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The NNPA is a great American institution in the rich history of African American newspaper gathering, and I am proud to pay tribute to them today.

SOCIAL SECURITY

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

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, at the urging of the Democrat leadership in the Congress, political campaign veterans have formed a new liberal group that plans to raise \$25 to \$50 million to pressure lawmakers to vote against any Social Security plan that includes pre-paid individual retirement accounts.

With straight faces, the Democrats call themselves "Americans United to Protect Social Security."

They say: "The President and his supporters in Congress are messing with the third rail of politics; and we're going to be sure they get zapped" good.

Mr. Speaker, this is about our children. The greatest disservice to our children and grandchildren would be to give in to groups like this who claim there is no problem and who simultaneously use Social Security as a political club to beat down those of us who would dare to strengthen it.

House Democrats have become the party of noes, and they are led by "Minority Leader No." If we do nothing, as some Democrats would have it, today's young workers and future workers will face benefit reductions, payroll tax increases and unprecedented debt.

Mr. Speaker, we should be worried about the next generation, not simply the next election.

WHERE IS THE DEMOCRAT SOCIAL SECURITY PLAN?

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I want to follow up the comments of the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW), because it is one thing for the Democrat Party and the liberal groups in Washington, D.C., the very, very special interest groups, to say we are against whatever the President wants to do. We understand that. But it is another thing when they do not offer their own plan.

What I would ask the Democrat Party is to put your plan on the table, because most people agree with the facts, and the facts are that Social Security is running out of money.

Most people understand life expectancy has changed since Social Security

started in 1937 when folks lived to be 59 years old. Today, they live to be 77 years old.

Most people understand that in 1937 when Social Security started there was 60 workers for every one retiree, and today it is three to one.

Most people understand the changing demographics that caused it so that if you retired in 1980 it took you 2.8 years to get all of your money back that you put into the Social Security Trust Fund, and yet if you retired in 2003 it will take you 17 years to get your money back.

Most people understand that there is a generation-to-generation issue that needs to be addressed.

What I would ask the Democrat Party is just put your plan on the table. Let us take a look at it. Let us take the best of the Democrat ideas, combine them with the best of the Republican ideas for what is best to protect and preserve Social Security for the next generation.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO JOINT COMMITTEE ON PRINTING AND JOINT COMMITTEE OF CONGRESS ON THE LIBRARY

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on House Administration be discharged from further consideration of the resolution (H. Res. 147) electing members to the Joint Committee on Printing and the Joint Committee of Congress on the Library, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BRADLEY of New Hampshire). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 147

Resolved,

SECTION 1. ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO JOINT COMMITTEE ON PRINTING AND JOINT COMMITTEE OF CONGRESS ON THE LIBRARY.

(a) JOINT COMMITTEE ON PRINTING.—The following Members are hereby elected to the Joint Committee on Printing, to serve with the chair of the Committee on House Administration:

- (1) Mr. Doolittle.
- (2) Mr. Reynolds.
- (3) Ms. Millender-McDonald.
- (4) Mr. Brady of Pennsylvania.

(b) JOINT COMMITTEE OF CONGRESS ON THE LIBRARY.—The following Members are hereby elected to the Joint Committee of Congress on the Library, to serve with the chair of the Committee on House Administration:

- (1) Mr. Ehlers.
- (2) Mrs. Miller of Michigan.
- (3) Ms. Millender-McDonald.
- (4) Ms. Zoe Lofgren of California.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. NEY) is recognized for 1 hour.

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

I rise today in support of House Resolution 147, a resolution electing the

House Members to the Joint Committee on Printing and Joint Committee of Congress on the Library.

This important resolution names our House Members to these two committees, and once passed, we may begin to work with the other body, which has already organized, to organize the entire committee for the 109th Congress.

I want to thank my colleagues for agreeing to serve with me on these committees. I would just like to briefly mention that on the Joint Committee on Printing would be the gentleman from California (Mr. DOOLITTLE); the gentleman from New York (Mr. REYNOLDS); the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD), our ranking member; and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRADY).

Joint Committee of Congress on the Library is the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS); the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER), our newest Member; the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD), our ranking member; and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ZOE LOFGREN).

I want to thank our ranking member for working with us on this resolution, and I ask for support of this resolution.

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

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

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Res. 147.

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

There was no objection.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the further consideration of H.R. 1268, and that I may include tabular material on the same.

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

There was no objection.

EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT FOR DEFENSE, THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR, AND TSUNAMI RELIEF, 2005

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 151 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in

the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 1268.

□ 1028

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 1268) making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2005, and for other purposes, with Mr. THORNBERRY in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. When the Committee of the Whole rose on Tuesday, March 15, 2005, the amendment offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. WEINER) had been disposed of, and the bill had been read through page 72, line 17.

It is now in order to consider the fifth amendment listed in the order of the House of March 15, 2005.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. OBEY

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. OBEY:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

TITLE VII—ADDITIONAL GENERAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 7001. None of the funds provided in this Act for national intelligence programs shall be available for obligation until the President submits to the Congress a proposal or procedure to fully inform the congressional intelligence and defense committees of all clandestine military activities for which it is intended that the role of the United States Government will not be apparent or acknowledged publicly and that will be conducted in countries identified by the United States Government as sponsors of terrorism.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order on the gentleman's amendment.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, could I ask the Clerk to read the amendment?

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection, the Clerk will report the amendment.

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the order of the House, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS) each will control 5 minutes.

The gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

□ 1030

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I made clear yesterday that based on conversations with Andy Card, the President's staff director, I have agreed to withdraw this amendment pending the administration's getting together with the leadership of the Committee on Appropriations and working out a process by which activities of the De-

partment of Defense that are classified will in fact be communicated to the Congress. I am not just talking about after the fact; I am talking about a communication prior to the activities.

I simply want to read one sentence from an article that appeared in the New Yorker about this matter. It reads as follows: "The intelligence system is now designed to put competing agencies in competition. What is missing will be the dynamic tension that ensures everyone's priorities in the CIA, the DOD, the FBI and even the Department of Homeland Security. The most insidious implication of the new system is that the Secretary of Defense no longer has to tell people what he is doing so they can ask, 'Why are you doing this? What are your priorities?' Now he can keep all of the mattress mice out of it."

Well, if the Congress considers itself to be mattress mice, then they will not be concerned about the reports that we hear about the Department of Defense's activities. If the Congress takes seriously its obligation to exercise the power of the purse, which is one of only two real powers that we have outside of actual legislating, and if the Congress feels we have an obligation to this institution that transcends our obligation to the committees on which we serve, then the Congress will see to it that the executive branch understands that we are not trying to dictate what they do; we are simply trying to see to it that what they do is consistent with American values and will not get the country in trouble in the first place.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. OBEY. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Chairman, I want to say upfront to the House that it is not my intention to speak on the time I have reserved in opposition to this proposition, so I am asking for a chance for an exchange here with the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY). The gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) and I have spent a good deal of time behind closed doors in appropriate security to discuss matters like this, but especially to express our concern that the Department of Defense communicate regularly with the Congress relative to activities that might involve areas that are, indeed, secure.

I have never told the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) this before, but I will never forget as a mere member of the Subcommittee on Defense and a member of the Intelligence Committee discussing a program that was in the black that I knew about because I happened to be in the back room, but a program that the Department of Defense was not very excited about. We ended up advancing some money to have that program go forward. I have no idea if we would have been unsuccessful with that effort if they had known how serious we were.

It is important that we communicate with each other. Communication is a

two-way street not a one-way street. So for those listening across the river, it is very important to know that the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) is serious about this, and the leadership of the House is serious about it as well.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, I want to make clear that I assume good faith on the part of the White House, and I hope we can work things out. But if we do not, I will be pursuing every possible avenue to see that an amendment such as this is adopted because this Congress has an obligation to know what is happening in some of these covert and clandestine operations.

Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

There was no objection.

The CHAIRMAN. The amendment is withdrawn.

