscal year 2010: $544,140,000,000.
Fiscal year 2011: $564,523,000,000.
Fiscal year 2012: $586,897,000,000.
Fiscal year 2013: $612,017,000,000.
Fiscal year 2014: $639,054,000,000.

(c) SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—In the Senate, the amounts of new budget authority and budget outlays of the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund for administrative expenses are as follows:

Fiscal year 2009:
(A) New budget authority, $5,296,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $4,945,000,000.
Fiscal year 2010:
(A) New budget authority, $6,072,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $5,934,000,000.
Fiscal year 2011:
(A) New budget authority, $6,568,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $6,433,000,000.
Fiscal year 2012:
(A) New budget authority, $6,895,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $6,809,000,000.
Fiscal year 2013:
(A) New budget authority, $7,223,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $7,148,000,000.
Fiscal year 2014:
(A) New budget authority, $7,599,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $7,517,000,000.

SEC. 103. POSTAL SERVICE DISCRETIONARY ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.

In the Senate, the amounts of new budget authority and budget outlays of the Postal Service for discretionary administrative expenses are as follows:

Fiscal year 2009:
(A) New budget authority, $253,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $253,000,000.
Fiscal year 2010:
(A) New budget authority, $262,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $262,000,000.
Fiscal year 2011:
(A) New budget authority, $267,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $267,000,000.
Fiscal year 2012:
(A) New budget authority, $272,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $272,000,000.
Fiscal year 2013:
(A) New budget authority, $277,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $277,000,000.
Fiscal year 2014:
(A) New budget authority, $283,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $283,000,000.

SEC. 104. MAJOR FUNCTIONAL CATEGORIES.

Congress determines and declares that the appropriate levels of new budget authority and outlays for fiscal years 2009 through 2014 for each major functional category are:

(1) National Defense (050):
Fiscal year 2009:
(A) New budget authority, $693,557,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $671,725,000,000.
Fiscal year 2010:
(A) New budget authority, $691,703,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $695,628,000,000.
Fiscal year 2011:
(A) New budget authority, $619,767,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $662,705,000,000.
Fiscal year 2012:
(A) New budget authority, $628,785,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $642,223,000,000.
Fiscal year 2013:
(A) New budget authority, $639,535,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $641,425,000,000.
Fiscal year 2014:
(A) New budget authority, $653,458,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $646,834,000,000.

(2) International Affairs (150):
Fiscal year 2009:
(A) New budget authority, $55,333,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $38,011,000,000.
Fiscal year 2010:
(A) New budget authority, $46,670,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $46,960,000,000.
Fiscal year 2011:
(A) New budget authority, $48,192,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $49,936,000,000.
Fiscal year 2012:
(A) New budget authority, $50,429,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $51,181,000,000.
Fiscal year 2013:
(A) New budget authority, $53,332,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $52,292,000,000.
Fiscal year 2014:
(A) New budget authority, $55,996,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $53,111,000,000.

(3) General Science, Space, and Technology (250):
Fiscal year 2009:
(A) New budget authority, $35,389,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $30,973,000,000.
Fiscal year 2010:
(A) New budget authority, $31,139,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $32,467,000,000.
Fiscal year 2011:
(A) New budget authority, $33,993,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $33,032,000,000.
Fiscal year 2012:
(A) New budget authority, $35,008,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $33,749,000,000.
Fiscal year 2013:
(A) New budget authority, $35,557,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $34,971,000,000.
Fiscal year 2014:
(A) New budget authority, $36,211,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $36,066,000,000.

(4) Energy (270):
Fiscal year 2009:
(A) New budget authority, $43,919,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $2,952,000,000.
Fiscal year 2010:
(A) New budget authority, $4,489,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $6,210,000,000.
Fiscal year 2011:
(A) New budget authority, $4,404,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $8,906,000,000.

Fiscal year 2012:
(A) New budget authority, $4,427,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $10,341,000,000.
Fiscal year 2013:
(A) New budget authority, $4,619,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $5,613,000,000.
Fiscal year 2014:
(A) New budget authority, $4,540,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $484,000,000.
(5) Natural Resources and Environment (300):
Fiscal year 2009:
(A) New budget authority, $56,009,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $36,834,000,000.
Fiscal year 2010:
(A) New budget authority, $37,387,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $40,450,000,000.
Fiscal year 2011:
(A) New budget authority, $37,914,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $39,868,000,000.
Fiscal year 2012:
(A) New budget authority, $38,376,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $39,419,000,000.
Fiscal year 2013:
(A) New budget authority, $38,256,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $38,883,000,000.
Fiscal year 2014:
(A) New budget authority, $38,602,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $38,788,000,000.
(6) Agriculture (350):
Fiscal year 2009:
(A) New budget authority, $24,974,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $23,070,000,000.
Fiscal year 2010:
(A) New budget authority, $23,620,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $23,881,000,000.
Fiscal year 2011:
(A) New budget authority, $24,602,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $23,914,000,000.
Fiscal year 2012:
(A) New budget authority, $21,500,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $17,410,000,000.
Fiscal year 2013:
(A) New budget authority, $22,295,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $21,877,000,000.
Fiscal year 2014:
(A) New budget authority, $22,920,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $21,906,000,000.
(7) Commerce and Housing Credit (370):
Fiscal year 2009:
(A) New budget authority, $694,439,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $665,437,000,000.
Fiscal year 2010:
(A) New budget authority, $61,113,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $85,818,000,000.
Fiscal year 2011:
(A) New budget authority, $25,931,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $37,798,000,000.
Fiscal year 2012:
(A) New budget authority, $9,305,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $8,400,000,000.
Fiscal year 2013:
(A) New budget authority, $16,985,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $5,329,000,000.
Fiscal year 2014:
(A) New budget authority, $10,958,000,000.
(B) Outlays, –$2,762,000,000.
(8) Transportation (400):
Fiscal year 2009:
(A) New budget authority, $122,457,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $87,784,000,000.
Fiscal year 2010:
(A) New budget authority, $75,246,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $95,695,000,000.
Fiscal year 2011:
(A) New budget authority, $75,301,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $96,147,000,000.
Fiscal year 2012:
(A) New budget authority, $75,885,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $95,184,000,000.
Fiscal year 2013:
(A) New budget authority, $75,758,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $95,017,000,000.
Fiscal year 2014:
(A) New budget authority, $75,642,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $94,972,000,000.
(9) Community and Regional Development (450):
Fiscal year 2009:
(A) New budget authority, $23,811,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $29,983,000,000.
Fiscal year 2010:
(A) New budget authority, $16,308,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $28,921,000,000.
Fiscal year 2011:
(A) New budget authority, $16,152,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $25,563,000,000.
Fiscal year 2012:
(A) New budget authority, $16,194,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $22,254,000,000.
Fiscal year 2013:
(A) New budget authority, $16,043,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $19,633,000,000.
Fiscal year 2014:
(A) New budget authority, $16,068,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $17,870,000,000.
(10) Education, Training, Employment, and Social Services (500):
Fiscal year 2009:
(A) New budget authority, $164,276,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $73,219,000,000.
Fiscal year 2010:
(A) New budget authority, $94,430,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $140,624,000,000.
Fiscal year 2011:
(A) New budget authority, $107,858,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $141,412,000,000.
Fiscal year 2012:
(A) New budget authority, $117,121,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $118,480,000,000.
Fiscal year 2013:
(A) New budget authority, $115,931,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $118,911,000,000.
Fiscal year 2014:
(A) New budget authority, $125,788,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $120,959,000,000.
(11) Health (550):
Fiscal year 2009:
(A) New budget authority, $380,158,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $354,397,000,000.
Fiscal year 2010:
(A) New budget authority, $383,911,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $388,746,000,000.
Fiscal year 2011:
(A) New budget authority, $363,906,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $367,276,000,000.
Fiscal year 2012:
(A) New budget authority, $368,156,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $367,505,000,000.
Fiscal year 2013:
(A) New budget authority, $387,170,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $382,555,000,000.
Fiscal year 2014:
(A) New budget authority, $396,523,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $397,351,000,000.
(12) Medicare (570):
Fiscal year 2009:
(A) New budget authority, $427,076,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $426,736,000,000.
Fiscal year 2010:
(A) New budget authority, $442,823,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $442,954,000,000.
Fiscal year 2011:
(A) New budget authority, $487,508,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $487,326,000,000.
Fiscal year 2012:
(A) New budget authority, $491,844,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $491,616,000,000.
Fiscal year 2013:
(A) New budget authority, $539,711,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $539,862,000,000.
Fiscal year 2014:
(A) New budget authority, $592,893,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $592,733,000,000.
(13) Income Security (600):
Fiscal year 2009:
(A) New budget authority, $520,123,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $503,020,000,000.
Fiscal year 2010:
(A) New budget authority, $534,689,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $538,604,000,000.
Fiscal year 2011:
(A) New budget authority, $507,482,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $510,762,000,000.
Fiscal year 2012:
(A) New budget authority, $450,081,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $450,806,000,000.
Fiscal year 2013:
(A) New budget authority, $454,160,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $453,932,000,000.
Fiscal year 2014:
(A) New budget authority, $454,931,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $453,726,000,000.
(14) Social Security (650):
Fiscal year 2009:
(A) New budget authority, $31,820,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $31,264,000,000.
Fiscal year 2010:
(A) New budget authority, $20,255,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $20,378,000,000.
Fiscal year 2011:
(A) New budget authority, $23,380,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $23,513,000,000.
Fiscal year 2012:
(A) New budget authority, $26,478,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $26,628,000,000.
Fiscal year 2013:
(A) New budget authority, $29,529,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $29,679,000,000.
Fiscal year 2014:
(A) New budget authority, $32,728,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $32,728,000,000.
(15) Veterans Benefits and Services (700):
Fiscal year 2009:
(A) New budget authority, $97,705,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $94,831,000,000.
Fiscal year 2010:
(A) New budget authority, $106,357,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $105,460,000,000.
Fiscal year 2011:
(A) New budget authority, $112,806,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $112,355,000,000.
Fiscal year 2012:
(A) New budget authority, $108,643,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $108,048,000,000.
Fiscal year 2013:
(A) New budget authority, $113,722,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $113,071,000,000.
Fiscal year 2014:
(A) New budget authority, $115,929,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $115,388,000,000.
(16) Administration of Justice (750):
Fiscal year 2009:
(A) New budget authority, $55,783,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $49,853,000,000.
Fiscal year 2010:
(A) New budget authority, $52,857,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $51,630,000,000.
Fiscal year 2011:
(A) New budget authority, $52,061,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $54,110,000,000.
Fiscal year 2012:
(A) New budget authority, $51,866,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $53,726,000,000.
Fiscal year 2013:
(A) New budget authority, $51,651,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $52,678,000,000.
Fiscal year 2014:
(A) New budget authority, $51,488,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $51,635,000,000.
(17) General Government (800):
Fiscal year 2009:
(A) New budget authority, $30,405,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $24,629,000,000.
Fiscal year 2010:
(A) New budget authority, $22,321,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $23,021,000,000.
Fiscal year 2011:
(A) New budget authority, $22,477,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $23,322,000,000.
Fiscal year 2012:
(A) New budget authority, $22,707,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $23,806,000,000.
Fiscal year 2013:
(A) New budget authority, $22,437,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $23,252,000,000.
Fiscal year 2014:
(A) New budget authority, $22,808,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $23,109,000,000.
(18) Net Interest (900):
Fiscal year 2009:
(A) New budget authority, $289,021,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $289,021,000,000.
Fiscal year 2010:

(A) New budget authority, $284,558,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $284,558,000,000.
Fiscal year 2011:
(A) New budget authority, $323,794,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $323,794,000,000.
Fiscal year 2012:
(A) New budget authority, $387,620,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $387,620,000,000.
Fiscal year 2013:
(A) New budget authority, $470,073,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $470,073,000,000.
Fiscal year 2014:
(A) New budget authority, $557,326,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $557,326,000,000.
(19) Allowances (920):
Fiscal year 2009:
(A) New budget authority, $0.
(B) Outlays, $0.
Fiscal year 2010:
(A) New budget authority, –$7,466,000,000.
(B) Outlays, –$2,536,000,000.
Fiscal year 2011:
(A) New budget authority, –$16,016,000,000.
(B) Outlays, –$12,873,000,000.
Fiscal year 2012:
(A) New budget authority, –$17,492,000,000.
(B) Outlays, –$16,820,000,000.
Fiscal year 2013:
(A) New budget authority, –$19,097,000,000.
(B) Outlays, –$18,307,000,000.
Fiscal year 2014:
(A) New budget authority, –$20,674,000,000.
(B) Outlays, –$19,758,000,000.
(20) Undistributed Offsetting Receipts (950):
Fiscal year 2009:
(A) New budget authority, –$78,206,000,000.
(B) Outlays, –$78,206,000,000.
Fiscal year 2010:
(A) New budget authority, –$68,444,000,000.
(B) Outlays, –$68,444,000,000.
Fiscal year 2011:
(A) New budget authority, –$71,653,000,000.
(B) Outlays, –$71,653,000,000.
Fiscal year 2012:
(A) New budget authority, –$74,620,000,000.
(B) Outlays, –$74,620,000,000.
Fiscal year 2013:
(A) New budget authority, –$77,585,000,000.
(B) Outlays, –$77,585,000,000.
Fiscal year 2014:
(A) New budget authority, –$79,491,000,000.
(B) Outlays, –$79,491,000,000.

TITLE II—RESERVE FUNDS

SEC. 201. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO TRANSFORM AND MODERNIZE AMERICA'S HEALTH CARE SYSTEM.

(a) TRANSFORM AND MODERNIZE AMERICA'S HEALTH CARE SYSTEM.—The Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels and limits in this resolution, and make adjustments to the pay-as-you-go ledger that are deficit-neutral over 11 years, for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, motions, or conference reports that are deficit-neutral, reduce excess cost growth in health care spending and are fiscally sustainable over the long term, and—

(1) protect families' financial health including restraining the growth of health premiums and other health-related costs;

(2) make health coverage affordable to businesses, households, and governments, including by reducing wasteful and inefficient spending in the health care system with periodic reports on savings achieved through these efforts, and by moving forward with improvements to the health care delivery system, including Medicare;

(3) aim for universality of health coverage;

(4) provide portability of coverage and assurance of coverage with appropriate consumer protections;

(5) guarantee choice of health plans and health care providers to Americans;

(6) invest in prevention and wellness and address issues of health disparities;

(7) improve patient safety and quality care, including the appropriate use of health information technology and health data, and promote transparency in cost and quality information to Americans; or

(8) maintain long-term fiscal sustainability and pays for itself by reducing health care cost growth, improving productivity, or dedicating additional sources of revenue;

by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2019.

(b) OTHER REVISIONS.—The Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels and limits in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, motions, or conference reports that—

(1) increase the reimbursement rate for physician services under section 1848(d) of the Social Security Act and that include financial incentives for physicians to improve the quality and efficiency of items and services furnished to Medicare beneficiaries through the use of consensus-based quality measures;

(2) include measures to encourage physicians to train in primary care residencies and ensure an adequate supply of residents and physicians; or

(3) improve the Medicare program for beneficiaries and protect access to outpatient therapy services (including physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech-language pathology services) through measures such as repealing the current outpatient therapy caps while protecting beneficiaries from associated premium increases;

by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2014 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2019.

SEC. 202. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO INVEST IN CLEAN ENERGY AND PRESERVE THE ENVIRONMENT.

(a) INVESTING IN CLEAN ENERGY AND PRESERVING THE ENVIRONMENT.—The Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels and limits in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, motions, or conference reports that would reduce our Nation's dependence on imported energy, produce green jobs, promote renewable energy development, create a clean energy investment fund, improve electricity transmission, encourage conservation and efficiency, make improvements to the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, implement water settlements, or preserve or protect public lands, oceans or coastal areas, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2014 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2019. The legislation may include tax provisions.

(b) CLIMATE CHANGE LEGISLATION.—The Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels and limits in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, motions, or conference reports that would invest in clean energy technology initiatives, decrease greenhouse gas emissions, or help families, workers, communities, and businesses make the transition to a clean energy economy, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2014 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2019.

SEC. 203. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR HIGHER EDUCATION.

The Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels and limits in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, motions, or conference reports that make higher education more accessible and affordable, which may include legislation to expand and strengthen student aid, such as Pell Grants, or increase college enrollment and completion rates for low-income students, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2014 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2019. The legislation may include tax provisions.

SEC. 204. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR CHILD NUTRITION AND WIC.

The Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels and limits in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, motions, or conference reports that would reauthorize child nutrition programs or the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (the WIC program), by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2014 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2019.

SEC. 205. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR INVESTMENTS IN AMERICA'S INFRASTRUCTURE.

(a) INFRASTRUCTURE.—The Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels and limits in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, motions, or conference reports that provide for a robust Federal investment in America's infrastructure, which may include projects for public housing, energy, water, or other infrastructure projects, by the amounts provided in that legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2014 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2019.

(b) SURFACE TRANSPORTATION.—The Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels and limits in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, motions, or conference reports that provide new budget authority for surface transportation programs to the extent such new budget authority is offset by an increase in receipts to the Highway Trust Fund (excluding transfers from the general fund of the Treasury into the Highway Trust Fund not offset by a similar increase in receipts), provided further that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2014 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2019.

(c) MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS.—The Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels and limits in this resolution for one or more

bills, joint resolutions, amendments, motions, or conference reports that would authorize multimodal transportation projects that—

(1) provide a set of performance measures;

(2) require a cost-benefit analysis be conducted to ensure accountability and overall project goals are met; and

(3) provide flexibility for States, cities, and localities to create strategies that meet the needs of their communities,

by the amounts provided in that legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2014 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2019.

SEC. 206. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO PROMOTE ECONOMIC STABILIZATION AND GROWTH.

(a) MANUFACTURING.—The Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels and limits in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, motions, or conference reports, including tax legislation, that would revitalize and strengthen the United States domestic manufacturing sector by increasing Federal research and development, by expanding the scope and effectiveness of manufacturing programs across the Federal Government, by increasing efforts to train and retrain manufacturing workers, by enhancing workers' technical skills in the use of the new advanced manufacturing technologies to produce competitive energy efficient products, by increasing support for the redevelopment of closed manufacturing plants, by increasing support for development of alternative fuels and leap-ahead automotive and energy technologies such as advanced batteries, or by establishing tax incentives to encourage the continued production in the United States of advanced technologies and the infrastructure to support such technologies, by the amounts provided in that legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2014 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2019.

(b) TAX RELIEF.—The Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution by the amounts provided by one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, motions, or conference reports that would provide tax relief, including but not limited to extensions of expiring and expired tax relief or refundable tax relief, by the amounts provided in that legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2014 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2019.

(c) TAX REFORM.—The Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, motions, or conference reports that would reform the Internal Revenue Code to ensure a sustainable revenue base that would lead to a fairer and more efficient tax system and to a more competitive business environment for United States enterprises, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2014 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2019.

(d) FLOOD INSURANCE REFORM.—The Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, motions, or conference reports that would provide for flood insurance reform and modernization, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2014 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2019.

(e) TRADE.—The Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, motions, or conference reports related to trade by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2014 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2019.

(f) HOUSING ASSISTANCE.—The Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels and limits in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, motions, or conference reports related to housing assistance, which may include low income rental assistance and assistance provided through the Housing Trust Fund created under section 1131 of the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2014 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2019.

(g) UNEMPLOYMENT MITIGATION.—The Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, motions, or conference reports which reduce the unemployment rate or provide assistance to the unemployed, particularly in the states and localities with the highest rates of unemployment, or improve the implementation of the unemployment compensation program, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2014 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2019.

SEC. 207. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR AMERICA'S VETERANS AND WOUNDED SERVICEMEMBERS.

The Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, motions, or conference reports that would expand the number of disabled military retirees who receive both disability compensation and retired pay, accelerate the phase-in of concurrent receipt, eliminate the offset between Survivor Benefit Plan annuities and Veterans' Dependency and Indemnity Compensation, or expand veterans' benefits (including for veterans living in rural areas), by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2014 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2019.

SEC. 208. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR JUDICIAL PAY AND JUDGESHIPS AND POSTAL RETIREE ASSISTANCE.

(a) JUDICIAL PAY AND JUDGESHIPS.—The Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels and limits in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, motions, or conference reports that would authorize salary adjustments for justices and judges of the United States, or increase the number of Federal judgeships, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2014 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2019.

(b) POSTAL RETIREES.—The Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, motions, or conference reports relating to adjustments to funding for postal retiree health coverage, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2014 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2019.

SEC. 209. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR DEFENSE ACQUISITION AND CONTRACTING REFORM.

The Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels and limits in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, motions, or conference reports that—

(1) enhance the capability of the Federal acquisition or contracting workforce to achieve better value for taxpayers;

(2) reduce the use of no-bid and cost-plus contracts; or

(3) reform Department of Defense processes for acquiring weapons systems in order to reduce costs, improve cost and schedule estimation, enhance developmental testing of weapons, or increase the rigor of reviews of programs that experience critical cost growth;

by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2014 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2019.

SEC. 210. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR INVESTMENTS IN OUR NATION'S COUNTIES AND SCHOOLS.

The Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels and limits in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, motions, or conference reports that provide for the reauthorization of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act of 2000 (Public Law 106–393) or make changes to the Payments in Lieu of Taxes Act of 1976 (Public Law 94–565), or both, by the amounts provided by that legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2014 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2019.

SEC. 211. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR THE FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION.

(a) REGULATION.—The Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, motions, or conference reports that authorize the Food and Drug Administration to regulate products and assess user fees on manufacturers

and importers of those products to cover the cost of the Food and Drug Administration's regulatory activities, by the amounts provided in that legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2014 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2019.

(b) DRUG IMPORTATION.—The Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, motions, or conference reports that permit the safe importation of prescription drugs approved by the Food and Drug Administration from a specified list of countries, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2014 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2019.

SEC. 212. DEFICIT NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR BIPARTISAN CONGRESSIONAL SUNSET COMMISSION.

The Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, motions, or conference reports that—

(1) provide for a bipartisan congressional sunset commission, that will review Federal programs, focusing on unauthorized and nonperforming programs;

(2) provide for a process that will help abolish obsolete and duplicative Federal programs;

(3) provide for improved government accountability and greater openness in Government decisionmaking; and

(4) provide for a process that ensures that Congress will consider the commission's reports and recommendations;

by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2014 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2019.

SEC. 213. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO IMPROVE DOMESTIC FUELS SECURITY.

The Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels and limits in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, motions, or conference reports to achieve domestic fuels security by authorizing the Department of Defense to procure alternative fuels from domestic sources under contracts for up to 20 years, provided that such procurement is consistent with section 526 of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (Public Law 110–140) and provided further that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2014 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2019.

SEC. 214. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR A COMPREHENSIVE INVESTIGATION INTO THE CURRENT FINANCIAL CRISIS.

The Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels and limits in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, motions, or conference reports that provide resources for a comprehensive investigation to determine the cause of the current financial crisis, hold those responsible accountable, and provide recommendations to prevent another financial crisis of this magnitude from occurring again by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2014 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2019.

SEC. 215. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR INCREASED TRANSPARENCY AT THE FEDERAL RESERVE.

The Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels and limits in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, motions, or conference reports that increase transparency at the Federal Reserve System, including audits of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and the Federal reserve banks and increased public disclosure with respect to the recipients of all loans and other financial assistance it has provided since March 24, 2008, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2014 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2019.

TITLE III—BUDGET PROCESS

Subtitle A—Budget Enforcement

SEC. 301. DISCRETIONARY SPENDING LIMITS, PROGRAM INTEGRITY INITIATIVES, AND OTHER ADJUSTMENTS.

(a) SENATE POINT OF ORDER.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as otherwise provided in this section, it shall not be in order in the Senate to consider any bill or joint resolution (or amendment, motion, or conference report on that bill or joint resolution) that would cause the discretionary spending limits in this section to be exceeded.

(2) SUPERMAJORITY WAIVER AND APPEALS.—

(A) WAIVER.—This subsection may be waived or suspended in the Senate only by the affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn.

(B) APPEALS.—Appeals in the Senate from the decisions of the Chair relating to any provision of this subsection shall be limited to 1 hour, to be equally divided between, and controlled by, the appellant and the manager of the bill or joint resolution. An affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members of the Senate, duly chosen and sworn, shall be required to sustain an appeal of the ruling of the Chair on a point of order raised under this subsection.

(b) SENATE DISCRETIONARY SPENDING LIMITS.—In the Senate and as used in this section, the term ''discretionary spending limit'' means—

(1) for fiscal year 2009, $1,391,471,000,000 in new budget authority and $1,220,843,000,000 in outlays; and

(2) for fiscal year 2010, $1,079,050,000,000 in new budget authority and $1,268,104,000,000 in outlays;

as adjusted in conformance with the adjustment procedures in subsection (c).

(c) ADJUSTMENTS IN THE SENATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—After the reporting of a bill or joint resolution relating to any matter described in paragraph (2), or the offering of an amendment thereto or the submission of a conference report thereon—

(A) the Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget may adjust the discretionary spending limits, budgetary aggregates, and allocations pursuant to section 302(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, by the amount of new budget authority in that measure for that purpose and the outlays flowing therefrom; and

(B) following any adjustment under subparagraph (A), the Senate Committee on Appropriations may report appropriately revised suballocations pursuant to section 302(b) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 to carry out this subsection.

(2) MATTERS DESCRIBED.—Matters referred to in paragraph (1) are as follows:

(A) CONTINUING DISABILITY REVIEWS AND SSI REDETERMINATIONS.—If a bill or joint resolution is reported making appropriations for fiscal year 2010 that appropriates $273,000,000 for continuing disability reviews and Supplemental Security Income redeterminations for the Social Security Administration, and provides an additional appropriation of up to $485,000,000 for continuing disability reviews and Supplemental Security Income redeterminations for the Social Security Administration, then the discretionary spending limits, allocation to the Senate Committee on Appropriations, and aggregates may be adjusted by the amounts provided in such legislation for that purpose, but not to exceed $485,000,000 in budget authority and outlays flowing therefrom for fiscal year 2010.

(B) INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE TAX ENFORCEMENT.—If a bill or joint resolution is reported making appropriations for fiscal year 2010 that appropriates $7,100,000,000 for the Internal Revenue Service for enhanced tax enforcement to address the Federal tax gap (taxes owed but not paid) and provides an additional appropriation of up to $890,000,000 for the Internal Revenue Service for enhanced tax enforcement to address the Federal tax gap, then the discretionary spending limits, allocation to the Senate Committee on Appropriations, and aggregates may be adjusted by the amounts provided in such legislation for that purpose, but not to exceed $890,000,000 in budget authority and outlays flowing therefrom for fiscal year 2010.

(C) HEALTH CARE FRAUD AND ABUSE CONTROL.—If a bill or joint resolution is reported making appropriations for fiscal year 2010 that appropriates up to $311,000,000 to the Health Care Fraud and Abuse Control program at the Department of Health and Human Services, then the discretionary spending limits, allocation to the Senate Committee on Appropriations, and aggregates may be adjusted by the amounts provided in such legislation for that purpose, but not to exceed $311,000,000 in budget authority and outlays flowing therefrom for fiscal year 2010.

(D) UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE IMPROPER PAYMENT REVIEWS.—If a bill or joint resolution is reported making appropriations for fiscal year 2010 that appropriates $10,000,000 for in-person reemployment and eligibility assessments and unemployment insurance improper payment reviews, and provides an additional appropriation of up to $50,000,000 for in-person reemployment and eligibility assessments and unemployment insurance improper payment reviews, then the discretionary spending limits, allocation to the Senate Committee on Appropriations, and aggregates may be adjusted by the amounts provided in such legislation for that purpose, but not to exceed $50,000,000 in budget authority and outlays flowing therefrom for fiscal year 2010.

(E) REDUCING WASTE IN DEFENSE CONTRACTING.—If a bill or joint resolution is reported making appropriations for fiscal year 2010 that appropriates up to $100,000,000 to the Department of Defense for additional activities to reduce waste, fraud, abuse, and overpayments in defense contracting or to enhance the capability of the defense acquisition or contracting workforce to save taxpayer resources, then the discretionary spending limits, allocation to the Senate

Committee on Appropriations, and aggregates may be adjusted by the amounts provided in such legislation for that purpose, but not to exceed $100,000,000 in budget authority and outlays flowing therefrom for fiscal year 2010.

(3) ADJUSTMENTS TO SUPPORT ONGOING OVERSEAS CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS.—The Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget may adjust the discretionary spending limits, allocations to the Senate Committee on Appropriations, and aggregates for one or more—

(A) bills reported by the Senate Committee on Appropriations or passed by the House of Representatives;

(B) joint resolutions or amendments reported by the Senate Committee on Appropriations;

(C) amendments between the Houses received from the House of Representatives or Senate amendments offered by the authority of the Senate Committee on Appropriations; or

(D) conference reports;

making appropriations for fiscal year 2010 for overseas contingency operations by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes (and so designated pursuant to this paragraph), up to $130,000,000,000 in budget authority for fiscal year 2010 and the new outlays flowing therefrom.

(4) REVISED APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2010.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—If after adoption of this resolution by the Congress, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) re-estimates the President's request for discretionary spending in fiscal year 2010 at an aggregate level different from the CBO preliminary estimate dated March 20, 2009, the Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget may adjust the discretionary spending limits, budgetary aggregates, and allocations pursuant to section 302(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 by the amount of budget authority and outlays flowing therefrom, to reflect the difference between such re-estimate and the CBO preliminary estimate dated March 20, 2009.

(B) SUBALLOCATIONS.—Following any adjustment under subparagraph (A), the Senate Committee on Appropriations may report appropriately revised suballocations pursuant to section 302(b) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 to carry out this paragraph.

(d) INAPPLICABILITY.—In the Senate, subsections (a), (b), (c), and (d) of section 312 of S. Con. Res. 70 (110th Congress) shall no longer apply.

SEC. 302. POINT OF ORDER AGAINST ADVANCE APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) POINT OF ORDER.—Except as provided in subsection (b), it shall not be in order in the Senate to consider any bill, joint resolution, motion, amendment, or conference report that would provide an advance appropriation.

(2) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ''advance appropriation'' means any new budget authority provided in a bill or joint resolution making appropriations for fiscal year 2010 that first becomes available for any fiscal year after 2010, or any new budget authority provided in a bill or joint resolution making general appropriations or continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2011, that first becomes available for any fiscal year after 2011.

(b) EXCEPTIONS.—Advance appropriations may be provided—

(1) for fiscal years 2011 and 2012 for programs, projects, activities, or accounts identified in the joint explanatory statement of managers accompanying this resolution under the heading ''Accounts Identified for Advance Appropriations'' in an aggregate amount not to exceed $28,852,000,000 in new budget authority in each year; and

(2) for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

(c) SUPERMAJORITY WAIVER AND APPEAL.—

(1) WAIVER.—In the Senate, subsection (a) may be waived or suspended only by an affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn.

(2) APPEAL.—An affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members of the Senate, duly chosen and sworn, shall be required to sustain an appeal of the ruling of the Chair on a point of order raised under subsection (a).

(d) FORM OF POINT OF ORDER.—A point of order under subsection (a) may be raised by a Senator as provided in section 313(e) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

(e) CONFERENCE REPORTS.—When the Senate is considering a conference report on, or an amendment between the Houses in relation to, a bill, upon a point of order being made by any Senator pursuant to this section, and such point of order being sustained, such material contained in such conference report shall be deemed stricken, and the Senate shall proceed to consider the question of whether the Senate shall recede from its amendment and concur with a further amendment, or concur in the House amendment with a further amendment, as the case may be, which further amendment shall consist of only that portion of the conference report or House amendment, as the case may be, not so stricken. Any such motion in the Senate shall be debatable. In any case in which such point of order is sustained against a conference report (or Senate amendment derived from such conference report by operation of this subsection), no further amendment shall be in order.

(f) INAPPLICABILITY.—In the Senate, section 313 of S. Con. Res. 70 (110th Congress) shall no longer apply.

SEC. 303. EMERGENCY LEGISLATION.

(a) AUTHORITY TO DESIGNATE.—In the Senate, with respect to a provision of direct spending or receipts legislation or appropriations for discretionary accounts that Congress designates as an emergency requirement in such measure, the amounts of new budget authority, outlays, and receipts in all fiscal years resulting from that provision shall be treated as an emergency requirement for the purpose of this section.

(b) EXEMPTION OF EMERGENCY PROVISIONS.—Any new budget authority, outlays, and receipts resulting from any provision designated as an emergency requirement, pursuant to this section, in any bill, joint resolution, amendment, or conference report shall not count for purposes of sections 302 and 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, section 201 of S. Con. Res. 21 (110th Congress) (relating to pay-as-you-go), section 311 of S. Con. Res. 70 (110th Congress) (relating to long-term deficits), and sections 301 and 304 of this resolution (relating to discretionary spending and short-term deficits). Designated emergency provisions shall not count for the purpose of revising allocations, aggregates, or other levels pursuant to procedures established under section 301(b)(7) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 for deficit-neutral reserve funds and revising discretionary spending limits set pursuant to section 301 of this resolution.

(c) DESIGNATIONS.—If a provision of legislation is designated as an emergency requirement under this section, the committee report and any statement of managers accompanying that legislation shall include an explanation of the manner in which the provision meets the criteria in subsection (f).

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the terms ''direct spending'', ''receipts'', and ''appropriations for discretionary accounts'' mean any provision of a bill, joint resolution, amendment, motion, or conference report that affects direct spending, receipts, or appropriations as those terms have been defined and interpreted for purposes of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

(e) POINT OF ORDER.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—When the Senate is considering a bill, resolution, amendment, motion, or conference report, if a point of order is made by a Senator against an emergency designation in that measure, that provision making such a designation shall be stricken from the measure and may not be offered as an amendment from the floor.

(2) SUPERMAJORITY WAIVER AND APPEALS.—

(A) WAIVER.—Paragraph (1) may be waived or suspended in the Senate only by an affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn.

(B) APPEALS.—Appeals in the Senate from the decisions of the Chair relating to any provision of this subsection shall be limited to 1 hour, to be equally divided between, and controlled by, the appellant and the manager of the bill or joint resolution, as the case may be. An affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members of the Senate, duly chosen and sworn, shall be required to sustain an appeal of the ruling of the Chair on a point of order raised under this subsection.

(3) DEFINITION OF AN EMERGENCY DESIGNATION.—For purposes of paragraph (1), a provision shall be considered an emergency designation if it designates any item as an emergency requirement pursuant to this subsection.

(4) FORM OF THE POINT OF ORDER.—A point of order under paragraph (1) may be raised by a Senator as provided in section 313(e) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

(5) CONFERENCE REPORTS.—When the Senate is considering a conference report on, or an amendment between the Houses in relation to, a bill, upon a point of order being made by any Senator pursuant to this section, and such point of order being sustained, such material contained in such conference report shall be deemed stricken, and the Senate shall proceed to consider the question of whether the Senate shall recede from its amendment and concur with a further amendment, or concur in the House amendment with a further amendment, as the case may be, which further amendment shall consist of only that portion of the conference report or House amendment, as the case may be, not so stricken. Any such motion in the Senate shall be debatable. In any case in which such point of order is sustained against a conference report (or Senate amendment derived from such conference report by operation of this subsection), no further amendment shall be in order.

(f) CRITERIA.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this section, any provision is an emergency requirement if the situation addressed by such provision is—

(A) necessary, essential, or vital (not merely useful or beneficial);

(B) sudden, quickly coming into being, and not building up over time;

(C) an urgent, pressing, and compelling need requiring immediate action;

(D) subject to subparagraph (B), unforeseen, unpredictable, and unanticipated; and

(E) not permanent, temporary in nature.

(2) UNFORESEEN.—An emergency that is part of an aggregate level of anticipated emergencies, particularly when normally estimated in advance, is not unforeseen.

(g) INAPPLICABILITY.—In the Senate, section 204(a) of S. Con. Res. 21 (110th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2008, shall no longer apply.

SEC. 304. POINT OF ORDER AGAINST LEGISLATION INCREASING SHORT-TERM DEFICIT.

(a) POINT OF ORDER.—It shall not be in order in the Senate to consider any bill, joint resolution, amendment, motion, or conference report (except measures within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Appropriations) that would cause a net increase in the deficit in excess of $10,000,000,000 in any fiscal year provided for in the most recently adopted concurrent resolution on the budget unless it is fully offset over the period of all fiscal years provided for in the most recently adopted concurrent resolution on the budget.

(b) SUPERMAJORITY WAIVER AND APPEAL IN THE SENATE.—

(1) WAIVER.—This section may be waived or suspended only by the affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn.

(2) APPEAL.—An affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn, shall be required to sustain an appeal of the ruling of the Chair on a point of order raised under this section.

(c) DETERMINATIONS OF BUDGET LEVELS.—For purposes of this section, the levels shall be determined on the basis of estimates provided by the Senate Committee on the Budget.

(d) SUNSET.—This section shall expire on September 30, 2018.

(e) INAPPLICABILITY.—In the Senate, section 315 of S. Con. Res. 70 (110th Congress), the concurrent resolution in the budget for fiscal year 2009, shall no longer apply.

SEC. 305. POINT OF ORDER AGAINST PROVISIONS OF APPROPRIATIONS LEGISLATION THAT CONSTITUTE CHANGES IN MANDATORY PROGRAMS AFFECTING THE CRIME VICTIMS FUND.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In the Senate, it shall not be in order to consider any appropriations legislation, including any amendment thereto, motion in relation thereto, or conference report thereon, that includes any provision or provisions affecting the Crime Victims Fund, as defined by section 1402 of the Victims of Crime Act of 1984 (42 U.S.C. 10601), which constitutes a change in a mandatory program that would have been estimated as affecting direct spending or receipts under section 252 of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (as in effect prior to September 30, 2002) were they included in legislation other than appropriations legislation. A point of order pursuant to this section shall be raised against such provision or provisions as described in subsections (d) and (e).

(b) DETERMINATION.—The determination of whether a provision is subject to a point of order pursuant to this section shall be made by the Committee on the Budget of the Senate.

(c) SUPERMAJORITY WAIVER AND APPEAL.—This section may be waived or suspended in the Senate only by an affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn. An affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members of the Senate, duly chosen and sworn, shall be required to sustain an appeal of the ruling of the Chair on a point of order raised under this section.

(d) GENERAL POINT OF ORDER.—It shall be in order for a Senator to raise a single point of order that several provisions of a bill, resolution, amendment, motion, or conference report violate this section. The Presiding Officer may sustain the point of order as to some or all of the provisions against which the Senator raised the point of order. If the Presiding Officer so sustains the point of order as to some of the provisions (including provisions of an amendment, motion, or conference report) against which the Senator raised the point of order, then only those provisions (including provision of an amendment, motion, or conference report) against which the Presiding Officer sustains the point of order shall be deemed stricken pursuant to this section. Before the Presiding Officer rules on such a point of order, any Senator may move to waive such a point of order as it applies to some or all of the provisions against which the point of order was raised. Such a motion to waive is amendable in accordance with rules and precedents of the Senate. After the Presiding Officer rules on such a point of order, any Senator may appeal the ruling of the Presiding Officer on such a point of order as it applies to some or all of the provisions on which the Presiding Officer ruled.

(e) FORM OF THE POINT OF ORDER.—When the Senate is considering a conference report on, or an amendment between the Houses in relation to, a bill, upon a point of order being made by any Senator pursuant to this section, and such point of order being sustained, such material contained in such conference report or amendment shall be deemed stricken, and the Senate shall proceed to consider the question of whether the Senate shall recede from its amendment and concur with a further amendment, or concur in the House amendment with a further amendment, as the case may be, which further amendment shall consist of only that portion of the conference report or House amendment, as the case may be, not so stricken. Any such motion shall be debatable. In any case in which such point of order is sustained against a conference report (or Senate amendment derived from such conference report by operation of this subsection), no further amendment shall be in order.

Subtitle B—Other Provisions

SEC. 311. OVERSIGHT OF GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE.

In the Senate, all committees are directed to review programs within their jurisdiction to root out waste, fraud, and abuse in program spending, giving particular scrutiny to issues raised by Government Accountability Office reports. Based on these oversight efforts and committee performance reviews of programs within their jurisdiction, committees are directed to include recommendations for improved governmental performance in their annual views and estimates reports required under section 301(d) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 to the Committees on the Budget.

SEC. 312. BUDGETARY TREATMENT OF CERTAIN DISCRETIONARY ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.

In the Senate, notwithstanding section 302(a)(1) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, section 13301 of the Budget Enforcement Act of 1990, and section 2009a of title 39, United States Code, the joint explanatory statement accompanying the conference report on any concurrent resolution on the budget shall include in its allocations under section 302(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 to the Committees on Appropriations amounts for the discretionary administrative expenses of the Social Security Administration and of the Postal Service.

SEC. 313. APPLICATION AND EFFECT OF CHANGES IN ALLOCATIONS AND AGGREGATES.

(a) APPLICATION.—Any adjustments of allocations and aggregates made pursuant to this resolution shall—

(1) apply while that measure is under consideration;

(2) take effect upon the enactment of that measure; and

(3) be published in the Congressional Record as soon as practicable.

(b) EFFECT OF CHANGED ALLOCATIONS AND AGGREGATES.—Revised allocations and aggregates resulting from these adjustments shall be considered for the purposes of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 as allocations and aggregates contained in this resolution.

(c) BUDGET COMMITTEE DETERMINATIONS.—For purposes of this resolution the levels of new budget authority, outlays, direct spending, new entitlement authority, revenues, deficits, and surpluses for a fiscal year or period of fiscal years shall be determined on the basis of estimates made by the Senate Committee on the Budget.

SEC. 314. ADJUSTMENTS TO REFLECT CHANGES IN CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS.

Upon the enactment of a bill or joint resolution providing for a change in concepts or definitions, the Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget may make adjustments to the levels and allocations in this resolution in accordance with section 251(b) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (as in effect prior to September 30, 2002).

SEC. 315. DEBT DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—It shall not be in order to consider a budget resolution in the Senate unless it contains a debt disclosure section including all, and only, the following disclosures regarding debt:

"SEC. ___. DEBT DISCLOSURES.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The levels assumed in this budget resolution allow the gross Federal debt of the nation to rise/fall by $_____ from the current year, fiscal year 20___, to the fifth year of the budget window, fiscal year 20___.

''(b) PER PERSON.—The levels assumed in this budget resolution allow the gross Federal debt of the nation to rise/fall by $_____ on every United States citizen from the current year, fiscal year 20___ to the fifth year of the budget window, fiscal year 20___.