It is now in order to consider the sixth amendment listed in the order of the House of March 15, 2005.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. FILNER

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. FILNER:

At the end of the bill, add the following new title:

TITLE VII—ADDITIONAL GENERAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 701. (a) REQUIREMENT FOR VETERANS HIRING PREFERENCE FOR FEDERAL CONTRACTORS PERFORMING CONTRACTS FOR RECONSTRUCTION IN IRAQ.—None of the funds made available in this Act may be used to enter into a contract with a private sector contractor to perform reconstruction in Iraq unless, as a condition of the contract, or any subcontract at any tier under the contract, the Federal Government requires the contractor and any subcontractor under the contract, when hiring employees who will perform work under the contract (or subcontract), to extend to preference eligible veterans a hiring preference equivalent to the preference extended to preference eligible veterans for civilian employee positions in the Federal Government.

(b) PREFERENCE ELIGIBLE VETERAN DEFINED.—In this section, the term "preference eligible veteran" has the meaning given the term "preference eligible" in section 2108 of title 5.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order on the gentleman's amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. A point of order on the amendment is reserved.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the amendment be read.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the order of the House of March 15, 2005,

the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS) each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER).

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I call this the "Let U.S. Veterans Rebuild Iraq and Afghanistan" amendment. Once again, I rise in support of the veterans of our Nation. We have a major, major operation in Iraq and Afghanistan. The bill on the floor today appropriates a sum of \$81 billion, and we will be spending over \$200 billion. It seems to me that we ought to guarantee jobs to veterans with companies that are awarded government contracts from this fund. Our active duty are fighting, but those who volunteer to go and help in other ways should have the preference that their veterans' service offers.

We have all rallied to support our troops, but often after they come home, our veterans are not treated with the respect they deserve. I outlined yesterday the lack of respect that they will have and continue to have because of lack of adequate funding in the health care system. PTSD, post-traumatic stress disorder, for example, will not have the funding that is needed to treat what is expected to arise out of the current war. As I said yesterday, research funds are being cut, nurses' positions are being cut.

I tried yesterday to put an amendment on the floor that would supplement this supplemental with an additional \$3 billion that the veterans groups think and have testified and have outlined is necessary. That \$3 billion was not added in yesterday's supplemental. So today I ask that we ensure that there are jobs for our Nation's veterans, whether they are new or old. Let us give them the preference that they have in law at home with the preference for the contracts that are being awarded with such abandon in the Middle East today.

We know, if we do not serve our veterans with jobs or health care, what occurs. We know that up to half of the homeless on the streets today are veterans, mainly from Vietnam, because we did not give them the honor, the respect, the health care, the jobs, the housing that they needed. And so they are on the street after having fought for this country. One way to make sure that this does not happen to anyone else is to include veterans in the rebuilding of Iraq and Afghanistan. Many of them fought for freedom for those nations. Let us get them involved in the effort to build the future.

Mr. Chairman, I hope that the rules are not invoked here once again to stop a commonsense approach to helping our veterans in this Nation.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, the gentleman's amendment is most intriguing. The gentleman is interested in having opportunity for veterans to gain employment. I presume they are veterans, whether veterans of World War II or circumstances in Iraq or otherwise. I presume that is the case. I certainly would be supportive of ensuring every veteran has an opportunity to find work, wherever the veteran might have served. I would like to engage in a colloquy with the gentleman.

Yesterday we had a discussion on the floor of the House relative to the gentleman's wanting to ensure there were additional funding flows for veterans. There was some resistance to that suggestion because some of us thought there was money in the pipeline that adequately serviced the hospitals; and in regular order we would make sure whatever was necessary would be available, at future hearings and markups of bills that affect funding. So I want to ask a question: There is a veterans hospital in San Diego County, is there not?

Mr. FILNER. Of course.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Chairman, I am trying to remember, what is the name of that hospital. I am trying to remember.

Mr. FILNER. La Jolla.

Mr. LEWIS of California. San Diego Veterans Medical Center in La Jolla. And does it happen to be in the gentleman's district?

Mr. FILNER. No, it is not.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Chairman, it is my understanding that hospital needs a lot of work. I assume the gentleman suggests that veterans ought to be first in line if we do some refurbishing?

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Chairman, in last year's appropriation bill, that hospital was awarded close to \$100 million for seismic refitting, retrofitting for earthquake safety.

Mr. LEWIS of California. And was the gentleman involved in that?

Mr. FILNER. Yes, sir.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Chairman, I would ask the gentleman, did we successfully get money for that seismic retrofitting?

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Chairman, yes, in last year's appropriation bill, La Jolla Medical Center was one of a variety of hospitals, I think about two dozen.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Chairman, I wish the gentleman would have discussed that with me at the time.

We had a similar problem at Loma Linda Veterans Medical Center, the sister hospital of the Jerry Pettis Veterans Hospital, and we found a way to do seismic retrofitting by way of using a laser. No portion of the hospital needs to be closed down while the work is being done. Thereby, patients can ac-

tually be in the hospital while the work is being done. We did not have that discussion.

Mr. Chairman, has the gentleman visited that hospital in the last years?

Mr. FILNER. Many times.

Mr. LEWIS of California. In the last year?

Mr. FILNER. Yes, sir.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Chairman, I attempt to visit my hospital regularly as well. And, indeed, visit the veterans who are now back at Walter Reed or Bethesda. Indeed, we all should be concerned about that priority.

But, frankly, I am a bit incensed by the gentleman's suggestion yesterday that would indicate that we do not give priority on a bipartisan basis to veterans. I would ask the gentleman to join me in a special mission. Would the gentleman consider the mission?

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Chairman, whatever the gentleman from California (Chairman LEWIS) suggests, I would consider.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Chairman, the mission is the veterans service organizations are a great voice for veterans here in Washington. Like the gentleman, they are constantly pounding their chest saying, I am calling for money, more opportunity for veterans. I insist that they help us go back to where the hospitals are and see that veterans are treated like real human beings in those hospitals. I cannot get the VSOs to do it. Maybe I can get the gentleman to do it because the gentleman is obviously more concerned than the VSOs are about those veterans benefits and the way they are being treated.

Mr. Chairman, I ask, would the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) join me in that effort, or does the gentleman believe the money is being spent very well at veterans hospitals?

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Chairman, if the gentleman would continue to yield, look, everybody wants efficiencies in this system; but I will say, for a paralyzed veteran with a spinal cord injury, there is no better place than the VA to get care.

□ 1045

To keep that quality of care for those veterans requires investment in our system. We are all looking for efficiencies but I will tell you there is no independent person, including the VA.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Chairman, I reclaim my time. . . .

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Chairman, the gentleman asked me a question.

Including the VA that says that we have enough money.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Who says we do not have enough money? . . .

Mr. FILNER. The VA says we do not have enough money. . . .

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman will suspend.

The Chair has been trying to facilitate this colloquy, but the Chair will

now insist that Members follow regular order in yielding and reclaiming time Members will not speak at the same time.

The gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS) controls the time and is recognized for the remainder of his time.

Mr. LEWIS of California. How much time do I have remaining, Mr. Chairman?

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman has 15 seconds.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Let me say that we made a major effort to see that veterans in our hospital did not have to walk around with folders under their arm. We insisted on computerization within that hospital. The gentleman could help me a lot helping the VSOs to really work with veterans where they are being treated or not treated so well.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Chairman, I make a point of order against the amendment because it proposes to change existing law and constitutes legislation on an appropriations bill which violates clause 2 rule XXI.

The rule states that an amendment to a general appropriation bill shall not be in order if it changes existing law or imposes additional duties.

I ask for the Chair's ruling.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Chairman, I wish to be heard on the point of order.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman is recognized.

Mr. FILNER. Once again we are using the rules to block a common-sense amendment. It seems to me that the chairman has deeper issues than a blocking of the thing on a procedural ground and feels that the VA is not doing its job. That is obviously a deep issue that we ought to discuss, but that should not lead him to block this amendment.