''(c) SOCIAL SECURITY.—The levels assumed in this budget resolution project that $_____ of the Social Security surplus will be spent over the 5-year budget window, fiscal years 20___ through 20___, on things other than Social Security.''.

(b) SOCIAL SECURITY.—If any portion of the Social Security surplus is projected to be spent in any year or the gross Federal debt in the fifth year of the budget window is greater than the gross debt projected for the current year, as described in section 101(5) of this resolution, the report, print, or statement of managers accompanying the budget resolution shall contain a section that—

(1) details the circumstances making it in the national interest to allow Federal debt to increase rather than taking steps to reduce the debt; and

(2) provides a justification for allowing the surpluses in the Social Security Trust Fund to be spent on other functions of Government even as the baby boom generation retires, program costs are projected to rise dramatically, the debt owed to Social Security is about to come due, and the Trust Fund is projected to go insolvent.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the term ''gross Federal debt'' means the nominal levels of (or changes in the levels of) gross Federal debt (debt subject to limit as set forth in section 101(5) of this resolution) measured at the end of each fiscal year during the period of the budget, not debt as a percentage of gross domestic product, and not levels relative to baseline projections.

SEC. 316. DEBT DISCLOSURES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The levels assumed in this budget resolution allow the gross Federal debt of the nation to rise by $4,960,000,000,000 from the current year, fiscal year 2009, to the fifth year of the budget window, fiscal year 2014.

(b) PER PERSON.—The levels assumed in this budget resolution allow the gross Federal debt of the nation to rise by $16,200 on every United States citizen from the current year, fiscal year 2009, to the fifth year of the budget window, fiscal year 2014.

(c) SOCIAL SECURITY.—The levels assumed in this budget resolution project that $700,000,000,000 of the Social Security surplus will be spent over the 5-year budget window, fiscal years 2010 through 2014, on things other than Social Security.

SEC. 317. EXERCISE OF RULEMAKING POWERS.

Congress adopts the provisions of this title—

(1) as an exercise of the rulemaking power of the Senate, and as such they shall be considered as part of the rules of the Senate and such rules shall supersede other rules only to the extent that they are inconsistent with such other rules; and

(2) with full recognition of the constitutional right of the Senate to change those rules at any time, in the same manner, and to the same extent as is the case of any other rule of the Senate.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 89—EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR DESIGNATION OF A ''WELCOME HOME VIETNAM VETERANS DAY''

Mr. BURR (for himself, Mrs. BOXER, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. HATCH, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. WICKER, Mr. ROBERTS, and Mr. COCHRAN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 89

Whereas the Vietnam War was fought in Vietnam from 1961 to 1975, and involved North Vietnam and the Viet Cong in conflict with United States Armed Forces and South Vietnam;

Whereas the United States became involved in Vietnam because policy-makers in the United States believed that if the Government of South Vietnam fell to a communist government then communism would spread throughout the rest of Southeast Asia;

Whereas members of the United States Armed Forces began serving in an advisory role to the Government of South Vietnam in 1961;

Whereas, as a result of the Gulf of Tonkin incidents on August 2 and 4, 1964, Congress overwhelmingly passed the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution (Public Law 88–408), on August 7, 1964, which effectively handed over war-making powers to President Johnson until such time as ''peace and security'' had returned to Vietnam;

Whereas, in 1965, United States Armed Forces ground combat units arrived in Vietnam;

Whereas, by the end of 1965, there were 80,000 United States troops in Vietnam, and by 1969 a peak of approximately 543,000 troops was reached;

Whereas, on January 27, 1973, the Treaty of Paris was signed, which required the release of all United States prisoners-of-war held in North Vietnam and the withdrawal of all United States Armed Forces from South Vietnam;

Whereas, on March 30, 1973, the United States Armed Forces completed the withdrawal of combat troops from Vietnam;

Whereas more than 58,000 members of the United States Armed Forces lost their lives in Vietnam and more than 300,000 members of the Armed Forces were wounded;

Whereas, in 1982, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was dedicated in the District of Columbia to commemorate those members of the United States Armed Forces who died or were declared missing-in-action in Vietnam;

Whereas the Vietnam War was an extremely divisive issue among the people of the United States;

Whereas members of the United States Armed Forces who served bravely and faithfully for the United States during the Vietnam War were caught upon their return home in the crossfire of public debate about the involvement of the United States in the Vietnam War;

Whereas the establishment of a ''Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day'' would be an appropriate way to honor those members of the United States Armed Forces who served in Vietnam during the Vietnam War; and

Whereas March 30, 2009, would be an appropriate day to establish as ''Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day'': Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) honors and recognizes the contributions of veterans who served in the United States Armed Forces in Vietnam; and

(2) encourages the people of the United States to observe ''Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day'' with appropriate ceremonies and activities that promote awareness of the contributions of veterans who served in the United States Armed Forces in Vietnam and the importance of helping such veterans readjust to civilian life.

SENATE RESOLUTION 90—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING THE FIFTH SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS, HELD IN PORT OF SPAIN, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, APRIL 17, 18, AND 19, 2009

Mr. KERRY (for himself, Mr. LUGAR, Mr. DODD, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. NELSON of Florida) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 90

Whereas the First Summit of the Americas, held in December 1994 in Miami, Florida, resulted in a comprehensive Plan of Action, issued by the region's democracies, which included initiatives on strengthening democracy, promoting human rights, combating corruption, furthering sustainable economic development, encouraging environmental conservation, and committing to access to universal basic education and health care throughout the Americas;

Whereas 3 Summits of the Americas and 2 Special Summits of the Americas have been convened since 1994, resulting in additional initiatives on sustainable development, strengthening democratic practices and good governance, the environment, economic relations, combating HIV/AIDS and other diseases, and numerous other areas of mutual interest and shared responsibility throughout the Western Hemisphere;

Whereas on July 21, 2008, the Draft Declaration of Commitment by the Summit Implementation Review Group proposed an agenda for the Fifth Summit of the Americas to discuss promoting human prosperity, energy security, environmental sustainability, public security, democratic governance, and the Summit's implementation and review process; and

Whereas on February 10, 2009, President Barack Obama stated that he would attend the Fifth Summit of the Americas to ''create the kind of partnership based on respect that the people of Latin America are looking for and that will be beneficial to the United States'': Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate—

(1) to express support for the Fifth Summit of the Americas as an effective multilateral forum, convened in the spirit of cooperation and partnership for the 34 democratically elected heads of state of the region to address shared challenges and foster collaboration throughout the Western Hemisphere;

(2) that the Fifth Summit provides the United States with an early opportunity to reinvigorate and strengthen its engagement with the countries of the Western Hemisphere, especially in—

(A) finding common solutions to the global economic crisis;

(B) promoting energy security; and

(C) combating threats to public and personal security, including threats from terrorism, international narcotics cartels, and organized criminal groups;

(3) that the United States is prepared to work with the countries of the Western Hemisphere on advancing an agenda of human prosperity, including—

(A) encouraging multilateral development institutions to invest in micro- to medium-sized enterprises;

(B) continuing the fight against HIV/AIDS, vector-borne, and noncommunicable diseases;

(C) raising the standard of living of the people in the region who currently live in poverty;

(D) eradicating child labor;

(E) recommitting to the Millennium Development Goals; and

(F) supporting investment in public health and education throughout the Western Hemisphere;

(4) that the United States should use the Fifth Summit of the Americas to strengthen cooperation by working with other nations to formulate and implement a regional energy strategy to promote—

(A) increased technology and information sharing;

(B) regulatory harmonization;

(C) integration; and

(D) renewable and alternative energy sources;

(5) to welcome civil society and nongovernmental organizations at the Fifth Summit, and to encourage their observation and active participation in the Summit's decision-making process to strengthen democratic governance, the rule of law, freedom of the press, and civil society in the Western Hemisphere; and

(6) to set achievable and measurable goals, based on areas of consensus, and to strengthen followup mechanisms to review the implementation, reporting, and progress of Summit initiatives.

SENATE RESOLUTION 91—CALLING ON THE CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION, THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY, AND THE SECRETARY OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT TO TAKE ACTION ON ISSUES RELATING TO DRYWALL IMPORTED FROM CHINA

Mr. NELSON of Florida (for himself and Ms. LANDRIEU) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation:

S. RES. 91

Whereas between 2006 and late 2007, more than 550,000,000 pounds of drywall and associated building materials were imported from China to the United States;

Whereas not less than 300,000,000 pounds of drywall were imported from China to the State of Florida, enough to build approximately 36,000 homes;

Whereas not less than 60,000,000 pounds of drywall were imported from China to the State of Louisiana, enough to build approximately 7,000 homes;

Whereas media reports indicate that drywall imported from China was also used in homes in no fewer than 10 other States, including Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, and Virginia;

Whereas testing by officials of the State of Florida found that drywall imported from China contains potentially hazardous levels of strontium sulfide, which, when exposed to moisture and humidity, can release hydrogen sulfide into the air;

Whereas emissions from drywall imported from China have caused substantial safety hazards in homes containing such drywall, including corrosion in electrical wiring, which can result in a fire hazard, failure of air conditioning units, and the failure of other household electrical products; and

Whereas preliminary testing shows that the drywall may also be responsible for certain health hazards: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the Consumer Product Safety Commission should—

(A) initiate a formal proceeding to investigate drywall imported from China during the period from 2004 through 2007;

(B) prohibit the further importation of drywall and associated building products from China;

(C) order a recall of hazardous Chinese drywall; and

(D) use its existing authority under the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-314; 122 Stat. 3016) and the Federal Hazardous Substances Act (15 U.S.C. 1261 et seq.) to seek civil penalties against the drywall manufacturers in China that produced or distributed hazardous drywall and their subsidiaries in the United States to cover the cost of the recall effort and other associated remediation efforts; and

(2) the Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development should—

(A) use all available measures, including civil forfeiture authority, to ensure that the costs of homeowner assistance efforts are borne by the drywall manufacturers in China that produced or distributed hazardous drywall and their subsidiaries in the United States and not by the taxpayers of the United States; and

(B) develop meaningful Federal tax incentives to help offset the expense of costly drywall repairs for struggling homeowners already suffering from depressed home values and negative economic conditions.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 14—SUPPORTING THE LOCAL RADIO FREEDOM ACT

Mrs. LINCOLN (for herself and Mr. BARRASSO) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation:

S. CON. RES. 14

Whereas the United States enjoys broadcasting and sound recording industries that are the envy of the world, due to the symbiotic relationship that has existed among these industries for many decades;

Whereas, for more than 80 years, Congress has rejected repeated calls by the recording industry to impose a performance fee on local radio stations for simply playing music on the radio and upsetting the mutually beneficial relationship between local radio and the recording industry;

Whereas local radio stations provide free publicity and promotion to the recording industry and performers of music in the form of radio air play, interviews with performers, introduction of new performers, concert promotions, and publicity that promotes the sale of music, concert tickets, ring tones, music videos, and associated merchandise;

Whereas Congress found that ''the sale of many sound recordings and the careers of many performers benefited considerably from airplay and other promotional activities provided by both noncommercial and advertiser-supported, free over-the-air broadcasting'';

Whereas local radio broadcasters provide tens of thousands of hours of essential local news and weather information during times of national emergencies and natural disasters, such as September 11th and Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, as well as public affairs programming, sports, and hundreds of millions of dollars of time for public service announcements and local fund raising efforts for worthy charitable causes, all of which are jeopardized if local radio stations are forced to divert revenues to pay for a new performance fee;

Whereas there are many thousands of local radio stations that will suffer severe economic hardship if any new performance fee is imposed, as will many other small businesses that play music including bars, restaurants, retail establishments, sports and other entertainment venues, shopping centers, and transportation facilities; and

Whereas the hardship that would result from a new performance fee would hurt American businesses, and ultimately the American consumers who rely on local radio for news, weather, and entertainment, and such a performance fee is not justified when the current system has produced the most prolific and innovative broadcasting, music, and sound recording industries in the world: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That Congress should not impose any new performance fee, tax, royalty, or other charge relating to the public performance of sound recordings on a local radio station for broadcasting sound recordings over the air, or on any business for such public performance of sound recordings.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 730. Mr. REID (for himself, Mr. ENSIGN, Ms. CANTWELL, and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 13, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2010, revising the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal year 2009, and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2011 through 2014; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 731. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 13, supra.

SA 732. Mr. KERRY (for himself and Mr. LUGAR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 13, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 733. Mr. CRAPO (for himself, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. VITTER, Mr. BROWNBACK, and Mr. VOINOVICH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 13, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 734. Mr. CRAPO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 13, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 735. Mr. JOHANNS proposed an amendment to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 13, supra.

SA 736. Mr. BOND submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 13, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 737. Mr. BOND submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 13, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 738. Mr. BOND submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 13, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 730. Mr. REID (for himself, Mr. ENSIGN, Ms. CANTWELL, and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 13, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2010, revising the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal year 2009, and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2011 through 2014; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of Title II, insert the following:

SEC.____. RESERVE FUND TO PROMOTE TAX EQUITY FOR STATES WITHOUT PERSONAL INCOME TAXES.

The Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget may revise the aggregates, allocations, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, motions, or conference reports that would provide for the permanent extension of the deduction for state and local sales taxes, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2014 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2019.

SA 731. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 13, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2010, revising the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal year 2009, and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2011 through 2014; as follows:

On page 33, line 21, after ''economy,'' insert ''without increasing electricity or gasoline prices,''.

SA 732. Mr. KERRY (for himself and Mr. LUGAR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 13, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2010, revising the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal year 2009, and setting forth the appropriate

budgetary levels for fiscal years 2011 through 2014.; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 10, line 20, increase the amount by $4,000,000,000.

On page 10, line 21, increase the amount by $1,896,000,000.

On page 10, line 25, increase the amount by $1,104,000,000.

On page 11, line 4, increase the amount by $476,000,000.

On page 11, line 8, increase the amount by $272,000,000.

On page 11, line 12, increase the amount by $116,000,000.

On page 27, line 23, decrease the amount by $4,000,000,000.

On page 27, line 24, decrease the amount by $1,896,000,000.

On page 28, line 3, decrease the amount by $1,104,000,000.

On page 28, line 7, decrease the amount by $476,000,000.

On page 28, line 11, decrease the amount by $272,000,000.

On page 28, line 15, decrease the amount by $116,000,000.

SA 733. Mr. CRAPO (for himself, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. VITTER, Mr. BROWNBACK, and Mr. VOINOVICH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 13, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2010, revising the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal year 2009, and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2011 through 2014; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title II, insert the following:

SEC. 2_____. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR INNOVATIVE LOAN GUARANTEE PROGRAM OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (b), the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations, aggregates, and other levels in this resolution by the amounts provided by a bill, joint resolution, amendment, motion, or conference report that authorizes an additional $50,000,000,000 for use to provide loan guarantees for eligible projects under title XVII of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16511 et seq.).

(b) DEFICIT NEUTRALITY.—Subsection (a) applies only if the legislation described in subsection (a) would not increase the deficit over the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2014 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2019.

SA 734. Mr. CRAPO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 13, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2010, revising the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal year 2009, and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2011 through 2014; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title II, insert the following:

SEC. 2_____. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR NUCLEAR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (b), the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations, aggregates, and other levels in this resolution by the amounts provided by a bill, joint resolution, amendment, motion, or conference report that authorizes nuclear research and development activities, including the Generation IV program, the Advanced Fuel Cycle Initiative, and the Light Water Reactor Sustainability program.

(b) DEFICIT NEUTRALITY.—Subsection (a) applies only if the legislation described in subsection (a) would not increase the deficit over the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2014 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2009 through 2019.

SA 735. Mr. JOHANNS proposed an amendment to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 13, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2010, revising the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal year 2009, and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2011 through 2014; as follows:

Section 202 is amended by inserting at the end the following: ''(c) The Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget shall not revise the allocations in this resolution if the legislation provided for in subsections (a) or (b) is reported from any committee pursuant to section 310 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.''

SA 736. Mr. BOND submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 13, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2010, revising the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal year 2009, and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2011 through 2014; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 33, line 21, after ''economy,'' insert ''without causing significant job loss in regions of the United States vulnerable to manufacturing or energy-intensive job loss such as the coal-dependent Midwest, Great Plains and South,''.

SA 737. Mr. BOND submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 13, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2010, revising the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal year 2009, and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2011 through 2014; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 33, line 21, after ''economy,'' insert ''without increasing fertilizer, diesel, gasoline, electricity or natural gas prices,''.

SA 738. Mr. BOND submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 13, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2010, revising the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal year 2009, and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2011 through 2014; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 33, line 21, after ''economy,'' insert ''without increasing residential retail electricity, natural gas or home heating oil prices,''.

NOTICE OF HEARING

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Committee on Indian Affairs will meet on Thursday, April 2, 2009, at 2:15 p.m. in room 628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing on the following bills: S. 313, White Mountain Apache Tribe Water Right Quantification Act, S. 443, the Hoh Indian Tribe Safe Homelands Act, S. 633, the Tribal Health Promotion and Tribal Colleges and Universities Advancement Act, and H.R. 326, the Cocopah Lands Act.

Those wishing additional information may contact the Indian Affairs Committee at 202–224–2251.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Michael Feldman, a congressional fellow on the Budget Committee, be granted the privilege of the floor for the duration of the consideration of S. Con. Res. 13.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Democratic Budget Committee staff members John Righter, Steve Posner, Joel Friedman, and Republican Budget Committee staff members Jim Hearn, David Fisher, and Jim Carter be granted floor privileges and floor passes during the consideration of S. Con. Res. 13.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

GREENSBURG, KANSAS RECOVERY EXTENSION ACT

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the HELP Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 681 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 681) to provide for special rules relating to assistance concerning the Greensburg, Kansas tornado.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed, a motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and any statements relating to the measure be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (S. 681) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 681

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 ''Greensburg, Kansas Recovery Extension Act''.

SEC. 2. AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS TO ADDRESS GREENSBURG, KANSAS TORNADO.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in the case of any national emergency grant that was made under section 173 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2918) to address the effects of the May 4, 2007, Greensburg, Kansas tornado, funds made available for such grant shall remain available for expenditure through June 30, 2010.

WELCOME HOME VIETNAM VETERANS DAY

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 89 which was submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 89) expressing support for designation of a ''Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day.''

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 89) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 89

Whereas the Vietnam War was fought in Vietnam from 1961 to 1975, and involved North Vietnam and the Viet Cong in conflict with United States Armed Forces and South Vietnam;

Whereas the United States became involved in Vietnam because policy-makers in the United States believed that if the Government of South Vietnam fell to a communist government then communism would spread throughout the rest of Southeast Asia;

Whereas members of the United States Armed Forces began serving in an advisory role to the Government of South Vietnam in 1961;

Whereas, as a result of the Gulf of Tonkin incidents on August 2 and 4, 1964, Congress overwhelmingly passed the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution (Public Law 88–408), on August 7, 1964, which effectively handed over war-making powers to President Johnson until such time as ''peace and security'' had returned to Vietnam;

Whereas, in 1965, United States Armed Forces ground combat units arrived in Vietnam;

Whereas, by the end of 1965, there were 80,000 United States troops in Vietnam, and by 1969 a peak of approximately 543,000 troops was reached;

Whereas, on January 27, 1973, the Treaty of Paris was signed, which required the release of all United States prisoners-of-war held in North Vietnam and the withdrawal of all United States Armed Forces from South Vietnam;

Whereas, on March 30, 1973, the United States Armed Forces completed the withdrawal of combat troops from Vietnam;

Whereas more than 58,000 members of the United States Armed Forces lost their lives in Vietnam and more than 300,000 members of the Armed Forces were wounded;

Whereas, in 1982, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was dedicated in the District of Columbia to commemorate those members of the United States Armed Forces who died or were declared missing-in-action in Vietnam;

Whereas the Vietnam War was an extremely divisive issue among the people of the United States;

Whereas members of the United States Armed Forces who served bravely and faithfully for the United States during the Vietnam War were caught upon their return home in the crossfire of public debate about the involvement of the United States in the Vietnam War;

Whereas the establishment of a ''Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day'' would be an appropriate way to honor those members of the United States Armed Forces who served in Vietnam during the Vietnam War; and

Whereas March 30, 2009, would be an appropriate day to establish as ''Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day'': Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) honors and recognizes the contributions of veterans who served in the United States Armed Forces in Vietnam; and

(2) encourages the people of the United States to observe ''Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day'' with appropriate ceremonies and activities that promote awareness of the contributions of veterans who served in the United States Armed Forces in Vietnam and the importance of helping such veterans readjust to civilian life.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 31, 2009

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m. tomorrow, Tuesday, March 31; that following the prayer and the pledge, the Journal of the proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed to have expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and the Senate resume consideration of S. Con. Res. 13, the concurrent resolution on the budget, under the previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:42 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, March 31, 2009, at 10 a.m.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING VERN MOSS

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 30, 2009

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Vern Moss upon his being named as a ''Distinguished Life Member'' by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 9896. Mr. Moss was honored on Saturday, January 31, 2009.

Vern Moss was born on September 2, 1939 in Yuba City, California. He spent much of his childhood on his uncle's dairy farm in Madera, California. After school, on the weekends and during the summers, Mr. Moss worked in the fields picking cotton, cutting grapes and bucking bales. He attended Pershing School, was a member of the first graduating class at Jefferson Junior High School and attended Madera High School. At age seventeen he left home to live with his aunt and uncle in San Jose; he graduated from San Jose High School in 1958. Upon graduation he moved to Visalia, attended College of the Sequoias, and worked at the Visalia Times-Delta.