In addition, the only way I could judge the sincerity of the majority party in these issues is to see what they had done to the chairman of the committee I have sat on for the last 12 years; that is, the VA Committee. The chairman was removed from that job, purged from that job because he stood up for veterans.

I hope, Mr. Chairman, that the gentleman will join me on a mission as I join him on a mission for accountability and efficiency to convince the leadership of his party to put back on that committee members of the committee who actually fight for veterans.

Once again, I think the veterans of this Nation ought to understand that the rules of this House can be waived for anything that the majority party wants, but when it comes to the veterans of this Nation, they refuse to waive the rules.

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair is prepared to rule on the point of order.

The Chair finds that the amendment, although in the form of a limitation, proposes a legislative contingency imposing new duties on the Executive.

As such, the amendment violates clause 2 of rule XXI. The point of order is sustained.

It is now in order to consider the seventh amendment listed in the order of the House of March 15, 2005.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. VELÁZQUEZ

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment offered by Ms. VELÁZQUEZ:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

TITLE VII—ADDITIONAL GENERAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 7001. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used to fund any contract in contravention of section 15(g)(2) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 644(g)(2)).

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the order of the House of March 15, 2005, the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ).

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Ms. VELÁZQUEZ asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chairman, Federal contracts for overseas work have increased substantially over the last several years. This rapid increase in government buying is largely the result of the war in Iraq and combating terrorism. Since the spring of 2003, Congress has appropriated close to \$200 billion for operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. The supplemental appropriations bill we are considering today provides an additional \$81 billion.

Much of this funding will be spent on contracts for overseas work, and most of these contracts will be awarded to large corporations. Unfortunately, while 23 percent of contracting dollars spent domestically must include small businesses, there is no requirement that small companies have access to the bulk of overseas contracts. My amendment would change that by requiring that small businesses have access to international contracts just as they do for domestic work.

Federal agencies currently do not include overseas contracts when calculating their small businesses goals. Therefore, there are no means of holding agencies accountable for providing U.S. small companies with access to international work. As a result, only 1 percent of government overseas contracts are awarded to small companies, and barely 500 of the more than 23 million U.S. small businesses are performing work abroad. By requiring that contracts funded by this bill are calculated in the Federal Government's small business goals, we start to instill credibility in the system while ensuring that small firms receive their fair share.

These goals were enacted to ensure small business participation in the

Federal marketplace. However, the Federal Government has failed to meet its small business goal in each of the last 5 years. In one year alone, this failure cost U.S. small businesses over \$15 billion in lost contracting opportunities.

We have a lot to make up for with our Nation's small business owners. We can start by ensuring that they have access to overseas contracts.

Mr. Chairman, there are 23 million small businesses in the United States. They represent 99 percent of all employers, create three out of four new jobs, and employ more than half of all private sector workers. Historically, when the government has needed to build up for military operations, it has turned to small businesses to fulfill its procurement needs because of their flexibility and quick response time.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Chairman, will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. LEWIS of California. I appreciate the gentlewoman from New York yielding. Como esta.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Gracias.

I am sorry. I thought this was English-only here.

Mr. LEWIS of California. I wanted to say to the gentlewoman, first, I very much appreciate the thrust of her amendment. While we are prepared to accept her amendment, let me add to that there could be some resistance, perhaps, on the part of the State Department. If there is resistance, it is because they have never seen fit to apply the existing law to overseas contracts. I think that is a small mistake on their part, frankly, if they have not. I think the gentlewoman is not just raising an important point but a point that needed to be made.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chairman, I really appreciate the gentleman's support of this amendment. I would say that it does not surprise me that the Department of State would raise a concern because they are the worst offenders when it comes to fulfilling the statutory goals set by Congress regarding contracting practices on behalf of small businesses in our Nation. I would love to see that the gentleman work with me on behalf of small businesses and make sure that in this \$81 billion there is small business participation. They can do the work and they can do it more effectively than many of the large corporations that are mismanaging and misappropriating much of the money that has been spent so far.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Let me say to the gentlewoman that her amendment is overdue. I am happy to accept it and I am happy to be her partner on behalf of small business in America.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. MARKEY

The CHAIRMAN. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the ayes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. MARKEY:

Page 72, after line 17, insert the following:

TITLE VII—ADDITIONAL GENERAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 7001. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used in contravention of the following laws enacted or regulations promulgated to implement the United Nations Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (done at New York on December 10, 1984):

(1) Section 2340A of title 18, United States Code.

(2) Section 2242 of the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998 (division G of Public Law 105-277; 112 Stat. 2681-822; 8 U.S.C. 1231 note) and any regulations prescribed thereto, including regulations under part 208 of title 8, Code of Federal Regulations, and part 95 of title 22, Code of Federal Regulations.

RECORDED VOTE

The CHAIRMAN. A recorded vote has been demanded. A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 420, noes 2, answered “present” 3, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 75]

AYES—420

Abercrombie	Brown (OH)	Cummings
Ackerman	Brown (SC)	Cunningham
Aderholt	Brown, Corrine	Davis (AL)
Akin	Brown-Waite,	Davis (CA)
Alexander	Ginny	Davis (FL)
Allen	Burgess	Davis (IL)
Andrews	Burton (IN)	Davis (KY)
Baca	Butterfield	Davis (TN)
Bachus	Buyer	Davis, Jo Ann
Baldwin	Calvert	Davis, Tom
Barrett (SC)	Camp	Deal (GA)
Barrow	Cannon	DeFazio
Bartlett (MD)	Cantor	DeGette
Barton (TX)	Capito	Delahunt
Bass	Capps	DeLauro
Bean	Capuano	DeLay
Beauprez	Cardin	Dent
Becerra	Cardoza	Diaz-Balart, L.
Berkley	Carnahan	Diaz-Balart, M.
Berman	Carson	Dicks
Berry	Carter	Dingell
Biggert	Case	Doggett
Bilirakis	Castle	Doolittle
Bishop (GA)	Chabot	Doyle
Bishop (NY)	Chandler	Drake
Bishop (UT)	Chocola	Dreier
Blackburn	Clay	Duncan
Blumenauer	Cleaver	Edwards
Blunt	Clyburn	Ehlers
Boehlert	Coble	Emanuel
Boehner	Cole (OK)	Emerson
Bonilla	Conaway	Engel
Bonner	Conyers	English (PA)
Bono	Cooper	Eshoo
Boozman	Costa	Etheridge
Boren	Costello	Evans
Boswell	Cox	Everett
Boustany	Cramer	Farr
Boyd	Crenshaw	Fattah
Bradley (NH)	Crowley	Feeney
Brady (PA)	Cuellar	Ferguson
Brady (TX)	Culberson	Filner

Fitzpatrick (PA)	Levin	Regula	Wolf	Wu	Young (AK)
Flake	Lewis (CA)	Rehberg	Woolsey	Wynn	Young (FL)
Foley	Lewis (GA)	Reichert			
Forbes	Lewis (KY)	Renzi		NOES—2	
Ford	Linder	Reyes	Hayes	Souder	
Fortenberry	Lipinski	Reynolds			ANSWERED “PRESENT”—3
Fossella	LoBiondo	Rogers (AL)			
Fox	Lofgren, Zoe	Rogers (KY)	Price (GA)	Rohrabacher	Westmoreland
Fox	Lowey	Rogers (MI)			NOT VOTING—9
Frank (MA)	Lucas	Ros-Lehtinen			
Franks (AZ)	Lungren, Daniel	Ross	Baird	Cubin	Portman
Frelinghuysen	E.	Rothman	Baker	Larsen (WA)	Royal-Allard
Gallely	Lynch	Royce	Boucher	McKinney	Sweeney
Garrett (NJ)	Mack	Ruppertsberger			
Gerlach	Maloney	Rush			□ 1122
Gibbons	Manzullo	Ryan (OH)		Messrs.	KLING, PUTNAM,
Gilchrest	Marchant	Ryan (WI)		CARDOZA,	TANCREDO, BLUNT,
Gillmor	Markey	Ryun (KS)		SMITH of Texas,	GOODLATTE,
Gingrey	Marshall	Sabo		MCHENRY, THOMAS, AKIN, FLATKE	and EHLERS and Mrs. EMERSON
Gohmert	Matheson	Salazar		changed their vote from “no” to “aye”.	
Gonzalez	Matsui	Sanchez, Linda		Messrs. PRICE of Georgia, WEST-	MORELAND and ROHRBACHER
Goode	McCarthy	T.		changed their vote from “aye” to	“present”.
Goodlatte	McCaul (TX)	Sanchez, Loretta		So the amendment was agreed to.	
Gordon	McCollum (MN)	Sanders		The result of the vote was announced	as above recorded.
Granger	McCotter	Saxton		Stated for:	
Graves	McCrery	Schakowsky		Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Chairman, due to a	previously scheduled commitment
Green (WI)	McDermott	Schiff		away from Capitol Hill, I was unavoidably	detained and regretfully missed
Green (VA)	McGovern	Schwartz (PA)		rollcall vote No. 75, the Mar-	key Amendment. Had I been present,
Green, Gene	McHenry	Schwarz (MI)		I would have voted “aye.”	
Grijalva	McHugh	Scott (GA)		Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, time and	time again, the Bush administration
Gutierrez	McIntyre	Scott (VA)		has not been straightforward with	Congress, the American people,
Gutknecht	McKeon	Sensenbrenner		or our soldiers about the costs of	this war and what it will take to
Hall	McMorris	Serrano		ensure stability and security in	Iraq so our troops can return
Harman	McNulty	Sessions		home.	
Harris	Meehan	Shadegg		Instead of disclosing the actual	findings of field reports on
Hart	Meeke (FL)	Shaw		contracting audits, troop needs,	or the projected cost of the
Hastings (FL)	Meeke (NY)	Shays		reconstruction effort, the adminis-	tration has withheld, distorted,
Hastings (WA)	Melancon	Sherman		and even deliberately hidden	information.
Hayworth	Menendez	Sherwood		Just this week, despite the adminis-	tration’s refusal to turn
Hefley	Mica	Shimkus		Pentagon audits over to Con-	gress, I obtained a report by
Hensarling	Michaud	Shuster		Defense Department auditors	concluding that Halliburton
Herger	Millender-	Simmons		overcharged the U.S. Government	more than \$100 million for a
Herseth	McDonald	Simpson		single task order under its no-bid	\$7 billion contract to restore
Higgins	Miller (FL)	Skelton		Iraq’s oil infrastructure. I would	like to know why unredacted
Hinojosa	Miller (MI)	Slaughter		versions of this audit report and	the audit reports on nine
Hobson	Miller (NC)	Smith (NJ)		additional task orders are still	being withheld from Congress.
Hoeckstra	Miller, Gary	Smith (TX)		I have also learned that adminis-	tration officials violated a U.N.
Holden	Miller, George	Smith (WA)		tration only provided heavily	redacted audits to the interna-
Holt	Mollohan	Snyder		tional auditors charged with	overseeing the Iraqi oil revenue
Honda	Moore (KS)	Sodrel		used to pay Halliburton’s	inflated costs.
Hooley	Moore (WI)	Solis		Worst of all, correspondence	between the Army Corps of
Hostettler	Moran (KS)	Spratt		between the Army Corps of	Engineers and Halliburton
Hoyer	Moran (VA)	Stark		officials indicates it was	Halliburton that blacked-
Hulshof	Murphy	Stearns		out references to egregious	overcharges and other key
Hunter	Murtha	Strickland		audit findings regarding the	unreasonableness of
Huys	Musgrave	Stupak		prices.	
Ingalls (SC)	Myrick	Sullivan		I am deeply disappointed that	the House voted down an
Inslee	Nadler	Tancredo		amendment calling for the	investigation of reconstruction
Israel	Napolitano	Tanner		efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan	including contracting
Issa	Neal (MA)	Tauscher		procedures, possible money	laundering, and profiteering.
Istook	Neugebauer	Taylor (MS)		It is disturbing that the	Republican leadership has
Jackson (IL)	Ney	Taylor (NC)		been unwilling to assert its	oversight responsibility and
Jackson-Lee	Northup	Terry		demand fiscal accountability.	
(TX)	Norwood	Thomas			
Jefferson	Nunes	Thompson (CA)			
Jenkins	Nussle	Thompson (MS)			
Jindal	Oberstar	Thornberry			
Johnson (CT)	Obey	Tiahrt			
Johnson (IL)	Oliver	Tiberi			
Johnson, E. B.	Ortiz	Tierney			
Johnson, Sam	Osborne	Towns			
Jones (NC)	Otter	Turner			
Jones (OH)	Owens	Udall (CO)			
Kanjorski	Oxley	Udall (NM)			
Kaptur	Pallone	Upton			
Keller	Pascrell	Van Hollen			
Kelly	Pastor	Velázquez			
Kennedy (MN)	Paul	Visclosky			
Kennedy (RI)	Payne	Walden (OR)			
Kildee	Pearce	Walsh			
Kilpatrick (MI)	Pelosi	Wamp			
Kind	Pence	Wasserman			
King (IA)	Peterson (MN)	Schultz			
King (NY)	Peterson (PA)	Waters			
Kingston	Petri	Watson			
Kirk	Pickering	Watt			
Kline	Pitts	Waxman			
Knollenberg	Platts	Weiner			
Kolbe	Poe	Weldon (FL)			
Kucinich	Pombo	Weldon (PA)			
Kuhl (NY)	Pomeroy	Weller			
LaHood	Porter	Wexler			
Langevin	Price (NC)	Whitfield			
Lantos	Pryce (OH)	Wicker			
Larson (CT)	Putnam	Wilson (NM)			
Latham	Radanovich	Wilson (SC)			
LaTourette	Rahall				
Leach	Ramstad				
Lee	Rangel				

Woolsey

Wynn

Young (AK)

Young (FL)

NOES—2

ANSWERED “PRESENT”—3

NOT VOTING—9

□ 1122

Messrs. KLING, PUTNAM, CARDOZA, TANCREDO, BLUNT, SMITH of Texas, GOODLATTE, MCHENRY, THOMAS, AKIN, FLATKE and EHLERS and Mrs. EMERSON changed their vote from “no” to “aye”.

Messrs. PRICE of Georgia, WEST-MORELAND and ROHRBACHER changed their vote from “aye” to “present”.

So the amendment was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Chairman, due to a previously scheduled commitment away from Capitol Hill, I was unavoidably detained and regretfully missed rollcall vote No. 75, the Markey Amendment. Had I been present, I would have voted “aye.”

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, time and time again, the Bush administration has not been straightforward with Congress, the American people, or our soldiers about the costs of this war and what it will take to ensure stability and security in Iraq so our troops can return home.

Instead of disclosing the actual findings of field reports on contracting audits, troop needs, or the projected cost of the reconstruction effort, the administration has withheld, distorted, and even deliberately hidden information.

Just this week, despite the administration’s refusal to turn Pentagon audits over to Congress, I obtained a report by Defense Department auditors concluding that Halliburton overcharged the U.S. Government more than \$100 million for a single task order under its no-bid \$7 billion contract to restore Iraq’s oil infrastructure. I would like to know why unredacted versions of this audit report and the audit reports on nine additional task orders are still being withheld from Congress.

I have also learned that administration officials violated a U.N. Security Council Resolution by intentionally concealing these overcharges from international auditors. The administration only provided heavily redacted audits to the international auditors charged with overseeing the Iraqi oil revenue used to pay Halliburton’s inflated costs.

Worst of all, correspondence between the Army Corps of Engineers and Halliburton officials indicates it was Halliburton that blacked-out references to egregious overcharges and other key audit findings regarding the unreasonableness of Halliburton’s prices.

I am deeply disappointed that the House voted down an amendment calling for the investigation of reconstruction efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan including contracting procedures, possible money laundering, and profiteering.

It is disturbing that the Republican leadership has been unwilling to assert its oversight responsibility and demand fiscal accountability.