In 1963 Mr. Moss received word that he would be drafted, so he immediately joined the U.S. Air Force. He went to Lackland Air Force Base for basic training, followed by technical school at Greenville Air Force Base, Mississippi. His next assignment was Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho. While in Idaho, he attended college courses in the evening. After meeting the necessary requirements, Mr. Moss attended Park College and earned his Bachelor's of Arts degree. Upon returning to Mountain Home, he applied for Officer Training School and was accepted. He was commissioned a Second Lieutenant on February 6, 1967 and directed to report to the 666 Radar Squadron, Mid Valley, California. He served as Administrative Officer, with numerous duties including Chief and Battle Staff Security Control. He was soon sent to Lowry Air Force Base, Colorado for further training.

In October 1968, Mr. Moss was sworn into the U.S. Army at Fort Ord, California; he and his family were quickly transferred to Germany. Upon arriving at HQ TASCOM in Germany, he was made Deputy Commander, 5th Replacement Detachment and Deputy Chief, Personnel Management Branch. Soon after arriving, he was promoted to Unit Commander and Chief PMB. In January 1970, he moved his family back to the states before leaving for Vietnam. He first arrived in Cam Ranh Bay then was told to report to Saigon where he was assigned as the MACV J–6, Executive Officer. During this tour, he was awarded the Bronze Star, Joint Service Commendation Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal with three stars, Vietnam Service Medal and the Vietnam Signal Corp devise (a foreign award).

Upon returning to the United States Mr. Moss attended six months of school at Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana. He served as the Division Postal Officer and then was promoted to Chief, Personnel Management Division in the Division's Adjunct Generals Office at the 4th Infantry Division at Fort Carson, Colorado. An opportunity arose for him to take command of a unit, and he took it; the 4th Infantry Division's Headquarters Company Administrative Command, a unit with over nine hundred service members assigned to it. It was a short lived assignment; he was then reassigned to Germany.

Shortly after arriving, he took command of one of the worst units in Germany. With the Inspector General due to arrive within one week, he assisted the unit as much as he could, but they failed all but two areas during the inspection. After the inspection he was determined to clean up his unit. He sent soldiers to Leavenworth Military Disciplinary Barrack and gave sixty-three expeditious discharges. Six months after taking control of the unit, a Commanding General and the Command Sergeant Major visited the unit; they passed the inspection with all areas satisfactory and with four commendable areas. From there, Mr. Moss became a Major and was selected to Command and General Staff College. He was given the opportunity to start a new unit at Wiesbaden to support the deploying Brigade 75.

In 1976, Mr. Moss attended the ten month program at Command and General Staff College; he graduated in June 1977. His next position was to advise the New York National Guard and United States Army Reserve throughout New York State. After three years, he was nominated and selected to serve in the Organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the Pentagon. His final position in the Army was at Fort Irwin where he was assigned to the Army's National Training Center and served as the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel and Community Activities and finally as the Installation Adjunct General.

Mr. Moss retired from the military on October 1, 1983. Afterward, he and his family moved to Idaho; he obtained a position as a Bank Manager in Los Gatos, California. He moved up through different banks and finally ended in Chowchilla, California in 1985. He has been part of the Chowchilla community since; including serving on the City Council, County Supervisor, President of the Chowchilla Chamber of Commerce, President of Chowchilla Rotary and President of the San Joaquin Valley Rail Commission. Mr. Moss is also a life member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 9896, member of the American Legion and Trinity Pregnancy Resource Center Board (President).

Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Vern Moss upon being named as a ''Distinguished Life Member'' by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 9896. I invite my colleagues to join me in wishing Mr. Moss many years of continued success.

TRIBUTE TO SERGEANT TED WADE, AN AMERICAN HERO

HON. JOHN P. MURTHA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 30, 2009

Mr. MURTHA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the valor and determination of Army Sergeant Ted Wade and his wife Sarah.

An American hero, Ted served his country in Afghanistan with the 82nd Airborne in 2002, and later deployed to Iraq with his unit in July of 2003. On February 14, 2004, the Humvee Ted was riding in hit an improvised explosive device (IED), throwing Ted from the vehicle, severing his right arm, and causing significant traumatic brain injury.

Ted, unconscious and in a coma, was evacuated to the Landstuhl Regional Army Medical Center in Germany and later transferred to a civilian hospital in Germany that specialized in the care he needed. On March 2, 2004, Ted and Sarah came back to the states for recovery at Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

I first met Ted and Sarah while visiting with our wounded soldiers recovering at Walter Reed. Years later I sat with them at the 2007 Capitol Memorial Day Concert, where I learned of Ted's ongoing recovery and Sarah's fight to ensure that he receives the best possible treatment and care.

You see, military and VA doctors said that because of Ted's injuries, he would have little chance of ever walking and talking again. He was shuffled back and forth between doctors at VA facilities in North Carolina and doctors at Walter Reed. Sarah fought through the bureaucratic red tape and forced the VA to allow Ted to see one of the nation's premier traumatic brain injury specialists.

Sarah never gave up on Ted's recovery, and Ted was determined to prove his doctors wrong. Ted has achieved incredible results through his ongoing rehabilitation. He's beaten the odds for recovery, and he's proven that through persistence and perseverance individuals can overcome insurmountable odds in confronting their injuries.

Today, Ted and Sarah continue to press lawmakers and military leaders for better health care for our wounded warriors and for additional funds for the research and treatment of traumatic brain injury (TBI). Through their work, Congress has appropriated over $1.2 billion in just the past two years for TBI programs. Sarah also works closely with the Defense Center of Excellence for Psychological Health-Traumatic Brain Injury to ensure that other wounded service members with Ted's injuries have access to the utmost care.

Madam Speaker, Ted and Sarah Wade are an inspiration to us all. Their courage, commitment, and extraordinary story have shown us the spirit that exemplifies our military families.

RECOGNIZING 188TH ANNIVERSARY OF GREEK INDEPENDENCE

SPEECH OF

HON. NIKI TSONGAS

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 24, 2009

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 273 and to honor the people of Greece on the 188th anniversary of their independence. This occasion is truly a celebration of the shared traditions and values of American and Greek democracy.

Over a million Americans, including the family of my husband Paul, claim Greek heritage. This vibrant community contributes to the fabric of our nation and further reinforces the bond between the United States and Greece.

I had the opportunity to visit Greece just last year as part of a Congressional Delegation to the region and saw firsthand the progress Greece has made in bringing prosperity to its people.

Greece has also stepped forward on the international stage to assist others in the pursuit of freedom and democracy. Through their active engagement in international peacekeeping efforts, the Greek people have shown their leadership on the world stage as well as their commitment to the democratic ideals we share.

Our common values have built an unbreakable bond between our two nations. This bond stretches back to the founding of our country and the establishment of the modern Greek state.

It is only fitting that the House of Representatives celebrate the 188th anniversary of Greek independence; express support for the principles of democratic governance to which the people of Greece are committed; and honor the contributions of Greece to the global community throughout its 188 years as an independent nation.

As an original cosponsor of this important resolution, I urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 273 to honor the 188th anniversary of Greek independence and to recognize the essential role that Greek culture has played in the development of democracy around the world.

A TRIBUTE TO THE MILWAUKEE AREA LABOR COUNCIL

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 30, 2009

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the Milwaukee Area Labor Council. The Milwaukee Area Labor Council is the largest central labor council in Wisconsin. On April 1, 2009, the Milwaukee Area Labor Council will celebrate its 50th anniversary as it continues to work for the betterment of the workers in their three county jurisdiction.

The MALC is not only comprised of AFL–CIO member unions but includes dues paying unions in federations such as Change to Win. Further, MALC has strived to include other unions outside these federations as active supporters, encouraging the membership of federal unions. The MALC works closely with community, retiree, and religious groups in collaboration with such AFL–CIO initiatives as Working America.

The primary mission of the MALC is to support and energize their AFL–CIO affiliated unions in their efforts to organize. Organizing is one of the most important duties they perform and is the engine through which they build strength through membership. However, organizing is not the only function of the MALC. They are politically active in federal, state, city and county initiatives to promote both strong communities and social justice. They research, monitor, meet and support candidates that support working families. The MALC informs and mobilizes their members and strives to support candidates and elected officials who truly help working families. Finally, the MALC publishes the Milwaukee Labor Press, providing important news and motivating labor perspectives to working families.

MALC participates in issues that are important to our community such as working cooperatively with the United Way. The MALC is deeply involved in the annual campaign contributing both strategies and legwork to elevate workplace giving and volunteerism. Union councils and their locals also provide direct help through treasury gifts, volunteer efforts and special charitable support.

MALC also initiates charitable campaigns like the Spring Health and Hygiene Drive. The drive has been so successful in providing health and hygiene products for Milwaukee's homeless shelters that the shelters could reallocate funds for this purpose to other clients needs.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to say the Milwaukee Area Labor Council provides a critical service to the people in the 4th Congressional District. The MALC takes a leading role in charities, legislative work, and social action. The breadth of their membership recognizes the importance of solidarity for all workers and is reflected by the diversity and reach of MALC.

CONGRATULATING THE MID-OHIO REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION ON ITS 40TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. MARY JO KILROY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 30, 2009

Ms. KILROY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) on its 40th anniversary. MORPC has been vital in assisting local governments of Central Ohio to address challenges and opportunities associated with growth and development in the region.

Solving important issues such as transportation, economic development, and energy conservation are vital to our country's success in the 21st century. Central Ohio is grateful to have a long lasting partnership with an organization that tackles these issues and works to solve problems.

The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission partners with over 40 local governments who represent all sectors of central Ohio. Each of these organizations in conjunction with MORPC seeks to improve the quality of life in central Ohio.

Just one of the many examples where MORPC has supported local governments is its work with the state's Clean Ohio Fund. MORPC is assisting the state in restoring and connecting Ohio's natural and urban places by preserving green space farmland, cleaning up brown fields, and improving recreational trails. We have already seen the effects of the Clean Ohio Fund with redevelopment and job creation in central Ohio.

I want to thank MORPC for working with the 44 local partners to ensure prosperity and growth for their communities. I would like to congratulate the leadership of MORPC including Executive Director Chester Jourdan, Chair Dean Ringle, Vice Chair Derrick Clay and Secretary Marilyn Brown.

I acknowledge this historic day with our friends at the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission and celebrate our continued support for their mission. I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating them.

INTRODUCTION OF THE DAIRY AND SHEEP H–2A VISA ENHANCEMENT ACT (H.R. 1660)

HON. JOHN M. McHUGH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 30, 2009

Mr. MCHUGH. Madam Speaker, on March 23, 2009, the Gentleman from New York, Mr. ARCURI, the Gentleman from California, Mr. NUNES, the Gentleman from Utah, Mr. BISHOP, and I introduced legislation, the Dairy and Sheep H–2A Visa Enhancement Act (H.R. 1660). This measure would allow dairy farmers to access the H–2A visa program and codify longstanding regulatory practices used by sheepherders and thus provide certainty to these two industries, which collectively accounted for over $141 billion in economic activity in 2007.

In New York's 23rd District, which I have the privilege of representing, dairy is an integral component of the economy, with approximately 2,000 dairy farms with some 190,000 milk cows dispersed across the 11 counties that comprise the region. Dairy farmers have long overcome natural disasters and wide farm price fluctuations, such as the current nearly 50 percent decline in the price of milk from just one year ago. However, these difficulties are exacerbated by current labor shortages, which cause farms to either remain static in size, shrink, or make a decision to end a way of life and go out of business. Whether in New York or California, with a herd large or small, dairies need sufficiently trained and skilled labor.

Dairy work is demanding and must be done around the clock, 365 days a year. During the past decade, dairy farms throughout the nation have increasingly experienced difficulty in hiring local workers to meet their needs and, as a result, are ever more reliant upon immigrant labor. The tremendous uncertainty regarding that labor supply has a profound impact on their ability to plan for the future and make sound business decisions.

Under the H–2A program, employers may hire foreign workers to perform full-time, temporary or seasonal agricultural work. However, the H–2A program does not work effectively for dairy because the program requires both

the worker and the job to be seasonal and temporary. Thus, the Dairy and Sheep H–2A Visa Enhancement Act would allow dairy farmers to legally hire foreign workers through the program for an initial period of three years with additional terms of three years thereafter without requiring intervening periods of absence.

The bill would also allow sheep ranchers to hire foreign workers through the program on the same terms and codify those existing regulatory practices benefitting American sheep ranchers that have proven to be extremely successful. For more than 60 years, the American sheep industry has been able to utilize the H–2A program to employ foreign sheepherders.

This legislation is currently supported by the following entities: Agri-Mark, Inc.; American AgCredit; American Sheep Industry Association; California Wool Growers Association; CoBank; Colorado Wool Growers Association; Dairy Farmers of America; Dairylea Cooperative Inc.; Farm Credit Services Southwest; Farm Credit of Western New York; Farm Credit West; Federal Land Bank Association of Kingsburg; First Pioneer Farm Credit; Idaho ACA; Idaho Wool Growers Association; Maryland & Virginia Milk Producers; Montana Wool Growers Association; National Milk Producers Federation; Nevada Wool Growers Association; New York Farm Bureau; Northeast Dairy Farmers Cooperatives; Northeast States Association for Agricultural Stewardship; Northwest Farm Credit Services; Oregon Sheep Growers Association; St. Albans Cooperative Creamery; South East Farmers Association; United Dairymen of Arizona; Upstate-Niagara Cooperative; Utah Wool Growers Association; Washington State Sheep Producers; Western Range Association; Western United Dairymen; Wyoming Wool Growers Association; Yankee Farm Credit; and Yosemite Farm Credit.

As I have previously stated, American dairy farmers and sheep ranchers deserve and need access to a stable source of legal workers. Accordingly, Congress should enact the Dairy and Sheep H–2A Visa Enhancement Act without undue delay.

TRIBUTE TO RICK KAPLAN

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 30, 2009

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, on behalf of myself and the Committee on the Judiciary, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize Rick Kaplan, who just recently left the House to take a position with the Federal Communications Commission. Mr. Kaplan served in the Office of the General Counsel for 14 months as an Assistant Counsel. We will miss him.

Mr. Kaplan provided invaluable legal advice and representation to our Committee, particularly in connection with a landmark lawsuit that resulted in a decision recognizing the judicial enforceability of congressional subpoenas to executive branch officials. I and my staff relied on his expertise and guidance both in connection with the many tactical and strategic decisions we were required to make in the course of this important case, and in drafting the legal briefs that were filed in court setting forth the Committee's positions.

Mr. Kaplan played a significant role in safeguarding the legal and institutional interests of the House of Representatives. He served the House with great distinction, and we know he will serve the Federal Communications Commission with that same level of distinction. On behalf of the Committee on the Judiciary, we thank him for his service to the House and extend to him our very best wishes for his continued success.

HONORING MR. MICHAEL H. DAVIS

HON. C.A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 30, 2009

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Madam Speaker, I rise before you today to honor the life of Mr, Michael H. Davis, a man I was honored to work with for many years serving the people of Baltimore County. A brilliant strategist, respected advisor, trusted friend and esteemed attorney, Mike's intellect and passion made a strong impression on everyone he met.

Born and raised in Baltimore, Maryland, Mike always strived to better himself and the world around him. His mother, a homemaker, and father, a Baltimore police officer, instilled in him a great sense of civic duty and a conviction to never forget about the little guy.

Mike was someone who believed in the power of education and discipline. Until his graduation in 1978, he attended The Gilman School on Roland Avenue on scholarship. It was there he met Nick Schloeder, a tough coach and brilliant teacher, who spurred his passion and early interest in the political process. Mike went on to attend Harvard University, a true testament to his academic discipline, graduating with a Bachelor's degree in Economics and Political Science in 1982. From there, he returned to Baltimore to attend the University of Maryland Law School, while simultaneously working on Mayor William Donald Schaefer's reelection campaign.

Mike soon began his career as a lawyer with Smith, Sommerville & Case, and then with Venable LLP. His extraordinary work ethic and knack for problem solving soon earned him the position of Partner at Venable. Though he was leading a successful law career, Mike never strayed far from local politics. He worked on three of Senator Paul Sarbanes' successful campaigns in 1988, 1994 and 2000.

Shortly after my election to the office of Baltimore County Executive in 1994, Mike became my Executive Officer. Mike was instrumental in countless accomplishments for Baltimore County and was a gifted advisor. One award Baltimore County was especially proud to receive was Governing Magazine's selection of Baltimore County as one of the Top Four Best Managed Counties out of 3,000 counties nationally. He was also responsible for helping Baltimore County secure three Triple A Bond ratings during my term. A strong proponent of education, he was responsible for developing a volunteer program partnering county employees with elementary schools, and the School Resource Officers program. Mike's priorities and values were obvious in his work ethic and his accomplishments. After leaving my office, Mike went back to work for Venable, but remained active in politics, advising and sharing his wisdom.

Michael Davis achieved much in his short life but his greatest pride was his family. His wife, Ann, of 24 years was the love of his life and an incredible source of strength. His son, Robert, and daughters, Jessica and Blair, are a tribute to the values he cherished, and the type of father he was. Madam Speaker, I ask that you join with me today to honor the life of Michael H. Davis. His legacy as a brilliant political advisor will be matched only by the memory of his devotion to his friends and family. Even though Mike has passed from this life, the memory of his friendship will remain eternally in the minds and hearts of those he knew and the lives he touched.

EARMARK DECLARATION

HON. MICHAEL R. TURNER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 30, 2009

Mr. TURNER. Madam Speaker, pursuant to the House Republican standards on earmarks, I am submitting the following information regarding earmarks I received as part of H.R. 1105.

1. Project—Lynchburg Police Department Police Equipment Replacement and Modernization

Requesting Member: MICHAEL R. TURNER

Bill Number: H.R. 1105 Division B

Account: COPS Law Enforcement Technology

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Village of Lynchburg

Address of Requesting Entity: 155 South Main Street, Lynchburg, Ohio 45142

Description of Project: Funding will go toward the replacement of outdated police cruisers and will support the inclusion of necessary, modern equipment that will support law enforcement in this community.

2. Project—Employment Training for Reentering Offenders-Turning Point Applied Learning Center

Requesting Member: MICHAEL R. TURNER

Bill Number: H.R. 1105 Division B

Account: OJP-Byrne Discretionary Grants

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Turning Point Applied Learning Center, Inc.

Address of Requesting Entity: Turning Point Applied Learning Center, Inc., 110 Homestead Ave., Hillsboro, OH 45133

Description of Project: Funds for this project will go toward the workforce retraining of ex-offenders in rural Ohio who lack a GED and are seeking basic employment skills and documented work history.

3. Project—Holes Creek, West Carrolton, OH

Requesting Member: MICHAEL R. TURNER

Bill Number: H.R. 1105 Division C

Account: Construction

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Miami Conservancy District

Address of Requesting Entity: 38 E. Monument Ave., Dayton, Ohio 45402

Description of Project: Funds will go toward the construction of a levee and floodwall to protect 13 commercial and industrial properties north of the creek, and purchase three flood prone properties south of the creek and remove the structures, completing this flood protection project.

4. Project—Ohio Environmental Infrastructure, OH, City of Hillsboro, OH

Requesting Member: MICHAEL R. TURNER
Bill Number: H.R. 1105 Division C
Account: Construction
Legal Name of Requesting Entity: City of Hillsboro, Ohio,
Address of Requesting Entity: 130 N. High St., Hillsboro, Ohio 44133
Description of Project: The funds requested would be used by Hillsboro, Ohio, located in rural Highland County for the construction of needed improvements to their wastewater treatment plant and the installation of additional equalization basins. Funds will also be used to upgrade aging water infrastructure for the treatment of waste.

5. Project—Ohio Environmental Infrastructure, OH, City of Dayton, OH
Requesting Member: MICHAEL R. TURNER
Bill Number: H.R. 1105 Division C
Account: Construction
Legal Name of Requesting Entity: CityWide Development Corporation
Address of Requesting Entity: 8 N. Main St., Dayton, Ohio 45402
Description of Project: These funds, authorized by the 2007 WRDA, will provide additional water, sanitary and storm sewer infrastructure to the Tech Town Campus in Dayton, OH. This property is a former brownfield being remediated for future use.

6. Project—Ohio Environmental Infrastructure, OH, Fairview Commons, Dayton, OH
Requesting Member: MICHAEL R. TURNER
Bill Number: H.R. 1105 Division C
Account: Construction
Legal Name of Requesting Entity: CityWide Development Corporation
Address of Requesting Entity: 8 N. Main St., Dayton, Ohio 45402
Description of Project: These funds will provide water and sewer infrastrucutre to neighborhood revitalization efforts underway in low-income neighborhoods in Northwest Dayton.

7. Project—Miamisburg Mound, OU–1 (OH)
Requesting Member: MICHAEL R. TURNER
Bill Number: H.R. 1105 Division C
Account: Defense Environmental Cleanup go.
Legal Name of Requesting Entity: City of Miamisburg, Ohio
Address of Requesting Entity: 10 N. First Street, Miamisburg, OH 45342
Description of Project: Funds for this project will go toward the final cleanup of a non-designed toxic waste landfill, the cleanup of which will allow for the full redevelopment of this former Department of Energy Nuclear Weapons Site.

8. Project—Dietary Intervention, Ohio
Requesting Member: MICHAEL R. TURNER
Bill Number: H.R. 1105, Division A
Account: Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service
Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Ohio State University
Address of Requesting Entity: Dr. William Ravlin 1680 Madison Ave. Wooster, OH
Description of Request: The funding would be used to continue ongoing clinical trials to evaluate new treatments for the prevention of colorectal cancer in conjunction with the cancer research centers within Ohio State University.

9. Project—Children's Medical Center of Dayton, Dayton, OH for facilities and equipment for the Pediatric Trauma Unit and Emergency Center
Requesting Member: MICHAEL R. TURNER
Bill Number: H.R. 1105 Division F
Account: HRSA—Health Facilities and Services
Legal Name of Requesting Entity: The Children's Medical Center of Dayton
Address of Requesting Entity: One Children's Plaza, Dayton, Ohio 45404
Description of Project: Funds for this project will go toward Children's Medical Center's renovation of their Pediatric Trauma and Emergency Center.

10. Project—Clinton Memorial Hospital Regional Health System for Facilities and Equipment
Requesting Member: MICHAEL R. TURNER
Bill Number: H.R. 1105 Division F
Account: HRSA—Health Facilities and Services
Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Clinton Memorial Hospital/dba CMH Regional Health System/Clinton Memorial Hospital
Address of Requesting Entity: PO Box 600, 610 W. Main Street, Wilmington, Ohio 45177
Description of Project: Funds will be used to stabilize an historic structure on hospital grounds, and to renovate this facility for viable hospital use.

11. Project—Premier Health Campus, Franklin, OH, For Facilities and Equipment
Requesting Member: MICHAEL R. TURNER
Bill Number: H.R. 1105 Division F
Account: HRSA—Health Facilities and Services
Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Premier Health Campus—Middletown
Address of Requesting Entity: 1 Medical Center Drive, Franklin, Ohio 45005
Description of Project: Funds will go toward the expansion of the health and health education facilities at Atrium Medical Center in Southwest Ohio.

12. Project—Montgomery County, Dayton, OH for training services for displaced automotive and manufacturing workers
Requesting Member: MICHAEL R. TURNER
Bill Number: H.R. 1105 Division F
Account: Employment and Training Administration (ETA)-Training & Employment Services (TES)
Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Montgomery County, Ohio
Address of Requesting Entity: 451 West Third Street, Dayton, Ohio 45422
Description of Project: Funds for this program will provide for the training and development of displaced automotive and manufacturing workers to fill jobs in the advanced manufacturing, tooling and machine sectors.

13. Project—Aviation Heritage Foundation, Inc., Dayton, OH for exhibit upgrades and purchase of equipment
Requesting Member: MICHAEL R. TURNER
Bill Number: H.R. 1105 Division F
Account: Museums & Libraries
Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Aviation Trail, Inc.
Address of Requesting Entity: P.O. Box 633, Dayton, Ohio 45409
Description of Project: Funds will be used to complete interactive and visual exhibits at the museum, which is a regional asset celebrating the Wright Brothers and the history of aviation.

14. Project—Dayton Society of Natural History, Dayton, OH for Exhibits and Purchase of Equipment
Requesting Member: MICHAEL R. TURNER
Bill Number: H.R. 1105 Division F
Account: Museums and Libraries
Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Dayton Society of Natural History
Address of Requesting Entity: 2600 DeWeese Parkway, Dayton, Ohio 45414
Description of Project: Funds will provide new interactive space science exhibits, and for new museum equipment at the Boonshoft Museum in Dayton, Ohio.

15. Project—Greater Dayton RTA Bus Replacement, OH
Requesting Member: MICHAEL R. TURNER
Bill Number: H.R. 1105 Division I
Account: Bus and Bus Facilities
Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Greater Dayton Regional Transit Authority
Address of Requesting Entity: 4 South Main Street, Dayton, OH 45402
Description of Project: Funds will go toward the replacement of 78 diesel buses between the years of 2008 and 2012.

16. Project—I–75 at South Dixie Drive/Central Avenue Interchange Improvements, OH
Requesting Member: MICHAEL R. TURNER
Bill Number: H.R. 1105 Division I
Account: Interstate Maintenance, Discretionary
Legal Name of Requesting Entity: City of West Carrolton, Ohio
Address of Requesting Entity: 300 E. Central Ave, West Carrolton, Ohio 45449
Description of Project: Funds will go toward constructing the four missing movements at exit 47 on 1–75.

17. Project—Great Miami Boulevard Extension, Dayton, OH
Requesting Member: MICHAEL R. TURNER
Bill Number: H.R. 1105 Division I
Account: Surface Transportation Priorities
Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Montgomery County, Ohio
Address of Requesting Entity: 451 West Third Street, 10th Floor, Dayton, Ohio 45422
Description of Project: Funds will go toward rebuilding Great Miami Boulevard from Riverside Drive to Shaw Avenue and extending Great Miami Boulevard from Shaw Avenue to Forest Avenue.

18. Project—For Acquisition and Demolition of Blighted, Vacant Properties and Buildings in Order to Revitalize the Area
Requesting Member: MICHAEL R. TURNER
Bill Number: H.R. 1105 Division I
Account: Economic Development Initiatives
Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Montgomery County, Ohio
Address of Requesting Entity: 451 West Third Street, Dayton, Ohio 45422
Description of Project: Funds for the Brown Warren Redevelopment Project will go toward acquisition and demolition of blighted, vacant properties and buildings in Dayton, OH in order to revitalize this neighborhood.

19. Project—For Build-out of Approximately 3 Historic Buildings to Make them Tenant Ready for Business Occupancy
Requesting Member: MICHAEL R. TURNER
Bill Number: H.R. 1105 Division I
Account: Economic Development Initiatives
Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Wright Dunbar, Inc.
Address of Requesting Entity: 1105 W. Third St. Dayton, OH 45402
Description of Project: Funds will provide build out of approximately three historic buildings (25,000 square feet) in the Wright-Dunbar historic neighborhood in Dayton, OH, to make them tenant ready for business occupancy.

20. Project—Ohio Hub Cleveland—Columbus Rail Corridor, OH

H.R. 1105 incorrectly named me as a requestor of the "Ohio Hub Cleveland—Columbus Rail Corridor, OH" project in the Research and Development Account of the Federal Rail Administration. I did not request this project.

IN RECOGNITION OF JANICE KAMINIS PLATT IN HONOR OF WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

HON. KATHY CASTOR

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 30, 2009

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Madam Speaker, in recognition of Women's History Month, I rise today to honor Janice Kaminis Platt, a devoted advocate for our natural environment, high ethical standards, and education in the Tampa Bay area. Ms. Platt's life is an example of true integrity in public service.

Ms. Platt was born in St. Petersburg, Florida and is a 1958 graduate of Florida State University where she was the Vice-President of the student body, President of the Student Council and was a member of Phi Beta Kappa and Phi Kappa Phi, Mortar Board, and Hall of Fame. Later in life, from 2004–2006, Ms. Platt returned to her roots, serving as the Chair of the Tampa Bay Phi Beta Kappa Alumni Association.

Ms. Platt's love of Tampa Bay's natural environment formed her strong advocacy for growth management and environmental protections. She was never afraid to say "no" to special interests who sought unwise or untimely permission to promote development or environmental harm.

Ms. Platt was elected to serve on the Tampa City Council from 1974–1978 and then elected to serve as a commissioner on the Hillsborough Board of County Commissioners from 1978–1994 and from 1996–2004. She also served as chair of the commission several times during her tenure.

Ms. Platt was named as a member of the American Library Association's "Freedom to Read Honor Roll" and received the "Best Friend of the Year" award from the Friends of the Library of Hillsborough County, Inc. in 1999. In honor of her committed work with libraries and education, the Jan Kaminis Platt Regional Library was dedicated to her on December 11, 2000. Hillsborough Head Start is viewed as a model among other institutions nationwide because of Jan Platt's guiding hand over many years.

Her extensive list of awards and achievements is remarkable. She has received more than fifty, demonstrating how much time and energy she devotes to truly making a difference. Her awards include: the Florida State University Distinguished Alumna for the College of Social Sciences Award, The University of Tampa Ethics Award, the Mortar Board Distinguished Lifetime Member Award, and the Don Hansen Conservationist of the Year Award.

In her lifetime as a public servant Ms. Platt has been a member of more than 40 community Boards and has served as chair of more than 20 of these organizations. Ms. Platt was also a distinguished member of the Constitutional Revision Commission.

Madam Speaker, Jan Platt is an incredible woman who has dedicated her life to improving reading education in Tampa. I was proud to call her a colleague. She served as one of my most important role models of what a public servant should be. I join many others to applaud her lifelong contribution to the Tampa Bay community.

INTRODUCTION OF A BILL EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THAT PUBLIC SERVANTS BE COMMENDED FOR THEIR DEDICATION AND CONTINUED SERVICE TO THE NATION DURING PUBLIC SERVICE RECOGNITION WEEK, MAY 4 THROUGH MAY 10, 2009

HON. STEPHEN F. LYNCH

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 30, 2009

Mr. LYNCH. Madam Speaker, the week of May 4 through May 10, 2009 marks the 25th anniversary of Public Service Recognition Week (PSRW). PSRW is a week set aside to commemorate the hard work, dedication, and sacrifice made by our Nation's Federal, State and local government employees. As Chairman of the Federal Workforce, Postal Service, and the District of Columbia Subcommittee, I am proud to introduce this resolution honoring public service and public servants.

PSRW offers an opportunity for all Americans to both recognize and learn about the significant contributions public sector employees make on a daily basis to our local communities, states, and country. Whether fighting crime, educating future generations, or serving on the front line to protect our nation, public servants touch every aspect of our lives.

While Public Service Week lasts only seven days, I believe that the contributions and sacrifices of public servants ought to be recognized and appreciated throughout the entire year. By honoring public servants we show younger generations the importance of public service and inspire them to consider entering the field, whether on the federal, State, or local level of government.

We, as a nation, have a responsibility to honor the commitment of government employees and to recognize that our country runs on their diligence and hard work. The commemoration of Public Service Recognition Week stands as a reminder to every citizen that the sacrifices and contributions made by American public employees is what makes our country a more perfect union and our government one that is truly of the people, for the people and by the people.

CONGRATULATING THE MADISON COUNTY, OHIO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ON ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. MARY JO KILROY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 30, 2009

Ms. KILROY. Madam Speaker, today I rise to congratulate the Madison County Chamber of Commerce on the celebration of its 50th anniversary. The Chamber of Commerce has been extremely important in building and growing hundreds of businesses in Madison County. At this significant moment in time, with much volatility and uncertainty in our economy, it is important to recognize the role that local chambers of commerce play.

The Madison County Chamber of Commerce's purpose is to serve the businesses and entrepreneurs in the local community. The Chamber plays an integral role in bringing new ideas and jobs to the area while sustaining small businesses and working on their behalf. Small businesses are the backbone of our economy. They have continued to employ American workers through some of the toughest times in history. These businesses stay true to their employees and do everything they can to positively impact their local community.

The Madison County Chamber of Commerce is working hard to ensure jobs stay at home in Central Ohio. Just last week the Chamber of Commerce announced nearly 15,000 jobs are available in Madison County. These competitive jobs require high levels of training; with my support and the support of the Chamber of Commerce, we are committed to providing the proper resources to equip our workforce with the tools they need to prosper in the 21st Century work environment.

Madam Speaker, I wish that our work here in Washington did not cause me to miss tonight's gathering. As the Madison County Chamber of Commerce begins its anniversary celebration, I am reminded of the importance of Main St. in our national economy and dedicate my efforts to continuing a partnership that benefits central Ohio.

I want to thank all of the businesses that contribute so much to Madison County and Central Ohio. I want to specifically acknowledge the Chamber's current leadership: Executive Director Sean Hughes, President of the Board of Directors Tim Suter, 1st Vice President Brenda Adams, 2nd Vice President Joan Denes, 3rd Vice President Pamela Peterman and Secretary-Treasurer Sarah Hankins-Miller. May the next 50 years be prosperous and successful. I ask that my colleagues join me to acknowledge and celebrate this milestone with my friends at the Madison Chamber of Commerce.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF ELLIE RICKER TO THE SCOTTSDALE SISTER CITIES ASSOCIATION

HON. HARRY E. MITCHELL

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 30, 2009

Mr. MITCHELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Ellie Ricker for the many significant contributions she has made to the Scottsdale Sister Cities Association. She has spent the last 30 years of her life working with Scottsdale's sister cities of Alamos, Mexico; Cairns, Australia; Kingston, Canada; and Interlaken, Switzerland.

Ellie, who is now retiring, was recently honored by Scottsdale Sister Cities for her three decades of loyal, dedicated work for the association and the people who benefit from their labor. She has served as secretary and representative to Cairns and chair of the Alamos and Kingston home-stay committees. Her passionate activism has ranged from organizing

trips to welcoming exchange students into her home.

Last fall, Ellie, along with volunteers from Scottsdale, helped mobilize relief efforts when Alamos, Mexico was struck by a devastating hurricane. She helped provide clothing, food, and relief funds to the residents of Alamos in their mission to rebuild their town.

Ellie and her husband John have had the privilege of traveling all over the world in support of Sister Cities' programs, forming longstanding relationships along their way. Her incredible commitment has raised the bar for all of our citizens and has already inspired many to follow in her path.

Madam Speaker, please join me in recognizing Ellie Ricker's 30 years of work and dedication to Scottsdale Sister Cities and the peoples' lives she has touched.

IN HONOR OF WOODROW WILSON HIGH SCHOOL CELEBRATING ITS 80TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 30, 2009

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Woodrow Wilson High School which will celebrate its eightieth anniversary on April 25, 2009.

Since its founding, Woodrow has always been a special part of Dallas. This historic high school was designed by famed Dallas architect Mark Lemmon. To honor its namesake, the school's cornerstone included a piece of wedding cake from Jesse Wilson Sayre, President Woodrow Wilson's daughter. Over the course of its history, Woodrow has educated thousands of bright individuals, nurturing their talent while providing them with a wonderful learning environment as well as many fond memories. In 2006 and 2008, Woodrow made it to Newsweek's list of America's Top Public High Schools.

It is also the only public high school in the United States proudly hailed as the alma maters of two Heisman Trophy winners: Davey O'Brien and Tim Brown. Other notable alumni include legendary real estate developer Trammell Crow, Congressman SAM JOHNSON, Congressman Jim Collins, Texas Attorney General Jim Maddox, Chief Justice Tom Phillips of the Texas Supreme Court, civic leader Ruth Sharp Altshuler, and seven Dallas area mayors. As Woodrow celebrates eighty years, I know it will continue to be a beacon of academic excellence in Dallas.

I ask my colleagues to join me in offering our heartiest congratulations to the faculty, staff, students, and alumni of Woodrow Wilson High School.

HONORING RON LAWSON

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 30, 2009

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Ron Lawson upon being named as a ''Distinguished Life Member'' by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 9896. Mr. Lawson was honored on Saturday, January 31, 2009.

Mr. Lawson was born in Los Angeles and attended high school in Bell, California. At seventeen he enlisted in the United States Army. He completed basic training at Fort Ord, California and was on his way to Korea. Once in Korea, he joined the First Cavalry for thirteen months, serving with a heavy weapons infantry unit with duties along the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). He was then transferred to Germany where he served for five years with the First ARB 46th Infantry and with the 24th Infantry Division. He had duty in Berlin along the wall at Checkpoint Charlie. Upon his return to the U.S. he was assigned as a weapons instructor at Fort Polk, Louisiana.

He was at Fort Polk for a short amount of time before returning to Korea for a second tour. He served in the 7th Cavalry with the 2nd Infantry Division. When he returned to the U.S., he was selected as an instructor at the Drill Sergeant Academy at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. After completion of the academy, he served as a drill sergeant for new recruits, readying them for advanced training and deployment to Vietnam. In 1970, Mr. Lawson was deployed to Southeast Asia and joined the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam. He was assigned to Team 25 and Mobile Advisory Team 97; Team 25 worked with South Vietnamese Regional Forces in the Central Highlands of II Corps. He provided expert advice to the regional soldiers in tactics while accompanying them on operations against Viet Cong and NVA forces in heavy jungle canopy and rugged mountain terrain. His units also worked with and fought alongside native Montagnard tribesmen. Mr. Lawson was awarded the Bronze Star Medal for his actions while serving with Team 25 and the Vietnam Cross of Gallantry for action with Mobile Team 97.

After completing twelve months in Vietnam, Mr. Lawson returned to Fort Ord and reassumed duties as a drill sergeant. He was reassigned to Germany and joined the 1st Armored Division as Operations Sergeant. He returned to Fort Ord to serve as a first sergeant for the 7th Light Infantry Division until he retired.

During Mr. Lawson's time in the Army he completed many training courses including German Language School, the 24th division NCO Academy, Instructor Preparation Course, Pre-commissioning Course at Fort Benning, Officer Leadership at Fort Ord, Infantry Armor NCO Advanced Course at Fort Benning, the NCO Republic of Vietnam Orientation Course and Drill Sergeant Academy. For his service he was awarded the Bronze Star, the Army Meritorious Service Medal, four Army Commendation Medals, Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with a Gold Star, Vietnam Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal with Device, the Army Occupation award, the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal (Berlin and Korea), Korean Defense Medal, National Defense Service Medal and the Combat Infantry Badge. Mr. Lawson received six letters of commendation and was honored as Fort Ord Drill Sergeant of the Year.

After Mr. Lawson retired he and his family moved to Chowchilla, California and he was employed as a maintenance supervisor. He is a member of the Young Men's Institute, Saint Columba Church and has served as a member of the City of Chowchilla Planning Commission for twenty-one years. He is a life member of the Chowchilla Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 9896 and member of the American Legion Post 148. He is also the Past Commander of Post 9896 and has held the position of Post Quartermaster for several years. Mr. Lawson currently resides in Chowchilla with his wife Mathilda, they have two children and two grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Ron Lawson upon being named as a ''Distinguished Life Member'' by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 9896. I invite my colleagues to join me in wishing Mr. Lawson many years of continued success.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CAROLYN McCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 30, 2009

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Madam Speaker, during rollcall 161 on the amendment offered by Representative GOODLATTE to H.R. 1404, the Federal Land Assistance, Management and Enhancement Act, I recorded a ''yes'' vote. This was in error; I intended to vote ''no.''

This amendment would create a new contract authority for the Secretary of the Agriculture to enter into contracts with states regarding projects on National Forest System lands. I, and many of my colleagues, were concerned that these new contracts might not be subject to Davis-Bacon protections or other relevant federal laws that provide wage protections for workers.

I have been a strong and consistent supporter of Davis-Bacon and of ensuring that America's workers are paid a fair wage. Recently, I voted ''no'' on an amendment to H.R. 1262, the Water Quality Investment Act, that would have removed all Davis-Bacon prevailing wage provisions from the bill.

I regret the error and am pleased that the Goodlatte amendment did not pass.

TRIBUTE TO RON SILVER

HON. MARY BONO MACK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 30, 2009

Mrs. BONO MACK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life of Ron Silver and mourn his untimely passing.

Ron Silver's talent and passion as an artist was evident on the screen, television and the stage. He received numerous awards and accolades from his peers for his memorable performances and his ability to entertain audiences. He cared about his craft and was beloved by the people who had the good fortune to work with him.

It's rare that an individual can successfully navigate through the personalities and politics of both Hollywood and Washington, but Ron Silver was able to master both and gain the respect of all he touched along the way. Ron's good nature and principled patriotism led him to be accepted and trusted by Republicans, Democrats and Independents alike. He was able to accomplish this because no matter

what side of the issues you were on, Ron did not question one's patriotism—he believed that all Americans were united by a common bond and love of country—even if they stood on opposite sides of an issue. That fact in and of itself says a lot about the man.

In Washington, Ron Silver understood the importance of taking the time to study the issues he championed and to Ron that included taking into account all points of view. As a fierce independent, he knew that criticism could come from all sides. Ron knew that it was important not only to understand the policy and politics but also to respect the process and nuances of Washington that too many overlook and, as a result, find themselves facing a more difficult and challenging path to achieve their goals.

Ron Silver's abilities were illustrated in his work as a founder of the Creative Coalition, a collection of artists and entertainers from across the political spectrum who work to educate people about issues ranging from arts funding to First Amendment Rights to fighting poverty. Ron earned immense respect for his tireless work with the Coalition. It wasn't Ron Silver's nature to simply write a column or cut a check—although he was able to do both—he simply had too much energy and too much of an interest in making the lives of others better to limit his advocacy. That was the Ron Silver way—always striving to make a difference and contribute to building a stronger and more secure America.

Ron Silver leaves behind a grateful nation and a loving family. Our nation would be enriched if more of us exercised the same sense of country, level of thoughtfulness and aptly placed priorities as Ron Silver. At the top of such order was his family, who graciously shared their devoted husband and father with the rest of us. Our condolences are with each of you. Please find solace in the memories of the time and special moments you shared and the knowledge that your loved one was the embodiment of all that Thomas Jefferson valued in his countrymen—a citizen who never shied from his responsibilities to make his country a better place. He will be sorely missed.

Thank you Ron Silver.

May God bless you and grant you peace.

THE WORLD'S WORST PERSECUTORS

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 30, 2009

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, the right to worship according to the dictates of your conscience is among the most precious freedoms.

Tragically this basic freedom has not been realized for millions around the globe. On January 16, the State Department designated the annual "Countries of Particular Concern." This notorious distinction is given to countries deemed particularly severe violators of religious freedom. This year the list included Burma, China, Eritrea, Iran, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and Uzbekistan.

Oftentimes the most powerful testimony of the repressive nature of these governments is found in the accounts of their own people.