The administration has not complied with Congressional mandates to provide a comprehensive breakdown of the \$200 billion already spent in Iraq and Afghanistan and a detailed assessment of the projected costs of military and reconstruction activities in Iraq over the next 5 years.

The White House has failed to justify a permanent extension of tax cuts for the wealthy while paying for the war with mounting deficits and massive budget cuts to social programs.

And when it comes to our troops, it has been Congress, not the administration, prioritizing force protection needs and the procurement of safety essentials like armored Humvees, body armor, night vision equipment, and jamming devices to neutralize the improvised explosive devices that are among the biggest threats to U.S. patrols.

I am willing to support this supplemental precisely because it allocates a majority of funds for troop and equipment needs and training of Iraqi security forces. This is a vast improvement over the blank check requested by the administration to pursue its less accountable reconstruction efforts.

No matter how each of us feels about the administration's actions that led to war and its conduct since then—and I have been one of its strongest critics—we have an obligation to ensure that our troops have the support and equipment they need as long as they are in the field. In addition, the funding in this legislation for training and equipment for Iraqi and Afghan security forces is essential for these nations to take control of their own security so U.S. troops can come home.

Some who oppose this legislation believe that its defeat would hasten the return of our troops. Although it is critically important for the U.S. to develop an exit strategy, I am deeply concerned that a premature withdrawal of U.S. troops just after Iraq's democratic elections and as its leaders attempt the difficult task of forming a coalition government would only embolden the Al-Qaeda cells fueling the insurgency in Iraq.

I also strongly support other provisions of the legislation to pay for food aid and peacekeeping in the Sudan, as well as the more than \$650 million allocated for relief and reconstruction to the countries devastated by the tsunami.

I fully support the \$200 million included in this bill for economic revitalization and infrastructure development in the West Bank and Gaza. The end of the Arafat era presents a concrete opportunity for the Palestinian people to chart a future away from terrorism, corruption, and incitement and toward democracy, transparency, and the rule of law.

This aid package is a strategic and timely investment in the leadership of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas. The accountability requirements in this bill will set an example for the international community for formulating assistance packages that protect against cronyism, embezzlement, and mismanagement, which in the past siphoned millions of dollars to Arafat loyalists and terrorist organizations.

And so, I will vote for this legislation to support our troops and to support these other worthwhile U.S. humanitarian endeavors, but we have an obligation to hold the Bush administration accountable for its policies in Iraq.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Chairman, I will vote for this supplemental appropriations bill today.

I have been a critic of the Bush administration's policy in Iraq. But I think even those who have supported it should be deeply concerned about the escalating cost of our efforts there. If approved, the President's emergency supplemental appropriations request will bring the total cost of our operations in Iraq so far to over \$200 billion. This amount gives me pause, but Congress must not fail to supply our troops.

When I visited Iraq last year, I met with our troops and it is clear to me that more resources, including body armor and military equipment, are needed to safeguard their lives. The bill we are considering today provides these resources. It includes important provisions to raise the military death gratuity from \$12,000 to \$100,000 and to increase funding for add-on vehicle armor kits, night-vision equipment, and electronic roadside-bomb jammers. It includes funding for contract linguists for the Army and additional body armor for the Army and Marines. And thanks to the passage of the Markey-Blumenauer amendment, which I supported, the bill reaffirms the U.S. commitment to the U.N. Convention Against Torture.

It also provides funding for tsunami disaster relief, \$1.3 billion to train and equip Afghan security forces and the Afghan army, \$92 million for Darfur and \$150 million for food aid to Sudan and Liberia, and \$580 million for peacekeeping programs, most of which are for Sudan. Importantly, the bill appropriates the President's request of \$200 million for economic development in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

But large as it is, the bill still falls short in some respects. More funding is needed for veterans' health care and mental health care and helping members of the National Guard transition back to civilian life.

And most problematically, the House-passed rule incorporated into the bill the REAL ID Act, legislation that I opposed when the House passed it in February. I opposed it again by voting against the rule. I believe the REAL ID Act does not strengthen national security, but it does create undue difficulties for asylum seekers and excessively expands the powers of the Secretary of Homeland Security.

The bill also lacks answers to some tough questions. How many more supplemental requests like this one does the administration plan to present to Congress? What is our post-election strategy in Iraq? Can we account for the billions of dollars already spent in Iraq, and are the remaining billions of dollars in reconstruction funds being well spent? Why can't we get a solid answer about the numbers of trained and equipped Iraqi troops?

That lack of information is why I voted for an amendment proposed by Representatives TIERNEY and LEACH to create a Select Congressional Committee—based on the Truman Committee that existed during World War II—to investigate and study the awarding and carrying out of Government contracts to conduct military and reconstruction activities in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Adoption of that amendment would have improved the bill. The failure of this amendment makes it even more important that we continue to ask questions, not only to provide accountability to American taxpayers, but also to keep faith with the real needs of our troops in the field. Estimates of future U.S. costs in Iraq are mind-boggling—ranging from \$400 billion

to \$600 billion over the next decade. That's why it's so important for us to do the job right this time. The more effectively we use these billions to train and equip Iraqi troops, the more quickly Iraqis will be able to fend for themselves, which means a ticket home for our troops.

So the bill could be improved—and I have supported amendments that would do that. But the bottom line is that we need to provide the funding necessary to keep our troops supplied and protected. With our troops stretched thin, forced to perform longer tours of duty and short of equipment and supplies, funding for our men and women in uniform must not be held hostage to disagreements about the wisdom or folly of Bush administration policies.

Mr. MEEKS of New York. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the Emergency Supplemental Wartime Appropriations Act. It is unconscionable that the administration comes to Congress for another emergency supplemental when it has failed to account for previous emergency funding, and has failed to include the cost of the war in the FY '06 budget. How can this administration offer a budget that does not include funding for America's military operations overseas when we have more than 150,000 soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan for an indefinite period of time? Why does the administration continue to resort to supplemental funding to pay for this war instead of including the cost in the budget where it will sufficiently reflect the impact of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom on our deficit?

Mr. Chairman, I did not support the Iraq supplemental request last year because I had serious concerns about no bid contracts in the bill. Unfortunately I was right to be concerned; just today it has been reported that Pentagon auditors have found excess billing for postwar fuel imports to Iraq by the Halliburton Company totaling more than \$108 million. To add insult to injury Congress has not received any of the nine auditing reports from the Pentagon, but instead must resort to receiving this information through unofficial channels. Despite repeated requests, the administration has kept nine audits confidential from both Republican and Democratic Members of Congress. Accountability is a bipartisan issue.

This \$81 billion emergency supplemental funding request for the Department of Defense's Iraq and Afghanistan operations comes on the heels of \$25 billion of emergency spending already appropriated for this year. Enacting this request would mean that this Congress will have provided this administration with almost \$300 billion for military and reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq. It is clear that this body is willing to live up to its end of the bargain and provide funding for our troops, but the administration is determined to continue to avoid serious questions and concerns about its spending.

Let me state outright that I opposed going to war in Iraq, but that is not my reason for opposing this supplemental request. I oppose simply because we cannot allow continued deception by the administration on every aspect of our engagement with Iraq. We were deceived with exaggeration of Hussein's weapons capabilities, and now we are being deceived about the duration of the engagement and its exact cost—on the American purse and the loss of our men and women in uniform. We have exacerbated the situation in the Middle East and put our country in a more

vulnerable position because of this war, and now we are asked to surrender the responsibilities of this body to hold the administration accountable for its actions.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. Chairman as a Member of Congress I must provide answers to my constituents about the money that Congress spends. Accountability is not a partisan issue, we must all demand answers. Our Constitution was carefully crafted so as to allow a balance of power in our Government. Congress is obligated to use appropriations and the oversight that accompanies it as a means of holding the executive branch accountable for its spending of American funds. Any attempt to usurp that balance of power is a betrayal of the moral fiber of our Government and must be taken as an attack on the integrity of this body.

The Department of Defense by law must submit reports to Congress with a detailed explanation of the spending and future costs of the Iraq war. These reports were due October of last year and at the beginning of this year. Despite this legal obligation clearly delineated in last year's Defense Appropriations Act, we have to date received no report accounting for the spending and detailing cost estimates of previous supplemental funding. Our Government should not fail to meet its legal responsibility without consequence. How can we justify more emergency appropriations without adequate assurance that what has already been appropriated has been shrewdly spent?

Sadly, we have no report directly from DoD but the Inspector General reported that almost \$9 billion in reconstruction funding has been mishandled and poorly accounted for. In fact, the Inspector General suggests that thousands of "ghost employees" were on an unidentified ministry payroll.

In addition, DoD has stated in the past that 220,000 Iraq security forces had been trained and equipped, that number was then scaled down to 136,000. Moreover, the Pentagon has recently put into question if these troops are truly prepared for service.

CONCLUSION

Mr. Chairman, opposition to this bill is not a vote against supporting our troops. This body has proven over and over again through appropriations that it supports our troops. Congress has appropriated \$20 billion for Iraq reconstruction despite the administration's claims that Iraq reconstruction would cost between \$1 and \$2 billion and could be financed by Iraqi oil revenues. With enactment of this bill Congress will have appropriated \$300 billion for the efforts in Iraq without proper accounting of the spending of these funds. The administration claimed that we would be received as great liberators and that just a few short months after the invasion we could start withdrawing troops, but instead we have no exit strategy and over 1,500 troops have died and thousands seriously injured. I could go on and on about the disastrous miscalculations and misleading estimates. This bill is critically lacking in accountability. No more blank checks for this administration.

Mr. STARK. Mr. Chairman, I cannot support the President's request to spend billions more for this protracted war in Iraq. It's time to bring our troops home.

Next week we will commemorate the second anniversary of the war and U.S. occupation. Over 1,500 American lives have been lost along with countless numbers of Iraqi civil-

ians. Over 11,000 Americans have been wounded. The world is still not a safer place. What have we gained?

I disagree with those who claim a vote for this bill is a vote to support our troops. I stand behind these brave Americans and believe they ought to have every resource to protect them.

How is it supporting our troops to keep them in harms way without a plan to win this war?

How is it supporting our troops when we continue to allow the Bush administration to spend hundreds of millions of dollars at will on no bid Government contracts with no oversight?

How is it supporting our troops when we don't provide for mental health services for those troops traumatized in combat?

For all of these reasons, I'm voting "no" on the President's \$81.3 billion supplemental request. It is time for a plan to bring our troops home, not give the President another blank check.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Chairman, in a few days we will mark the second anniversary of the invasion of Iraq and the start of a war that, in my judgment, did not need to be fought. At the time, the war was rationalized on intelligence estimates of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction capabilities that were wrong, and on suggestions that Iraq was somehow connected with the September 11 al-Qaeda attacks on our country that were never true.

The President now says that the war is really about the spread of democracy in the Middle East. This effort at after-the-fact justification was only made necessary because the primary rationale was so sadly lacking in fact.

The one constant in 2 years of combat has been the courage, dedication, and skill of the men and women of our Armed Forces. For more than 1,500 of our troops, service in Iraq required the ultimate sacrifice. That is a loss for which our country mourns each day.

Thousands more have been wounded—their lives, and the lives of their families changed forever by this war. Similar losses have been experienced by families in Spain, in Italy, and, of course, in Iraq.

The bill before us provides another \$75 billion for military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. This enormous sum was not requested through the normal budget process, not subjected to any hearings, and not counted against our massive budget deficits. In fact, this will be the third largest appropriations measure this year.

And this \$75 billion will be on top of the more than \$200 billion previously appropriated, mostly by the supplemental appropriations process, for these military operations.

How much of this cost would have been unnecessary had the administration taken the time and the care to plan adequately for a war of choice? We will never know. But we do know—because these supplementals are evidence of it—that our troops were sent into combat without the equipment they would need for a protracted insurgency operation.

Our responsibility now is two-fold. First, to ensure that our troops have what they need to do their jobs effectively and as safely as possible. And second, to develop a strategy for success that will contain clear benchmarks by which the American people can measure progress toward the time when our forces will be brought home.

That strategy for success must include an aggressive plan for transferring responsibility

for their country's security to the Iraqis, an improved plan for Iraq's reconstruction, and an intensification of diplomatic efforts in the region.

Other countries—the Netherlands and Italy among them—are making plans for the return of their forces. The United States does not need to adopt their timelines, but we do need clear criteria for judging certain fundamentals, including the capability and willingness of Iraqi security forces to deal with the insurgency and protect the country.

Somewhere between an open-ended U.S. commitment to Iraq and a timetable for withdrawal must be a strategy for ending our military involvement. That fact was the heart of the amendment by the gentleman from Virginia, Mr. MORAN, which this House adopted yesterday.

The President owes it to the American people and this Congress to develop such a plan, clearly describe it, and provide an assessment of how much it will cost and how long it will take.

I understand and share the frustration that will lead some to vote against this bill. We are being asked, again, to clean up a mess that many of us argued strongly against creating.

Putting aside our frustration with this administration so that we can provide our troops what they need does not, however, mean that we will forget the mistakes, miscalculations, and misrepresentations that brought us to the point where these billions are necessary.

The time is long past due for an accounting for those failures. We in Congress understand our responsibility to provide for the common defense. The administration must understand its responsibility to use the money this Congress provides effectively, and with a transparency that can withstand scrutiny.

Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to H.R. 1268, the Emergency Supplemental Wartime Appropriations Act for FY 2005. My opposition to this bill does not mean that I do not support our troops. I wholeheartedly support our troops and believe that we should fully fund our troops so that they have the necessary equipment to ensure their safety. Also incorporated into this bill is funding for Tsunami relief efforts for affected Southeast Asian countries. Having gone to Sri Lanka and personally seen the devastation, I know how important our relief efforts are for these countries.

Sadly, I'm opposing H.R. 1268 because it includes the REAL ID Act of 2005. The REAL ID Act of 2005 would deny drivers' licenses to immigrants, and slam the doors on refugees seeking asylum from persecution. The REAL, bad, ID Act has nothing to do with supporting our troops, let alone national security.

It is such a shame that Republicans had to incorporate the REAL ID Act in the Iraq Supplemental and Tsunami Relief when it has nothing to do with these two pressing issues. This is an unprecedented move on the part of the Republican leadership and this concerns me.

The REAL ID Act, H.R. 418 will not make us safer. What H.R. 418 will do is undermine several key security features that were dealt with responsibly in the Intelligence Reform legislation which was based on the 9–11 Commission Recommendations.

If the Republicans and this administration really want to strengthen national security, they should start by providing full funding for

the Department of Homeland Security, particularly the security improvements authorized in the Intelligence Reform bill. Yet the President's 2006 budget did not include funding for 10,000 new border guards, 40,000 new detention beds to hold people awaiting deportation, and 4,000 new immigration inspectors as the bill dictates. The administration merely funds 210 new border patrol agents.

As the proud daughter of immigrants, I am pleased to be serving my country as a Member of Congress. It is a great honor to be giving back to America, a country that has given my family so much. Like millions of immigrants, my parents came here in search of the American Dream and to give their children the opportunity to secure a promising future.

Again, I am outraged and saddened that Republicans are using the pretext of national security to attack immigrants who pose no real threat to our safety. America is a country built by immigrants, and we should remain a country that is open and welcoming to those seeking freedom. The U.S. has always been a beacon of hope and we must continue to guard the light of liberty for those who are oppressed or displaced.

Mr. KIND. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Tsunami Relief, 2005.

I have had the opportunity to visit Iraq twice over the last 2 years and visit with our military women and men and survey the operations of the U.S. reconstruction mission in Iraq. Never have I been more proud to be an American than when I visited our troops and observed them in the line of duty. My trips reconfirmed that we must give our troops the tools and resources they need to carry out their mission safely and effectively so they can return home soon. For this reason I am supporting the administration's supplemental request for \$81 billion.