Take the words of a 23-year-old Burmese monk: "We did not expect that the junta would crush down a peaceful demonstration but when they raided the monasteries, shot and arrested the monks. I was so surprised and unbelievable that I could not express how my feelings were. All my beliefs were also destroyed."

Or the reflections of a Chinese house church leader: "First, when they arrest you, they try to convince you to give up your faith. And when you surrender to them they will offer you an office in a position such as community member or a position in the Three Self church. If you do not deny your faith and surrender to them, then they will attack you. First they put you into a small place, isolate you, and they let you starve to convince you."

Or these insights from North Korea: "North Korea is a prison without bars. The reason why the North Korean system still exists is because of the strict surveillance system. When we provide the information like 'this family believes in a religion from their grandfather's generation,' the National Security Agency will arrest each family member. That is why entire families are scared of one another. Everyone is supposed to be watching one another like this . . .".

With the 1998 passage of the International Religious Freedom Act, legislation which I authored, the promotion of religious freedom became official U.S. foreign policy. Sadly, 10 years later, the fight for this "first freedom" has never been more necessary. We must commit ourselves anew to standing with persecuted people of faith around the world who against all odds, in the face of fear, intimidation, imprisonment, torture and worse gather secretly to worship as their conscience demands.

CONGRATULATING DR. JIM JACOBS

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 30, 2009

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate my good friend, Dr. Jim Jacobs, as he is inaugurated as the Fifth President of Macomb Community College. Jim has the creative intelligence, passion, in-depth knowledge of the challenges facing Michigan, and collaborative energy to lead this fine institution through these next vital years of economic transformation for our State's businesses, workers and communities.

Jim Jacobs has more than 40 years of experience at Macomb Community College. He began teaching economics in 1967 and continued teaching both economics and political science for sixteen years before leading efforts to establish both the Tech Prep and Machinist Training institutes.

Jim Jacobs has a vast array of expertise in the areas of occupational change and technology, suburban economic development, occupational education, retraining of displaced workers and needs assessment of occupational programs. He has played a significant role in these areas at the national, state and local level, both conducting and publishing research and developing programs.

Jim Jacobs is the past president of the National Council for Workforce Education, a national post-secondary organization of occupational education and workforce development specialists. He served on the team that assisted the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth in the development of Reshaping Michigan's Workforce: An Action Plan of the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth. He was also part of the research staff and a report writer for Lt. Governor John Cherry's Commission on Higher Education & Economic Growth.

At the local level, Jim Jacobs is viewed by many as the authoritative voice on the economic climate in Macomb County. Each January for the past 23 years, Jim Jacobs has presented his economic forecast for Macomb County to an often sell-out crowd of business, government and civic leaders. He has also served on a number of community boards, including Peoples State Bank, Macomb Inter-Faith Action Center, United Way and St. John Hospital, and is a member of the board of directors of the Community College Research Center, New York.

I have had the pleasure of working with Jim Jacobs on numerous projects over the years. Including, school-to-work efforts, the redevelopment of the Tank Plant property (the local committee was co-chaired by Jim), worker retraining, and the impact of trade and monetary policies. On a whole range of issues, Jim is always available with wise and thoughtful insights and the economic statistics to make his case.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Dr. Jim Jacobs as he assumes this important position. With his immense skills and masterful understanding of the local area he and the community college will play a key role in continuing efforts to revolutionize the work force in Macomb County to prosper in this new economy.

IN HONOR OF THE STUDENTS AT ANOKA HIGH SCHOOL, MN

HON. MICHELE BACHMANN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 30, 2009

Mrs. BACHMANN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the students at Anoka High School. These students are taking their talents to the next level and joining with the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation to help fellow students that are afflicted by this lifelong disease.

Using the Tony Award-winning musical, Aida, as well as their reputation as one of Minnesota's best high school musical theater programs, students at Anoka High School are learning more than choreography and stage cues. They'll be raising money and awareness for juvenile diabetes. Through the "Kids Showing They Care" program, teens are able to be involved in a larger cause that affects their community and have the opportunity to use their talents and skills to help others. They can also see the growing impact of their seemingly small efforts and understand the importance of a collective effort in a successful production.

I rise today to honor the students at Anoka High School who have taken on an ambitious endeavor today, producing a school musical, that will have a lifelong impact on themselves and others. I commend them for their desire to help others in need and their very mature sense of community.

EARMARK DECLARATION

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 30, 2009

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, pursuant to the U.S. House of Representatives Republican Leadership standards on earmarks, I am submitting the following information for publication in the Congressional Record regarding earmarks I received as part of H.R. 1105, the Omnibus Appropriations Act, 2009:

(1.) Denton Regional Public Safety Training Facility, Denton, TX—$500,000—Byrne Discretionary/COPS Technology—Congressman MICHAEL C. BURGESS

The purpose of this project is to provide the new Denton Public Safety Training Facility with equipment and technology. The requested funding will help equip the facility, including fire simulation equipment, computerized firearm targeting systems, classroom-based virtual reality simulation equipment and administrative/classroom multimedia equipment. The total project cost is $19,260,000–$4,452,000 federal and $14,808,000 City of Denton. The City of Denton has paid $2.03 million for the 88-acre site of the facility, $205,000 on the master plan for the facility and the City Council has approved $12,600,000 to construct the facility.

City of Denton is located at 215 East McKinney, Denton, TX 76201

(2.) Central City, Trinity River Water District—$6 million—MRT Construction—Congressman MICHAEL C. BURGESS

The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is currently sponsoring a flood control project in the Central City area of Fort Worth, TX. The aging levee system in the Central City area is no longer adequate to provide protection to an 800 acre area adjacent to downtown Fort Worth. The infrastructure required for the flood control project is a 1.5 mile bypass channel (used to divert waters during a flood event) and related roads and bridges to span the channel. By providing flood control via a bypass channel, the aging industrial area adjacent to downtown can be revitalized into a vibrant waterfront community. The USACE recommended course of action, as set forth in the Final Environmental Impact Statement, combines solutions to flood control, transportation, environmental restoration and community redevelopment in an integrated, comprehensive plan with multiple partners (state, local and federal) collaborating on implementation and funding.

Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Worth District, located at 819 Taylor Street Fort Worth, Texas 76102

(3.) Upper Trinity River Basin, (USACE)—$382,000—Investigations—Congressman MICHAEL C. BURGESS

The FY 2009 request would be used to complete the Big Fossil Creek Watershed Interim Feasibility Study and Regional Resource Inventory and initiate two new interim feasibility studies on the Irving Northwest Levee and Elm Fork of the Trinity River by developing existing conditions for ecologic, engineering, real estate, cultural, and hydrologic and hydraulic modeling.

Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Worth District, located at 819 Taylor Street Fort Worth, Texas 76102

(4.) Grapevine Lake, USACE, Fort Worth District—$2.692 million—O&M—Congressman MICHAEL C. BURGESS

Grapevine Lake is located in Denton and Tarrant Counties, at river mile 11.7 on Denton Creek, Trinity River Basin, near the city of Grapevine. The funds in this project request would be used for scheduled operations and maintenance, including Murrell Park and Rockledge modernization, habitat restoration, repair erosion in downstream outlet channel and removal of vegetation.

Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Worth District, located at 819 Taylor Street Fort Worth, Texas 76102

(5.) Lewisville Dam, USACE, Fort Worth District—$3.81 million—O&M—Congressman MICHAEL C. BURGESS

This project request and Congressional add is for infrastructure repairs. Non-routine maintenance includes repair and expand seepage collector system and repair gates, frames and liners. This project would also fund scheduled operations and maintenance activities.

Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Worth District, located at 819 Taylor Street Fort Worth, Texas 76102

(6.) Ray Roberts Lake, USACE, Fort Worth District—$1.35 million—O&M—Congressman MICHAEL C. BURGESS

Ray Roberts is located in Denton, Cook and Grayson Counties, near the city of Denton, Texas. The project consists of an earth fill dam, a 100 foot uncontrolled spillway, and a 13 foot diameter gated conduit through the dam with two sluice gates. The proposed use of this funding would be for schedule operations and maintenance activities including repair service on gate, frames, and liners, repair and expand seepage collector system and maintenance of shoreline erosion control.

Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Worth District, located at 819 Taylor Street Fort Worth, Texas 76102

(7.) Center for Advanced Science and Computer Assisted Modeling (CASCAM), University of North Texas—$700,304—Science—Congressman MICHAEL C. BURGESS

CASCAM uses computing and modeling to conduct and predict advanced scientific laboratory outcomes at reduced cost (chemicals, time) and increased safety (reduces need to expose workers to toxic chemicals, radioactive materials). Scientific computing allows determination of the probability of whether or not two chemicals will explode, become a viable pharmaceutical, the next new nanomaterial, or tomorrow's new alternate fuel source.

University of North Texas, located at 1500 Chestnut Street, Denton, TX 76203

(8.) Lewisville Lake, Frisco, Texas, USACE, Fort Worth District—Section 1135—Congressman MICHAEL C. BURGESS

FY 2009 funds would be used to execute the Project Cooperation Agreement and fully fund project design and implementation. The recommended plan consists of the reforestation of approximately 57 acres providing linkage among existing riparian and bottomland hardwood habitat and the construction of a series of wetland cells comprising a total of approximately 39 acres. The total project cost would be shared between the Federal Government and the city of Frisco.

Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Worth District, located at 819 Taylor Street Fort Worth, Texas 76102

(9.) Alliance Airport Runway Extension—$1.75 million—Airport Improvement Program—Congressman MICHAEL C. BURGESS

The Runway Extension Project at Alliance Airport in Denton County will lengthen the runways to 11,000 feet and will allow for greater utilization of the airfield and provide greater capacity as a reliever for DFW International Airport. It will also allow for the cargo carriers to safely maximize their loads and not have to compromise fuel, cargo or both. The increased growth of the airfield will provide many jobs and economic activity. The runway extension project has local, regional and national significance and impacts the infrastructure around the airport. In addition to the runway extension the project will open up the west side of the airport for more airside development and improve access to the Alliance Intermodal facility, which has already proven economic growth benefits to the entire North Texas area. With the advantages of a longer runway at Alliance the nation benefits from this premier intermodal industrial facility that can serve the world. Total Estimated Project Cost (2007 dollars) $216,161,603. Funding for the project has come from a variety of sources, primarily from FAA, AIP discretionary grants. City of Fort Worth matching funds have come from land credits valued at over $15 million. Other funding has been obtained for FM 156, specifically, a $6.5 million priority project in the 2005 Transportation Authorization (TEA–LU) bill and $5.1 in the 2006 Tarrant County Bond Fund.

Alliance Airport, 2221 Alliance Boulevard, Suite 100, Fort Worth, TX 76177–4300

(10.) City of Denton, Denton Municipal Airport Improvements—$570,000—Airport Improvement Program—Congressman MICHAEL C. BURGESS

The Denton Municipal Airport plays an important role in the regional economy, serving as a general aviation hub for North Texas. The City of Denton and the Texas Department of Transportation, Aviation, have made substantial capital improvements in the Denton Airport in the past five years and as a result considerable private development is being realized at this field. The City is requesting discretionary funding for security enhancements at the Denton Airport. These improvements include security fencing and controlled access points to increase airport security and wildlife control. This project is recognized in the current Airport Master Plan. FAA personnel have identified the lack of security fencing as a weakness that needs to be addressed. The installation of the security fencing will further facilitate the current growth trend on the facility as more and more corporate aircraft operators will only utilize secured facilities. The total project cost is $1.1 million; the City of Denton will provide a local match of $110,000.

City of Denton is located at 215 East McKinney, Denton, TX 76201

(11.) Denton County Transportation Authority (DCTA)—$475,000—Buses and Bus Facilities—Congressman MICHAEL C. BURGESS

The DCTA is a county transportation authority, and their mission is to provide safe, customer-focused, and efficient mobility solutions for Denton County, which is a rapidly growing metropolitan area of North Texas. The funds will be used to purchase 16 low-emission replacement buses, as well as to purchase transit system security and resource protection technology and operations and maintenance facility equipment. All of these improvements are needed to enhance DCTA's bus transit service to meet current and future demands. This project is vitally important to meeting their

goals to improve mobility and air quality, reduce congestion and enhance the safety, security, reliability and cost-effectiveness of public transportation in Denton County. The finance plan is to match all federal dollars with DCTA local funds on an 80–20 basis and to complete all purchases in FY 2009.

Denton County Transportation Authority is located at 1660 S. Stemmons, Suite 250, Lewisville, TX 75067

(12.) Fort Worth Transportation Authority, Fleet Replacement and Expansions—$1.425 million—Buses and Bus Facilities—Congressman MICHAEL C. BURGESS

The Fort Worth Transportation Authority (''The T'') is seeking federal funding to purchase 20 Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) coaches to replace the oldest vehicles in The T's fleet. Approximately 20,000 passengers travel on The T's bus system each weekday and they ride a fleet of vehicles that accumulate over 1 million revenue miles per year. Wear and tear on each bus is substantial which leads to the need for timely replacement to avoid service interruptions and increasing maintenance and repair costs. This bus replacement purchase is consistent with The T's plan for fleet upgrades. The buses purchased will be wheel chair accessible and fueled with clean-burning CNG. The buses will also be installed with cameras for improved passenger and driver security.

The Fort Worth Transportation Authority is located at 1600 E Lancaster Ave., Fort Worth, TX 76102

(13.) City of Fort Worth, Interstate 35 Improvement Act—$1.8 million—Interstate Maintenance Discretionary—Congressman MICHAEL C. BURGESS

This funding will provide for the design and environmental work of the initial phase of the improvement of this section of I–35W to provide congestion and air quality relief. I–35 impacts the transportation needs, both personal and commercial, of the entire central United States. The improvement and expansion of I–35W from downtown Fort Worth to its intersection with I–35E in Denton will serve to significantly enhance private and commercial access to the important central city renewal work of the Trinity River Vision project.

The City of Fort Worth is located at 1000 Throckmorton Street, Fort Worth, TX 76102

(14.) Texas Wesleyan University, Fort Worth, TX—$142,000—Economic Development Initiatives—Congressman MICHAEL C. BURGESS

This request is the second phase of the Rosedale Plan which calls for renovation and reconstruction of the historic Dillow House, long a part of Texas Wesleyan life through its history as classrooms, housing, offices, and an alumni center. The University will use this facility as the permanent house for its Business Incubation Center sponsored and supported by its School of Business, and also as a meeting place for alumni and community. Additional funding will be used for student housing to be built along Rosedale, which will provide much needed housing for students and their families. Funding will also be used to create green spaces that will provide parks for the community and the University. The University will create attractive fencing to help define the neighborhood borders and will provide security for this designated area through its on-campus security force.

TEXAS WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY ROSEDALE AVENUE REDEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE 2009–2010

PROJECT BUDGET

A. Historic Dillow House Renovation	
Asbestos abatement	$75,000
Renovation and code compliance	800,000
Technology and access/parking	125.000
	1,000,000
B. Additional Student Housing—Family Housing (20 units)	
Architecture, fees, permits	150,000
Construction	2,400,000
Amenities and site work	350.000
	$2,900,000
C. Park Creation, Fencing, Outdoor Meeting Spaces	
Construction	300,000
Complete Project	4,200,000

Texas Wesleyan University (TWU) is located at 1201 Wesleyan St., Fort Worth, TX 76105

(15.) Stop Six Community Go Center, Fort Worth ISD and Fort Worth Metropolitan Black Chamber of Commerce—$95,000—Elementary and Secondary Education (FIE)—Congressman MICHAEL C. BURGESS

The Stop Six Community Go Center provides a safe environment in which students can explore higher education and career options, financial aid resources, apply for scholarships and receive counseling services to assist in facilitating a seamless transition from high school to college. This funding will help the Go Center hire another academic advisor and a security guard.

Total project costs equate to $134,600. That will be monetary or in-kind contributions.

Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce	$5,000
Fort Worth Independent School District (FWISD)	5,000
University of North Texas Health Science Center (UNTHSC)	18,000
Department of Defense, (donated computers)	5,000
AB Christian Learning Center, Cash on hand	5,000
	38,000

AB Christian Learning Center, (Stop Six Community Go Center) is located at 5009 Brentwood Stair Rd., Suite #101, Fort Worth, TX 76112; mailing address: P.O. Box 54456, Hurst, TX 76054

(16.) City of Fort Worth, Early Childhood Development Program—$285,000—Administration for Children and families (ACF)-Social Services—Congressman MICHAEL C. BURGESS

The City of Fort Worth, Texas seeks $900,000 to support key projects that will significantly advance the Early Childhood Matters Initiative. Early Childhood Matters, a community initiative led by the City that impacts the entire region, will help coordinate resources and programs to benefit children up to 5 years of age. Training and materials from Early Childhood Resource Centers will be used by parents and child care providers. The funds will be used to continue two existing early childhood resource centers and start up two new locations in facilities in high-need neighborhoods. Each neighborhood resource center provides training, support, educational materials and leadership development for parents, children, and child care staff. Together, the 4 resource centers will reach 500 parents, 280 child care staff, and 1,200 children under five years old. Each $1 expended for early childhood training will result in savings of $7 per child due to children not being retained a year at school, taking special education classes, or dropping out of school. A multi-goal Community Action Plan for Early Childhood was approved by City Council in October 2004 and has been endorsed by more than 30 community partners, including the Fort Worth Independent School District (FWISD). Initially, a Health and Human Services Early Learning Opportunities Act grant for $687,000 along with the additional sum of $125,000 in local matching funds and in-kind contributions enabled this program to establish base of operation. Upon receipt of the funding, 1,100 neighborhood families and 80 child care center employees would participate within the first 12 months.

The City of Fort Worth is located at 1000 Throckmorton St., Fort Worth, TX 76102

(17). Texas Wesleyan University (TWU) Doctorate in Nurse Anesthesia Practice Initiative—$247,000—Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)-Health Facilities and Services—Congressman MICHAEL C. BURGESS

This project will support TWU's new doctorate program of nurse anesthesia practice—the second doctoral program of its kind in the United States, and the only program to be offered 100 percent online—originating from the main campus of Texas Wesleyan University. The objective is to develop a distance learning program that will provide extended education to full-time employed Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists who are located in rural or metropolitan areas of the United States. This project provides education via new technologies, including distance learning methodologies, and addresses the Health People 2010 goal set by HHS to eliminate health disparities. The total project cost is $1.86 million; $1.5 federal/$360,000 private.

Texas Wesleyan University (TWU) is located at 1201 Wesleyan St., Fort Worth, TX 76105

HONORING NIS NISSEN

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 30, 2009

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Nis Nissen upon being named as a ''Distinguished Life Member'' by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 9896. Mr. Nissen was honored on Saturday, January 31, 2009.

Mr. Nissen was born in Santa Monica, California in October 1948. He graduated from Mira Costa High School and enlisted in the U.S. Navy in July 1968. He completed Navy boot camp in San Diego. After a brief training period, he was designated as an engineman and was sent to join thousands of American service members fighting the North Vietnamese. He was assigned to the USS *Tutuila*, a 442-foot length, Luzon Internal Combustion

Engine Repair Shop. The USS *Tutuila* functioned as a repair ship for the hundreds of small armed craft, or swift boats, used by the U.S. Navy and their South Vietnamese counterparts in patrolling the numerous inland and coastal waterways. Mr. Nissen and his fellow sailors worked around the clock to keep the swift boats functioning. They were often responsible for towing boats out of hostile areas and transporting wounded sailors to safety.

During his service on the USS *Tutuila*, Mr. Nissen became interested in the work of the medical staff and became a ''striker'' for a rating as a dental technician. He served fifteen months in Vietnam and upon his return to the U.S. he completed training for a dental technician. After dental school he was assigned to the medical facility at the Naval Air Station at Lemoore, California. He was later transferred to Naval Air Station at Kodiak Island, Alaska. He completed his active duty service in 1972.

Upon discharge, Mr. Nissen served as a civilian employee at the U.S. Air Force radar tracking station on Kodiak Island where they tracked Soviet aircraft and missiles. He received an honorable discharge as a Dental Technician third class. He was awarded the National Defense Service Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal with three stars and the Vietnam Campaign with Device. Today, Mr. Nissen is the owner-broker of Old West Realty in Chowchilla. He has served as a charter member of the City of Chowchilla Historical Preservation Commission, is a life member of Chowchilla Veterans of Foreign Wars Post, 9896 and is a member of the Masons.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Nis Nissen upon being named as a ''Distinguished Life Member'' by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 9896. I invite my colleagues to join me in wishing Mr. Nissen many years of continued success.

RECOGNIZING SUNY CORTLAND MEN'S CROSS COUNTRY TEAM

HON. MICHAEL A. ARCURI

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 30, 2009

Mr. ARCURI. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the State University of New York (SUNY) Cortland Men's Cross Country Team, which won its first ever national title on November 22, 2008. During the NCAA Division III Championships at Hanover College in Hanover, Indiana, the Cortland Red Dragons beat 31 competitors with a score of 80 points. The team solidly outpaced the second and third place finishers who scored 115 and 129 points, respectively, and improved on their previous finishes of fourth in 2006 and third in 2007 to win this year's title.

Four of the team's runners earned All-America honors by finishing in the top 35 competitors over the 8,000–meter course. Junior Seth DuBois of Altamont, New York finished seventh; senior Shamus Nally of Burnt Hills, New York, 11th; senior Josh Henry of Truxton, New York, 15th; and junior Justin Wager of Guilderland, New York, 28th.