Specifically, I would like to highlight the good work of the 128th Infantry Division out of western Wisconsin, and the 1158th Transportation Company out of Tomah, Black River Falls, and Beloit. The 128th is on their first tour of duty in Iraq and is performing well, despite several equipment shortages and setbacks the unit has dealt with. The 1158th is on their second tour of duty, and is also performing above and beyond their mission. I am extraordinarily proud of their service to our country.

I am especially proud of young men like Andrew Carter. Today I had the opportunity to visit Andrew, a member of the 128th, at Walter Reed Hospital. He was recently injured in Iraq riding in a Humvee that was hit by an RPG. There is a good chance he would have been killed if it hadn't been for vehicle armor that was added to the Humvee. This supplemental appropriates more funding to continue to armor humvees, so that we can continue to save lives. One of the first things Andrew said to me was that he wants to heal quickly so he can get back to Iraq and serve with his unit. His resolve is a good reminder of the dedication of our men and women in uniform and why we need to renew our commitment to soldiers like Andrew.

While I do not endorse all of the supplemental's provisions, in the absence of a funding alternative, I support the need to provide for our troops. But we do need to start budgeting and paying for their obligations,

such as the need for a new embassy in Iraq, instead of passing so-called "emergency" supplementals and leaving a legacy of debt for our children to inherit.

As our military effort continues, I and other members of Congress will work to ensure that our service men and women have all the resources necessary to fulfill their mission. Again, my thoughts and prayers are with those serving our country, as well as their families. America is firmly behind our troops and we're all hoping to see them home safe, secure, and soon.

May God continue to bless these United States of America.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of H.R. 1268, the Emergency Supplemental and Wartime Appropriations Act of 2005. This supplemental provides necessary funding for a variety of military operations and for equipment that will keep our troops safe while they fight the War on Terror. We are asking the brave men and women of our Armed Forces to put their lives on the line in defense of our freedom. In return, we should not hesitate to give them the best protective gear that we can provide.

However, I have serious concerns about providing additional non-defense and non-emergency items, such as money for facility construction and international peacekeeping efforts that are included in this supplemental. I believe that while these items may be vital to our Nation's interests, they are not true emergencies.

I commend the chairman of the Appropriations Committee, the distinguished gentleman from California, Mr. LEWIS, for his efforts to limit the amount of non-defense and non-emergency funding in this bill. But, far too often the Federal Government deems additional spending an "emergency" because it was not included in the original budget request. Any non-defense and non-emergency funding should be considered in the regular budget process.

As Members of Congress, we owe it to the American taxpayer to ensure any new request for emergency spending is thoroughly reviewed and considered in a fair manner on the House floor, especially when essential funding for our Nation's Armed Forces is at stake.

Despite my displeasure in allowing some of these additional items to be included in the supplemental, I support this legislation because Congress has a moral obligation to provide our troops with the safest equipment and most up to date training available.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this Wartime Supplemental bill but not without some hesitation after questioning why some funding is included in what should be a bill solely to support our troops and their ongoing efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

I applaud my colleagues who are working to include at least some FY2006 funding for Iraq and Afghanistan in the FY2006 Budget. The Congressional Budget Office predicts that the cost of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq could reach \$458 billion over the FY 2005 to 2014 period, on top of the more than \$200 billion already expended. An emergency is something unforeseen, but these war costs can be estimated far in advance.

In his FY2006 budget request, President Bush did not include funds for construction of the U.S. Mission in Iraq. Instead, a week after

submitting his FY2006 budget to Congress, the President sent Congress an FY2005 emergency supplemental funding request which included more than \$1.3 billion for the embassy in Iraq. This hardly seems to be emergency funding since we have known we will need to operate and maintain an embassy in this country, yet there has been funding for the U.S. embassy in Iraq included in the previous two wartime supplemental bills, and again in this bill.

There is also \$36 million dollars included for the construction of a new detention facility at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba in this supplemental. We have been detaining suspected terrorists at Guantanamo Bay since shortly after September 11, 2001; this is clearly a need seen far in advance and should be included in the Defense appropriations bill, not in this bill.

Additionally, this bill should not be used as a means to move controversial legislation, but the rule for this bill includes a provision to attach the text of H.R. 418. This bill was brought to the Floor of the House in February without a hearing in the Judiciary Committee, circumventing the legislative process.

H.R. 418 includes language that allows the Secretary of Homeland Security to waive any law necessary to construct barriers and roads along our borders. With over one thousand miles of border in Texas alone, I did not feel it was appropriate to allow the Secretary of Homeland Security to waive environmental regulations, undermine the competitive bidding process and threaten the ability of workers to be paid a prevailing wage on these projects.

The most important part of this issue is catching people who are here without proper documents. In December of 2004, I voted to authorize 10,000 new border patrol agents over the next 5 years, however the President's budget would fund only 210 of the 2,000 authorized border patrol agents, 143 of the 800 authorized interior investigators and only 1,920 of the 8,000 detention beds promised by the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004. H.R. 418 will not solve our immigration problem if we do not put agents on the border and increase the capacity of detention centers.

I do strongly support a number of provisions in this bill, however, which will better protect the men and women serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, better provide for the families of those who gave their lives serving in these countries, and better equip our troops.

It is time that we increase the military death gratuity benefit to \$100,000 and the subsidized life insurance benefit to \$400,000 for the families of soldiers who died or were killed on active duty while serving in Iraq and Afghanistan after October 2001.

We must take additional steps however, to improve benefits for the families of our troops not addressed in this bill. When families of our service members do not have access to healthcare because they cannot find a provider that has a contract with Tricare, there is a major problem. We need to address the excess paperwork and low reimbursement rates in the Tricare system to ensure family members do not have to worry about their health care while their loved ones are serving our country.

In addition, after continually hearing stories from the men and women serving in Iraq about the lack of protective armor, this supplemental addresses these problems by providing

\$75 million for body armor protection and \$611 million for add-on vehicle armor kits which was \$48 million more than requested. We also provide necessary oversight on the vehicle armor kits and several other procurement requests, while offsetting increases in funding for our troops with decreases in unnecessary foreign aid. In addition, we rightly increased the request for the family of medium-tactical vehicle, or FMTVs, to \$735 million after recognizing wartime operations are causing much greater wear and stress on these vehicles than peacetime operations.

I support this bill because it provides necessary benefits and equipment to our troops, but I do not believe it should be used as a vehicle for projects that could and should be funded through the annual budget. During this time of soaring deficits, we must practice fiscal discipline; however this bill fails to do that by adding projects unrelated to the immediate wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. This bill should be solely about providing our troops with necessary resources for their mission in Iraq and Afghanistan. Anything not directly related to that does not belong in this bill.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to voice my strong opposition to incorporating the unnecessary provisions of the REAL ID Act, H.R. 418, in the Emergency Supplemental Wartime Appropriations bill.

I intend to vote for the emergency spending package today. It provides the equipment and armor our service members need on the ground in Iraq and Afghanistan. H.R. 1268 also significantly improves our support of military families by increasing the death gratuity to \$100,000 and improving the life insurance coverage we provide to those risking so much in the battlefield. Our service members need this bill. However, I was extremely disappointed to learn House Leadership was adding the text of H.R. 418 to the legislation. I voted against the REAL ID Act on the House floor for several reasons.

I am firmly committed to the security of the United States and the safety of all Americans. H.R. 418 does little or nothing to improve our protection. At the same time, the bill has a harmful impact on legal precedent and allows the federal government to undermine states' rights and state procedures. I also worry the REAL ID Act diverts attention from the crucial mission of securing the homeland by creating new demands on our agencies without providing the resources.