The team was led by first year head coach Steve Patrick of Batavia, New York and assistant coaches Kathryn Wagner and Jacob Smith. Coach Patrick was named the 2008 Division III Men's Cross Country National Coach of the Year by the United States Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association (USTFCCCA).

Overall, the win marks SUNY Cortland's 22nd national team title, including 16 NCAA crowns in seven different sports.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to represent such skilled and hard-working athletes in my district. Please join me in congratulating the team and wishing them the best of luck in their future athletic and scholarly pursuits.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

HON. ALAN GRAYSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 30, 2009

Mr. GRAYSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month.

As March comes to a close, I would like to commemorate Women's History Month on the House Floor by highlighting the accomplishments of the many courageous women who, throughout history, have worked to improve the lives of all of the citizens of our great nation.

Madam Speaker, I wish to recognize those women whose hard work and dedication have directly impacted the state of Florida, and to commend them for their accomplishments. I would also like to recognize the Florida Women's Hall of Fame, whose mission it is to highlight and preserve the legacies of such women.

A native Floridian, Representative Carrie Meek paved the way for both women and African Americans in Florida by serving in the state House from 1979 to 1982. She was then elected as the first African-American woman in the State Senate, and in 1992 she went on to become the first black woman elected to Congress from Florida.

A champion of gender and racial equality throughout her career, Representative Meek sponsored legislation that created the Florida Commission on the Status of Women, which is tasked with identifying and studying issues that affect women. The Commission also maintains and facilitates the permanent Florida Women's Hall of Fame display, in the State Capitol.

Madam Speaker, another Florida-born trailblazer is former U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno. Ms. Reno has achieved many firsts, and done much for women in her storied career.

She was named staff director of the Judiciary Committee of the Florida House of Representatives in 1971, and is credited with helping to reform the Florida court system during her time there. In 1978, she was appointed as the first female Dade County State Attorney, a position to which she was elected six consecutive times. During her tenure as State Attorney, she developed programs for drug courts and domestic violence.

Following her time serving the State of Florida and as a result of her leadership in the area of criminal justice, Janet Reno was appointed the first female Attorney General of the United States in 1993—a position she held until 2001.

Madam Speaker, another pioneering woman with Florida roots is Ms. Zora Neal Hurston.

In the 1930s anthropologist, folklorist, and writer Zora Neale Hurston collected information on Florida folk life while working for the WPA's Federal Writers Project. As a result of her extensive anthropological research, her writings have become invaluable sources on African American life during the Harlem Renaissance. In all, Hurston wrote four novels and more than 50 published short stories, plays, and essays, and she is best known for her 1937 novel ''Their Eyes Were Watching God.''

Madam Speaker, I would also like to recognize Dr. Gladys Pumariega Soler. Dr. Soler was born in Cuba in 1930 and earned a medical degree from Havana University in 1955. In 1961, Dr. Soler moved to the United States and devoted her career to caring for indigent children in Jacksonville, Florida. Because of her role as director of the Pediatric Clinic at the University Medical Center from 1964 to 1992, for over 25 years Dr. Soler was widely known as ''the Pediatrician.''

These women have dedicated their lives to improving the status of women, and have encouraged people of all genders, races, and ages to reach higher and dream bigger.

As a son, husband, and father, it is a great honor and privilege for me to stand before you and recognize just a few of the many great women throughout history that have contributed their lives to better the lives not only of their peers, but of future generations, as well.

It is important that we continue to honor such women, not just during Women's History Month, but throughout the year, because they have done so much to improve the lives of women and the United States of America.

TRIBUTE TO THOMAS F. McCORMICK

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 30, 2009

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, as Chairman of the Joint Committee on Printing, I wish to note the passing of Thomas F. McCormick, of Niskayuna, New York. Mr. McCormick died March 19, 2009, at age 80. From 1973 until 1977, he served as America's Public Printer, the head of the Government Printing Office (GPO).

Before his appointment as Public Printer by President Nixon, and following active and reserve duty in the Navy, Tom McCormick had a successful career at the General Electric Company. He joined GE's financial management program, and in 1967 he became president and general manager of The Maqua Company, a 420-person printing subsidiary of GE. Thereafter he headed strategic planning for GE's power generation business group in New York City. He took office as Public Printer in March 1973, at that time becoming the youngest person ever appointed to the post.

Tom McCormick served as Public Printer under Presidents Nixon and Ford and he held that position until succeeded by President Carter's appointee. During his term he automated GPO's business systems, expanded management training, and established program performance measures for GPO's operations. He continued GPO's program of replacing hot metal typesetting with electronic photocomposition technology and advocated standardizing print products to achieve savings. He promoted individualized service provision for customer agencies and giving them

more leeway to handle small job orders. He also called for relocating GPO to a new facility at a site in northeast Washington, D.C.

For the library and Government information communities, Tom McCormick supported the fledgling Government Documents Round Table of the American Library Association, and oversaw automating the Monthly Catalog of Government Publications and related measures that helped the lay the groundwork for future electronic dissemination measures. He worked closely with the printing industry and its various organizations and associations nationwide. His service was recognized by numerous industry service awards and distinctions, including an honorary Doctor of Engineering degree from Lehigh University in my own state of Pennsylvania.

Madam Speaker, although Tom McCormick led the GPO long before I came to Congress, I am told that he was an energetic and articulate spokesman for the value of GPO and was an outspoken supporter of the men and women who work there. I commend Tom McCormick's record of service to the Nation and offer the condolences of the Joint Committee on Printing to Beverly, his wife of 55 years, and to their children and their families.

A TRIBUTE TO RICHARD S. UDOFF

HON. C.A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 30, 2009

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Madam Speaker, I rise before you today to honor Mr. Richard S. Udoff, the Joint Veterans Committee of Maryland 2009 Veteran of the Year. His years of service and dedication to our Nation and its Veterans are both admirable and inspiring to all.

Richard enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in August of 1950, soon after the breakout of the Korean War. Upon completion of basic training, he spent 26 weeks training at the Aircraft and Engine School. After graduation he reported to Germany as a member of the 41st Troop Carrier Squadron of the 317th Troop Carrier Wing as a Flight Engineer on a C–119 Flying Box Car. As a result of his military service Richard received the following awards and decorations; Army Good Conduct Medal; Army of Occupation Medal; National Defense Service Medal; Air Crew Wings and two Presidential Unit Citations.

Richard and his twin sister were born in Medford, Massachusetts, along with another brother and sister. He followed his family to Baltimore in 1948, and graduated from Forest Park High School in 1950 where he played baseball, hockey, basketball and ran track. When the Korean War started Richard decided to enlist and serve his Country. Richard returned home in August 1954 receiving an Honorable Discharge with the rank of Staff Sergeant and soon started civilian life working in the insurance business until 1967.

Later in life, Richard began his service organization career with dual membership in the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW). He entered VFW Post 521 in Owings Mills, Maryland where his leadership skills were recognized and he was elected as Post Commander. He excelled with an All State Post Commander his first year and received numerous first and second place awards for VFW programs.

Richard then became District 7 Commander, a position he held for three years. Because of his leadership skills, he was the Captain of the District Commanders All State Commanders Team for two years. Among other accomplishments, Richard was instrumental in setting up a group of VFW members who met men and women serving in Iraq and Afghanistan as they entered and departed from BWI Airport.

In his next role, Richard was the Chief of Staff for VFW State Commander Ron Dickens. He was responsible for heading a committee that provided catered lunches and dinners for the wounded veterans, their families and hospital staff at Bethesda Naval Hospital, Walter Reed Army Hospital and the Malone House. He was appointed a member of the Garrison Forest Veterans Cemetery Advisory Committee and eventually became its Chairman. Richard was the VFW State Junior and Senior Vice Commander and was elected as the VFW State Commander 2007–08 and became an All-American State Commander. He was elected as the Vice Chairman of the JVC and ran a very successful Veteran of the Year Banquet for George Creighton. Richard was elected as the Chairman of the JVC for the 2007–08 term. He received ''The Legion of Honor Bronze Medallion'' presented by the Chapel of Four Chaplains. This past October, he was recently honored and inducted into the ''Maryland Senior Citizens Hall of Fame, Inc. of Baltimore County''. He is a life member of the VFW, the American Legion, Jewish War Veterans, AMVETS, DAV, and a member of the Military Order of the Cooties. Richard has been Captain of the National VFW Honor Guard for the past four years.

Richard and his wife of 52 years, Shirley, reside in Owings Mills, Maryland. They have two children and four grandchildren. Madam Speaker, I ask that you join with me today to recognize Richard S. Udoff for his dedication and loyalty as a Veteran of the United States Armed Forces, and as an advocate and a leader in the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

A TRIBUTE TO JOHN W. DANIELS

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 30, 2009

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to John W. Daniels, a graduate of Harvard Law School and a practicing attorney for over 35 years. Mr. Daniels is the Chairman of Quarles & Brady LLP, located in the 4th Congressional District of Wisconsin.

Mr. Daniels has extensive experience in serving national, regional, local and governmental owners and investors in real estate. He has significant involvement and experience in complex real estate redevelopment, including representing the largest property owner in connection with the redevelopment of both the Bradley Sports Center and the Midwest Airlines Center. He serves as national real estate counsel for Philip Morris Capital Corporation and has represented a number of major corporations on their real estate developments, including General Electric Capital Corporation, Xerox Corporation and Kraft Foods. Finally, he has worked on major public/private ventures with higher education, including serving as a lead advisor to the University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee in connection with a redevelopment of a several hundred thousand square foot project.

Mr. Daniels is very involved in the community and serves on the Board of Directors for the following corporations or agencies; Aurora Health Care, M&I Bank, Zilber Corporation, and the Greater Milwaukee Committee Foundation. The most recent honor to be conferred upon Daniels was his induction into the National Black Lawyers Student's Association Hall of Fame on March 21, 2009. In the following publications, Mr. Daniels was recognized one of the 100 Managing Partners You Need to Know by ''Lawdragon'' and one of the 50 Most Influential Minority Lawyers in America by the ''National Law Journal.'' Additionally, in 2008, Mr. Daniels received the National Bar Association's Leadership Award and he and his wife, Irma, were honored with the St. Francis Children's Center's Humanitarian Award.

Madam Speaker, I congratulate Mr. John W. Daniels on his well deserved recognition. I am pleased that he continues to lend his expertise and knowledge to the people of my district and the greater Milwaukee area. I salute him for his numerous achievements.

HONORING PHIL LYBARGER

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 30, 2009

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Phil Lybarger upon being named as a ''Distinguished Life Member'' by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 9896. Mr. Lybarger was honored on Saturday, January 31, 2009.

Mr. Lybarger was born in Merced and raised in Chowchilla, California; he graduated from Chowchilla High School in 1960. He worked in manufacturing in the San Jose area before enlisting in the United States Army. After completion of basic training at Fort Ord, he reported for training at the Medical Training Specialist School at Fort Sam Houston in Texas. He was then sent for airborne training at Fort Benning, Georgia. He made five jumps from a C–19 to earn the silver wings of a paratrooper. After airborne training, he received orders to join the 173rd Airborne Brigade. Mr. Lybarger reported to the Oakland Navy Terminal and boarded the USS *Billy Mitchell* and headed for Okinawa. Once the ship arrived in Okinawa he participated in numerous field exercises including off-island exercises to Formosa (now Taiwan) and training sessions with Nationalist Chinese troops. He attended jungle warfare/Assault training and participated in an exercise assaulting the East China Sea island of Irimote.

Upon completion of his tour to Southeast Asia, Mr. Lybarger was assigned to the 18th Airborne Corps, 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. At about the same time, the Dominican Republic was in the beginning of civil war. Former President Lyndon Johnson ordered the U.S. military to restore order, and Mr. Lybarger was deployed along with 42,000 Marines and soldiers to the Dominican Republic. He was deployed with the

first wave of troops and remained on the island for as a platoon medic for seven months.

Mr. Lybarger returned to the U.S. and was discharged as a Private First Class. During his service he was designated as an expert marksman with the M–1, M–14 and M–16 rifles. He was awarded Army parachutists wings and made twenty-two jumps including three night jumps. For his service, he was awarded the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal and the National Defense Service Medal.

After life in the military, Mr. Lybarger attended Fresno City College, De Anze College, San Joaquin Valley College and the University of Maryland (Extension) on the G.I. Bill and was employed in manufacturing management. He is a member of the First Church of Religious Science of the Mind and volunteers as an Ombudsman for the State of California Department of Aging. He is a Life Member of Chowchilla Veterans of Foreign War Post 9896, Past Junior Vice Commander of the 11th Veterans of Foreign War District and Past Commander of Post 9896. He is a member of the 82nd Airborne Association and the 173rd Airborne Society. Mr. Lybarger and his wife Virginia continue to live in Chowchilla; they have three children and nine grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Phil Lybarger upon being named as a ''Distinguished Life Member'' by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 9896. I invite my colleagues to join me in wishing Mr. Lybarger many years of continued success.

EXTENDING DED

HON. DONNA F. EDWARDS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 30, 2009

Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland. Madam Speaker, I want to applaud President Obama for extending DED until March 31, 2010, enabling many Liberian families to remain together in the United States for 12 months beyond the original March 31, 2009 expiration of DED. However, I urge the Administration to create a permanent path to citizenship for Liberians who have called the United States home for over a decade.

Temporary Protected Status (TPS) was established in 1991 to allow Liberians fleeing political turmoil to stay in the United States without fear of deportation. Since arriving in the United States in the early 1990s, Liberians under TPS have built lives in this country; they have established careers, paid taxes, and bought property. TPS ended in 2007 and President Bush deferred the enforced departure of Liberians who were originally granted TPS. TPS is meant to provide a temporary safe haven in times of political turmoil or natural disaster. It was not contemplated that the political turmoil in Liberia would persist for so many years, but it did.

Since coming to this country, many Liberians have married and had American-born children. Many have attained United States citizenship themselves. However, according to The New York Times, many of the approximately 3,600 Liberians residing lawfully under DED have applied for legal citizenship, including one of my constituents, Janvier Richards, but the process has been delayed for well over ten years for her and many others. If DED expires before Ms. Richards and other Liberians under DED are granted citizenship, their only legal option is to return to Liberia, which many no longer consider home.

Tremendous strides have been made by Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, and I commend her leadership. Unfortunately, Liberia still has many political and economic challenges to overcome. Liberia has an unemployment rate of about 85 percent and, if Liberians under DED are forced to return to Liberia before economic and political stability are fully established, they may be unable to support themselves and their families.

Again, I applaud President Obama for extending DED for Liberians until 2010, averting the separation of families and the splintering of communities that surely would have occurred had departure been enforced on March 31, 2009. I am hopeful that we will be able to reverse the policies of earlier Administrations and forge a permanent path to citizenship for Liberians under DED.

HILANDER WRESTLERS SET STATE TITLE WINNING STREAK

HON. GREG WALDEN

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 30, 2009

Mr. WALDEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to draw my colleagues' attention to a remarkable and historic athletic feat achieved by the Burns High School Hilanders wrestling teams of Harney County, Oregon.

On February 28, the Hilanders captured their eighth consecutive 3A state wrestling championship. The streak is unprecedented in the state and mark the first time in any sport, at any level, such an accomplishment has been achieved. These eight teams, their coaches, and their families are testament to the commitment to hard work that is pervasive throughout eastern Oregon.

The streak began way back in 2002. Since then, the Hilanders have captured 22 individual state titles, and some have won multiple championships, including Talon Hofman (2001 to 2004), Ben Cate (2003 to 2005), Abe Jacobs (2003 and 2004), and Joe Drinkwater (2008 and 2009).

In 2007, the Hilanders set a new team scoring record for all classifications when they scored 269.5 points at the state championship.

All athletic programs that enjoy longevity of success do so only with the guidance of good leaders. Bill Winn, Mark Hofman, Jeff Kloetzer, and Ray Cate have been tremendous coaches throughout the eight-year run.

Green Bay Packers coaching legend Vince Lombardi once said, ''Individual commitment to a group effort—that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work.''

No doubt, the young men of the Hilanders wrestling program sacrificed more than others in exchange for their committed pursuit of such lofty goals. These wrestlers have spent untold hours running laps around the gymnasium, doing ''up-downs'' until they thought their lungs couldn't take anymore, challenging each other in thousands of take-down drills, and critiquing each other's ''first move off the bottom.''

They spent thousands of miles sitting on busses headed for the next contest. They watched their weight but made sure they were physically strong when the time came. They practiced, and practiced, and practiced again until the moves became automatic. Their many titles are proof of their devotion and sacrifice.

But titles aside, the lessons they learned about what it takes to be the very best are the keepsakes that will serve them well for the rest of their lives. The hardware they've earned for their success is, as they say, the icing on the cake.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the Hilanders wrestling program and the Harney County community for their remarkable achievement. Their unprecedented streak is a reminder to us all of the value of dedication, perseverance, and good old fashioned hard work.

HONORING A RETIRED SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL

HON. ADAM H. PUTNAM

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 30, 2009

Mr. PUTNAM. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor a longstanding civil servant in the Social Security Administration (SSA). Mr. Gregory Alan Elkins was a Title XVI SSI Office Supervisor with the SSA. He worked for the SSA for over 35 years.

Mr. Elkins was hired as a Claims Representative in Lima, Ohio, in October of 1973 and continued to work there until February of 1979. Keeping the same title, he then moved to the Tampa District office. He stayed in the Tampa office until it moved it's location to Plant City, where he stayed until September of 1991.

He moved within the agency to become a Field Representative at the Lakeland office and stayed there until June of 1999. He then earned a promotion to the position of Public Affairs Specialist, the first to take that title in the state of Florida. He stayed in that position until November of 2007 when he took his current position as a Title XVI SSI Office Supervisor. Mr. Elkins is due to retire from this position in March of this year.

On a personal note, Mr. Elkins has a long history of working with the staff in my district office. His knowledge of SSA rules and regulations has been an incomparable boon in helping constituents in my district with their claims. He has spoken at many Medicare Seminars that our office has held to advise our seniors with regards to Social Security, retirement, disability, survivors' benefits, and more. I wish to congratulate Mr. Elkins for a long, successful career and I wish him well in retirement.

INTRODUCTION OF RESIDENTIAL CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING PREVENTION ACT

HON. JIM MATHESON

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 30, 2009

Mr. MATHESON. Madam Speaker, today In introduced the ''Residential Carbon Monoxide

Poisoning Prevention Act'' in the House of Representatives. Carbon monoxide is the leading cause of accidental poisoning deaths in America. Nearly all carbon monoxide poisonings can be prevented by simply placing a carbon monoxide detector in one's home. Carbon monoxide poisoning kills 500 people each year in the U.S. and hospitalizes an additional 20,000 people, according to the Centers for Disease Control. Poisonings occur from several sources, including leaky furnaces that aren't properly serviced, water heaters, stoves, and portable generators that are used inside or in an area with poor ventilation. Carbon monoxide poisonings occur everywhere across the U.S., from cold weather states in which furnaces frequently run to hurricane-prone areas in which residents lose electricity and use portable generators inside.

This is a commonsense bill that incentivizes states to encourage citizens to place carbon monoxide detectors in their homes by establishing grant programs for detectors for which states can apply. This commonsense legislation is supported by both consumer protection groups and national retailers.

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, March 31, 2009 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

APRIL 1

Time to be announced

Environment and Public Works

Business meeting to consider the nomination of Thomas L. Strickland, of Colorado, to be Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, Department of the Interior.

Room to be announced

9:30 a.m.

Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine United States policy toward Afghanistan and Pakistan, with the possibility of a closed session following in SR–222.

SD–106

Foreign Relations

Business meeting to consider pending calendar business.

SD–419

Foreign Relations

International Development and Foreign Assistance, Economic Affairs and International Environmental Protection Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in the 21st Century.

SD–419

Small Business and Entrepreneurship

To hold hearings to examine the nomination of Karen Gordon Mills, of Maine, to be Administrator of the Small Business Administration.

SR–428A

10 a.m.

Environment and Public Works

Clean Air and Nuclear Safety Subcommittee

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Environmental Protection Agency's renewable fuel standard.

SD–406

Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

Business meeting to consider pending calendar business.

SD–430

Appropriations

State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine assistance for civilian casualties of war.

SD–138

Veterans' Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the nomination of W. Scott Gould, of the District of Columbia, to be Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

SR–418

2 p.m.

Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Joe Leonard, Jr., of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Civil Rights, Kathleen A. Merrigan, of Massachusetts, to be Deputy Secretary, James W. Miller, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services, and Dallas P. Tonsager, of South Dakota, to be Under Secretary for Rural Development, all of Department of Agriculture.

SR–328A

2:30 p.m.

Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Business meeting to consider H.R. 35, to amend chapter 22 of title 44, United States Code, popularly known as the Presidential Records Act, to establish procedures for the consideration of claims of constitutionally based privilege against disclosure of Presidential records, S. 599, to amend chapter 81 of title 5, United States Code, to create a presumption that a disability or death of a Federal employee in fire protection activities caused by any certain diseases is the result of the performance of such employee's duty, S. 469, to amend chapter 83 of title 5, United States Code, to modify the computation for part-time service under the Civil Service Retirement System, S. 615, to provide additional personnel authorities for the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, S. 507, to provide for retirement equity for Federal employees in nonforeign areas outside the 48 contiguous States and the District of Columbia, S. 713, to require the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to quickly and fairly address the abundance of surplus manufactures housing units stored by the Federal Government around the country at taxpayer expense, S. 574, to enhance citizen access to Government information and services by establishing that Government documents issued to the public must be written clearly, S. Res. 87, expressing the sense of the Senate that public servants should be commended for their dedication and continued service to the Nation during Public Service Recognition Week, May 4 through 10, 2009, and the nominations of Jane Holl Lute, of New York, to be Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security, and John Berry, of the District of Columbia, to be Director of the Office of Personnel Management.

SD–342

Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of David F. Hamilton, of Indiana, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Seventh Circuit, and Ronald H. Weich, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice.

SD–226

Armed Services

Personnel Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine the implementation of Wounded Warrior policies and programs.

SD–106

3 p.m.

Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine enhanced partnership with Pakistan.

SD–419

3:30 p.m.

Armed Services

Strategic Forces Subcommittee

Emerging Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee

To receive a joint closed briefing to examine nuclear terrorism.

SVC–217

APRIL 2

9 a.m.

Armed Services

Business meeting to markup S. 454, to improve the organization and procedures of the Department of Defense for the acquisition of major weapon systems.

SD–106

10 a.m.

Environment and Public Works

To hold hearings to examine the nomination of Regina McCarthy, of Massachusetts, to be an Assistant Administrator, Office of Air and Radiation, of the Environmental Protection Agency.

SD–406

Finance

To hold hearings to examine the nomination of Kathleen Sebelius, of Kansas, to be Secretary of Health and Human Services.

SD–215

Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine recovery and reinvestment spending.

SD–342

Judiciary

Business meeting to consider S. 515, to amend title 35, United States Code, to provide for patent reform.

SD–226

Appropriations

Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine the role of the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) in addressing the housing crisis.

SD–138

2:15 p.m.

Indian Affairs

To hold hearings to examine S. 313, to resolve water rights claims of the White Mountain Apache Tribe in the State of Arizona, S. 443, to transfer certain land to the United States to be held in trust for the Hoh Indian Tribe, to place land into trust for the Hoh Indian Tribe, S. 633, to establish a program for tribal colleges and universities within the Department of Health and Human Services and to amend the Native American Programs Act of 1974 to authorize the provision of grants and cooperative agreements to tribal colleges and universities, and H.R. 326, to direct the Secretary of the Interior to take lands in Yuma County, Arizona, into trust as part of the reservation of the Cocopah Tribe of Arizona.

SD–628

APRIL 3

9:30 a.m.

Joint Economic Committee

To hold hearings to examine the employment situation for March 2009.

SD–106

APRIL 22

10 a.m.
Armed Services
Readiness and Management Support Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine the current readiness of United States ground forces.
SR–222

2:30 p.m.
Veterans' Affairs
To hold hearings to examine pending health related legislation.
SR–418

MAY 6

9:30 a.m.
Veterans' Affairs
To hold hearings to examine pending benefits related legislation.
SR–418

MAY 21

9:30 a.m.
Veterans' Affairs
Business meeting to markup pending legislation.
SR–418

CANCELLATIONS

APRIL 2

2:30 p.m.
Intelligence
To hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters.
SH–219

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S3941–S4008

Measures Introduced on Friday, March 27, 2009: One resolution was introduced, as follows: S. Con. Res. 13. **Page S3985**

Measures Introduced on Monday, March 30, 2009: Ten bills and four resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 734–743, S. Res. 89–91, and S. Con. Res. 14. **Pages S3985–86**

Measures Reported:

Reported on Friday, March 27, during the adjournment:

S. Con. Res. 13, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2010, revising the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal year 2009, and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2011 through 2014. **Page S3985**

Measures Passed:

Greensburg, Kansas Recovery Extension Act: Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions was discharged from further consideration of S. 681, to provide for special rules relating to assistance concerning the Greensburg, Kansas tornado, and the bill was then passed. **Pages S4007–08**

Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day: Senate agreed to S. Res. 89, expressing support for designation of a ''Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day''. **Page S4008**

Measures Considered:

Budget Resolution—Agreement: Senate began consideration of S. Con. Res. 13, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2010, revising the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal year 2009, and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2011 through 2014, taking action on the following amendments proposed thereto: **Pages S3942–77**

Pending:

Thune Amendment No. 731, to amend the deficit-neutral reserve fund for climate change legislation to require that such legislation does not increase electricity or gasoline prices. **Pages S3972–74**

Johanns Amendment No. 735, to prohibit the use of reconciliation in the Senate for climate change legislation involving a cap and trade system. **Pages S3974–77**

A unanimous-consent-time agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the resolution at 10 a.m., on Tuesday, March 31, 2009, and that the statutory time remaining be 40 hours, with each side controlling 20 hours; provided that Senator Murray be recognized to speak for 15 minutes, following which, Senator Gregg, or his designee, be recognized to propose an amendment, and that there be 1 hour of debate, equally divided and controlled, and that upon conclusion of the debate, Senator Boxer be recognized to offer an amendment relative to Amendment No. 731 (listed above), and that there be 1 hour of debate, equally divided and controlled; provided further, Senator Conrad, or his designee, be recognized to propose a side-by-side amendment relative to Amendment No. 735 (listed above). **Page S3977**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S3986–88**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S3988–S4006**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S4006–07**

Notices of Hearings/Meetings: **Page S4007**

Privileges of the Floor: **Page S4007**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 11 a.m. and adjourned at 6:42 p.m., until 10 a.m. on Tuesday, March 31, 2009. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Acting Majority Leader in today's Record on page S4008.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

No committee meetings were held.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 29 public bills, H.R. 1774–1802; and 10 resolutions, H. Con. Res. 86–89; and H. Res. 295, 297–301 were introduced. **Pages H4128–29**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H4129–30**

Reports Filed: Reports were filed on March 26, 2009 (Omitted from the Record of March 26, 2009) as follows:

H.R. 1256, to protect the public health by providing the Food and Drug Administration with certain authority to regulate tobacco products (H. Rept. 111–58, Pt. 1) and

H.R. 1256, to protect the public health by providing the Food and Drug Administration with certain authority to regulate tobacco products, with amendments (H. Rept. 111–58, Pt. 2).

Reports were filed on March 27, 2009 as follows:

H. Res. 279, providing for the expenses of certain committees of the House of Representatives in the One Hundred Eleventh Congress, with an amendment (H. Rept. 111–59) and

H. Con. Res. 85, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2010 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2009 and 2011 through 2014 (H. Rept. 111–60).

Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 985, to maintain the free flow of information to the public by providing conditions for the federally compelled disclosure of information by certain persons connected with the news media (H. Rept. 111–61);

H.R. 1253, to require that limitations and restrictions on coverage under group health plans be timely disclosed to group health plan sponsors and timely communicated to participants and beneficiaries under such plans in a form that is easily understandable (H. Rept. 111–62, Pt. 1);

H. Res. 294, providing for consideration of the resolution (H. Res. 279) providing for the expenses of certain committees of the House of Representatives in the One Hundred Eleventh Congress (H. Rept. 111–63);

H.R. 1664, to amend the executive compensation provisions of the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 to prohibit unreasonable and excessive compensation and compensation not based on performance standards, with an amendment (H. Rept. 111–64);

H.R. 151, to establish the Daniel Webster Congressional Clerkship Program (H. Rept. 111–65);

H.R. 1299, to make technical corrections to the laws affecting certain administrative authorities of the United States Capitol Police (H. Rept. 111–66); and H. Res. 296, providing for consideration of the Senate amendments to the bill (H.R. 1388) to reauthorize and reform the national service laws (H. Rept. 111–67). **Pages H4127–28**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein she appointed Representative Jackson-Lee (TX) to act as Speaker Pro Tempore for today. **Page H4065**

Recess: The House recessed at 12:42 p.m. and reconvened at 2 p.m. **Page H4066**

Board of Visitors to the United States Merchant Marine Academy—Appointment: The Chair announced the Speaker's appointment of the following Members of the House of Representatives to the Board of Visitors to the United States Merchant Marine Academy: Representatives McCarthy (NY) and King (NY). **Page H4067**

Suspensions: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures:

Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program Reauthorization Act of 2009: H.R. 1171, amended, to amend title 38, United States Code, to reauthorize the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program for fiscal years 2010 through 2014; **Pages H4067–69**

Agreed to amend the title so as to read: "To amend title 38, United States Code, to reauthorize the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program for fiscal years 2010 through 2014, and for other purposes.". **Page H4069**

Amending title 38, United States Code, to expand veteran eligibility for reimbursement by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for emergency treatment furnished in a non-Department facility: H.R. 1377, amended, to amend title 38, United States Code, to expand veteran eligibility for reimbursement by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for emergency treatment furnished in a non-Department facility; **Pages H4069–70**

Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2009: H.R. 1513, to increase, effective as of December 1, 2009, the rates of disability compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for survivors of certain service-connected disabled veterans; **Pages H4070–72**

Honoring the life, achievements, and contributions of Paul Harvey, affectionately known for his signature line, "This is Paul Harvey . . . Good Day": H. Res. 223, amended, to honor the life, achievements, and contributions of Paul Harvey, affectionately known for his signature line, "This is Paul Harvey . . . Good Day"; **Pages H4072–73**

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States remains committed to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO): H. Res. 152, amended, to express the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States remains committed to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO); **Pages H4076–78**

Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Act of 2009: H.R. 1246, to amend the Public Health Service Act regarding early detection, diagnosis, and treatment of hearing loss; **Pages H4078–79**

National Pain Care Policy Act of 2009: H.R. 756, amended, to amend the Public Health Service Act with respect to pain care; **Pages H4079–81**

Melanie Blocker Stokes MOTHERS Act: H.R. 20, amended, to provide for research on, and services for individuals with, postpartum depression and psychosis, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 391 yeas to 8 nays, Roll No. 164; **Pages H4081–84, H4101–02**

Wakefield Act: H.R. 479, amended, to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide a means for continued improvement in emergency medical services for children, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 390 yeas to 6 nays, Roll No. 165; **Pages H4084–86, H4102**

Supporting the observance of Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month: H. Con. Res. 60, to support the observance of Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month; and **Pages H4088–90**

Making technical corrections to the Higher Education Act of 1965: H.R. 1777, to make technical corrections to the Higher Education Act of 1965. **Pages H4093–H4100**

Suspensions—Proceedings Postponed: The House debated the following measures under suspension of the rules. Further proceedings were postponed:

Recognizing the 30th anniversary of the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel: H. Res. 282, amended, to recognize the 30th anniversary of the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel; **Pages H4073–76**

Dextromethorphan Distribution Act of 2009: H.R. 1259, to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to the distribution of the drug dextromethorphan; **Pages H4086–87**

Health Insurance Restrictions and Limitations Clarification Act of 2009: H.R. 1253, to require that limitations and restrictions on coverage under group health plans be timely disclosed to group health plan sponsors and timely communicated to participants and beneficiaries under such plans in a form that is easily understandable; and **Pages H4087–88**

Vision Care for Kids Act of 2009: H.R. 577, amended, to establish a grant program to provide vision care to children. **Pages H4090–93**

Privileged Resolution: The House agreed to table H. Res. 295, raising a question of the privileges of the House, by a yea-and-nay vote of 210 yeas to 173 nays with 13 voting "present", Roll No. 163. **Pages H4100–01**

Privileged Resolution—Intent to Offer: Representative Flake announced his intent to offer a privileged resolution. **Pages H4102–03**

HIT Policy Committee—Appointment: The Chair announced the Speaker's appointment of Mr. Paul Egerman of Weston, Massachusetts to the HIT Policy Committee for a term of 3 years. **Page H4104**

Senate Message: Message received from the Senate by the Clerk and subsequently presented to the House today appears on page H4067.

Quorum Calls—Votes: Three yea-and-nay votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H4101, H4101–02, H4102. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 12:30 p.m. and adjourned at 10:58 p.m.

Committee Meetings

PROVIDING EXPENSES FOR CERTAIN HOUSE COMMITTEES FOR 111TH CONGRESS

Committee on Rules: Granted, by a non-record vote, a closed rule providing for consideration of H. Res. 279, providing for the expenses of certain committees of the House of Representatives in the One Hundred Eleventh Congress. The rule provides one hour of general debate in the House equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on House Administration. The rule provides that the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on House Administration now printed in the resolution shall be considered as adopted. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the resolution and provides that the resolution, as

amended, shall be considered as read. The rule provides one motion to recommit which may not contain instructions. Testimony was heard from Chairman Robert A. Brady of Pennsylvania and Representative Daniel E. Lungren of California.

PROVIDING FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF THE SENATE AMENDMENTS TO H.R. 1388, TO REAUTHORIZE AND REFORM THE NATIONAL SERVICE LAWS

Committee on Rules: Granted, by a non-record vote, a rule providing for the consideration of the Senate amendments to H.R. 1388, to reauthorize and reform the national service laws. The rule makes in order a motion by the Chair of the committee on Education and Labor to concur in the Senate amendments. The rule waives all points of order against the motion except clause 10 of rule XXI. The rule provides that the Senate amendments and the motion shall be considered as read. The rule provides one hour of debate on the motion equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Education and Labor. House Resolution 289 is laid on the table. Testimony was heard from Chairman Miller of California.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 31, 2009

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry: to hold hearings to examine Federal school meal programs, focusing on nutrition for kids in schools, 9:30 a.m., SR–328A.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: business meeting to consider S. 414, to amend the Consumer Credit Protection Act, to ban abusive credit practices, enhance consumer disclosures, protect underage consumers, 10 a.m., SD–538.

Subcommittee on Economic Policy, to hold hearings to examine lessons from the New Deal, 2:30 p.m., SD–538.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: to continue hearings to examine health insurance industry practices, 10:15 a.m., SR–253.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: business meeting to consider S. 531, to provide for the conduct of an in-depth analysis of the impact of energy development and production on the water resources of the United States, S. 598, to amend the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to improve appliance standards, S. 661, to strengthen American manufacturing through improved industrial energy efficiency, Energy Innovation and Workforce Development Title, and the nomination of Thomas L. Strickland, of Colorado, to be Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, Department of the Interior, 10 a.m., SD–366.

Committee on Environment and Public Works: Subcommittee on Water and Wildlife, to hold hearings to examine Environmental Protection Agency's role in promoting water use efficiency, 10 a.m., SD–406.

Committee on Finance: to hold an oversight hearing to examine a six month update on the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP), 10 a.m., SD–215.

Committee on Foreign Relations: business meeting to consider S. 384, to authorize appropriations for fiscal years 2010 through 2014 to provide assistance to foreign countries to promote food security, to stimulate rural economies, and to improve emergency response to food crises, to amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, S. 705, to reauthorize the programs of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, proposed legislation espressing the sense of the Senate regarding the Fifth Summit of the Americas in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, from April 17–19, 2009, S. Con. Res. 11, condemning all forms of anti-Semitism and reaffirming the support of Congress for the mandate of the Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism, S. Res. 9, commemorating 90 years of U.S.-Polish diplomatic relations, during which Poland has proven to be an exceptionally strong partner to the United States in advancing freedom around the world, S. Res. 20, celebrating the 60th anniversary of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, S. Res. 56, urging the Government of Moldova to ensure a fair and democratic election process for the parliamentary elections on April 5, 2009, and the nominations of Esther Brimmer, of the District of Columbia, to be Assistant Secretary for International Organization Affairs, Karl Winfrid Eikenberry, of Florida, to be Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Philip H. Gordon, of the District of Columbia, to be Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs, Rose Eilene Gottemoeller, of Virginia, to be Assistant Secretary for Verification and Compliance, Christopher R. Hill, of Rhode Island, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Career Minister, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Iraq, Richard Rahul Verma, of Maryland, to be Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, and Melanne Verveer, of the District of Columbia, to be Ambassador at Large for Women's Global Issues, all of the Department of State, 2:15 p.m., S–116, Capitol.

Subcommittee on Near Eastern and South and Central Asian Affairs, to hold hearings to examine the return and resettlement of displaced Iraqis, 2:45 p.m., SD–419.

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: to hold hearings to examine the nomination of Kathleen Sebelius, of Kansas, to be Secretary of Health and Human Services, 10 a.m., SH–216.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia, to hold hearings to examine the Office of the Chief Financial Officer, focusing on the progress it has made since the financial crisis of the 1990s, the financial management

challenges in the years ahead, and the steps that are being taken to address those challenges, 10 a.m., SD–342.

Committee on the Judiciary: business meeting to consider pending calendar business, 10 a.m., SD–226.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SH–219.

House

Committee on Agriculture, Subcommittee on Rural Development, Biotechnology, Specialty Crops, and Foreign Agriculture, hearing to review innovative approaches to rural development, 1 p.m., 1300 Longworth.

Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, on Agriculture, on Rural Development and FDA, 10 a.m., 2362–A Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Defense, on Army: Aviation, 9:30 a.m., H–140 Capitol.

Subcommittee on Financial Services, and General Government, on FTC, 10 a.m., 2358–A Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Homeland Security, on Securing the Nation's Rail and Transit Systems, Improving the Efficiency of the Aviation Security System, 10:30 a.m., 2362–B Rayburn.

Subcommittee in Interior, Environment and Related Agencies, on Federal Role in the Arts, 10:30 a.m., 2359 Rayburn.

Committee on Education and Labor, Subcommittee on Workforce Protections, hearing on Green Jobs and their Role in our Economic Recovery, 10 a.m., 2175 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Commerce, Trade, and Consumer Protection, hearing on H.R. 1706, Protecting Consumer Access to Generic Drugs Act of 2009, 11 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Health, hearing on Making Health Care Work for American Families: Protecting the Public Health, 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Emergency Communications, Preparedness, and Response, hearing entitled "Examining Preparedness and Coordination Efforts of First Responders Along the Southwest Border," 10 a.m., 311 Cannon.

Subcommittee on Emergency Threats, Cybersecurity and Science and Technology, hearing entitled "Do the Payment Card Industry Data Standards Reduce Cybercrime?" 2 p.m., 311 Cannon.

Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Commercial and Administrative Law, hearing on VoIP: Who Has Jurisdiction to Tax It? 2 p.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, Refugees, Border Security and International Law, and the Subcommittee on Constitutional, Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, joint hearing on H.R. 847, James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act of 2009, 10 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, oversight hearing on "The California Drought: Actions by Federal and State agencies to address impacts on lands, fisheries, and water users," 10:30 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs, hearing on Afghanistan and Pakistan: Understanding and Engaging Regional Stakeholders, 10 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Rules, to consider the following: H.R. 1664, To amend the executive compensation provisions of the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 to prohibit unreasonable and excessive compensation and compensation not based on performance standards; and H. Con. Res. 85, Setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2010 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2009 and 2011 through 2014, 3 p.m., H–313 Capitol.

Committee on Science and Technology, Subcommittee on Research and Science Education, to mark up the following bills: H.R. 1736, International Science and Technology Cooperation Act of 2009, H.R. 1709, STEM Education Coordination Act of 2009, 2 p.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Technology and Innovation, hearing on the Role of Research in Addressing Climate in Transportation Infrastructure, 10 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Subcommittee on Water Resources, and Environment, hearing on the Tennessee Valley Authority's Kingston Ash Slide: Potential Water Quality Impacts of Coal Combustion Waste Storage, 2 p.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Select Revenue Measurers, hearing on Banking Secrecy Practices and Wealthy American Taxpayers, 10 a.m., 1100 Longworth.

Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, executive, briefing on Armenia, 5 p.m., 304 HVC.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

10 a.m., Tuesday, March 31

Senate Chamber

Program for Tuesday: Senate will continue consideration of S. Con. Res. 13, Budget Resolution.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10:30 a.m., Tuesday, March 31

House Chamber

Program for Tuesday: Consideration of the following suspensions: (1) H. Res. 290—Honoring the lives and mourning the loss of Sergeant Mark Dunakin, Sergeant Ervin Romans, Sergeant Daniel Sakai, and Officer John Hege, Members of the Oakland Police Department in California who were brutally slain in the line of duty; (2) H.R. 985—Free Flow of Information Act of 2009; (3) H.R. 1029—Alien Smuggling and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2009; (4) H.R. 838—Miami Dade College Land Conveyance Act; (5) H. Con. Res. 54—Permitting the use of the Rotunda of the Capitol for a ceremony as part of the commemoration of the days of remembrance of victims of the Holocaust; (6) H.R. 151—Daniel Webster Congressional Clerkship Act of 2009; (7) H.R. 1299—Capitol Police Administrative Technical Corrections Act of 2009. Consideration of Senate amendments to H.R. 1388—Generations Invigorating Volunteerism and Education Act (Subject to a Rule).

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

HOUSE

Arcuri, Michael A., N.Y., E812
Bachmann, Michele, Minn., E809
Bono Mack, Mary, Calif., E808
Brady, Robert A., Pa., E812
Burgess, Michael C., Tex., E810
Castor, Kathy, Fla., E807
Conyers, John, Jr., Mich., E805
Grayson, Alan, Fla., E812
Kilroy, Mary Jo, Ohio, E804, E807
Levin, Sander M., Mich., E809
Lynch, Stephen F., Mass., E807
McCarthy, Carolyn, N.Y., E808
McHugh, John M., N.Y., E804
Mitchell, Harry E., Ariz., E807
Moore, Gwen, Wisc., E804, E813
Murtha, John P., Pa., E803
Radanovich, George, Calif., E803, E808, E811, E813
Ruppersberger, C.A. Dutch, Md., E805, E813
Sessions, Pete, Tex., E808
Tsongas, Niki, Mass., E804
Turner, Michael R., Ohio, E805
Wolf, Frank R., Va., E809

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