Finally, Congress passed many of the recommendations made by the 9/11 Commission. H.R. 418 is not only unnecessary and potentially harmful but also counters the hard work of the Commission and the Congress.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of H.R. 1268. I would like to thank the committee leadership for their efforts to provide our men and women in uniform with the equipment that they need to succeed. As a member of the House Armed Services Committee, I have worked with my colleagues to provide much-needed force protection equipment to our troops. H.R. 1268 includes \$75 million for body armor, \$51 million for up-armored Humvees, and \$611 million for add-on armor kits for vehicles. Having visited our wounded soldiers at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, I know that we can prevent further injuries by funding this important equipment, and I appreciate the committee's efforts in this area.

Furthermore, the bill raises the military death gratuity from \$12,000 to \$100,000 and increases subsidized life insurance benefits from \$250,000 to \$400,000 for families of service members who died or were killed on active duty, retroactive to October 7, 2001. As a cosponsor of legislation to increase the military death gratuity, I believe we must appropriately honor those that have made the ultimate sacrifice, and these benefit increases are one small gesture that Congress can make to demonstrate our respect. This legislation also demonstrates our nation's commitment to aiding those in dire need throughout the world. H.R. 1268 includes \$656 million for disaster relief to the victims of the tsunami as well as essential peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance to Darfur.

However, I was deeply disappointed that the House leadership used a procedural move to attach the language of the REAL ID Act, which I opposed when the House considered it in February. The REAL ID Act would significantly alter our nation's asylum and immigration laws in the name of homeland security, though its provisions went far beyond the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission. The Senate has already registered some opposition to the REAL ID provisions, and I fear that their inclusion in the House's supplemental bill will slow down the process and prevent us from sending assistance to those who need it most.

Our primary responsibility should be to assist our men and women in uniform and to fulfill our promises to the nations that were devastated in the December tsunami. I urge my colleagues to move swiftly to pass this measure and to drop any extraneous provisions that would hinder this important funding.

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Chairman, my opposition to the war in Iraq and criticism of the Administration's rationale for engaging our troops in this conflict have been well documented. As U.S. casualties mount, it is my hope that the Administration will craft a plan to facilitate the timely withdrawal of our forces. For this reason, I am a cosponsor of H. Con. Res. 35 which calls on the President to do so.

But in the meantime, despite these reservations, the cold, hard truth of the matter is that our soldiers are in Iraq not because they choose, but because they have been ordered there. And they are under fire every day. We must make every possible effort to ensure that our troops return home safely to their families.

The legislation before us today provides \$51 million for "up-armored" Humvees which protect soldiers from anti-tank mines and armor-piercing munitions. It appropriates \$611 million for add-on vehicle armor kits which provide critical protection to drivers and crews against attacks from Iraqi insurgents. Also included is \$50 million for the radio jammers that are installed in our vehicles to prevent attempts by insurgents to explode remote controlled bombs and mines as our troops drive by.

This measure also provides critical increases in financial support to the families of our fallen soldiers. H.R. 1268 increases the military death gratuity from \$12,000 to \$100,000. This benefit provides an immediate cash payment to assist survivors of deceased members of the armed services. It also increases government subsidized life insurance benefits from \$250,000 to \$400,000.

The legislation also provides crucial assistance for emergency situations overseas. It would give \$656 million in direct assistance for

tsunami disaster relief for countries devastated by the December 26, 2004 earthquake and tsunami. In addition, \$92 million in emergency funds are provided to respond to the humanitarian crisis in the Darfur region of Sudan where egregious ethnic cleansing has been occurring. Tens of thousands of men, women, and children have been killed during the violence and thousands more die every month in camps housing the nearly 2 million people who have fled their homes. \$150 million in emergency food aid, mostly for Sudan and war-ravaged Liberia, was included in committee.

With a recent glimmer of hope and improved chances for a resolution in the Middle East, the bill provides \$200 million for the West Bank and Gaza to help the forces for peace seize this opportunity. This includes \$50 million for road and water infrastructure improvements, \$50 million to improve the flow of people and goods into Israel, \$24 million for trade promotion and capacity building, \$20 million for schools and community centers, \$16 million for democracy and rule of law programs, \$15 million for agriculture production and marketing, and \$13 million for health care.

Mr. Chairman, while I continue to have grave concerns about the President's war in Iraq, on balance this bill provides funds that will help protect our men and women under fire, gives additional help to the families of those who will never return home, helps consolidate the tentative gains in Israel and the Palestinian areas, and aids the peoples of other nations who face dire crises abroad. For these reasons, I will cast my vote in favor of the measure.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Chairman, I reluctantly voted against this supplemental, not because there aren't many important items included in it, but because a "no" vote is one of the few things in my power to signal my deep opposition to the administration's policy in Iraq. At its core, this bill gives too much money to the wrong people to do the wrong thing. As I made clear from the beginning of this war the administration continues to have no plan for success in Iraq. They have no blueprint for winning the peace and have not even adequately protected our troops in harm's way.

I fully support the assistance to the tsunami-affected region, and hope it will be used wisely for recovery, reconstruction, and mitigation of future disasters. While we cannot prevent natural events such as floods, mudslides, volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, or tsunamis, we can reduce or mitigate their devastating impacts by helping communities to rebuild in safer locations, construct sturdier dwellings, and enhance natural ecosystems that mitigate the impact of these natural disasters.

I am pleased to see that there is funding to provide additional armor for our troops and vehicles in Iraq. I hope that they will use the funding provided by Congress to give our troops the protection that they need.

An amendment that I offered with Mr. MARKEY to prohibit funds for torture and for sending detainees to countries that practice torture passed. The use of torture and rendition is morally reprehensible, puts Americans at risk, is a poor way to obtain reliable information in our fight against terrorism, and sets back the cause of democracy. This is the very least that we can do as Congress continues to abdicate its responsibility to investigate this horrific aspect of administration policy.

Regardless of the merits, everyone should be troubled by the use of supplemental legislation to pay for regular military action in Iraq and Afghanistan. Funding these operations outside of the regular budgeting process limits our ability for effective oversight and distorts the true budget picture.

The Rules Committee burdened this legislation with all the flaws of H.R. 418, the "Real ID Act," which, among other things, placed the entire 7,514 mile border completely outside all legal protections. This is perhaps the most damaging single precedent since I've been in Congress.

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of H.R. 1268, the War Supplemental Appropriations bill for FY 2005, which will provide funding for military operations and reconstruction activities in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as important funds for tsunami relief and recovery.

The bill before us includes important changes made by the Appropriations Committee to the President's original budget request. These changes are essential to providing our servicemen and women the equipment and support they need to help keep them safe as they fulfill their important mission. Committed to the fact that the well-being of our troops is our highest priority, the Appropriations Committee increased funding by 69 percent more than requested for add-on vehicle armor kits; \$401 million more, or twice the amount requested, for new trucks; and \$50 million in unrequested funds for radio jammers to disrupt attempts by Iraqi insurgents to explode remote controlled bombs and mines.

The bill also includes important provisions to increase the military death gratuity from \$12,000 to \$100,000 and to provide subsidized life insurance benefits from \$250,000 to \$400,000 for families of soldiers who die or are killed on active duty, and we make these important provisions retroactive to the beginning of military operations on October 7, 2001. No amount can compensate for the death of a loved one, but an increase in these benefits that can help a family cope with the financial impact of a combat death is long overdue.

When the Appropriations Committee met, I strongly supported the Jackson amendment to add \$150 million in food aid for Sudan, and I am pleased we have acted again today to add \$100 million in additional disaster assistance. The United States has an obligation and opportunity to assist this troubled country, and I believe this additional funding sets an important example for the United Nations and other countries that still need to respond to the crisis in Sudan.

I have been very concerned about the lack of accountability by the Defense Department and the Administration as we provide them with enormous, although necessary, sums of money. While there has been some improvement, I am troubled that the Department of Defense has not submitted the required biannual report on the military operations of the armed forces and on the reconstruction activities administered by DOD in Iraq and Afghanistan. I know that Chairman JERRY LEWIS, Defense Appropriations Chairman BILL YOUNG and ranking members DAVID OBEY and JOHN MURTHA, as well as my colleagues on the full committee, have expressed similar concerns about DOD's lack of responsiveness.

I'm also troubled that the Administration continues to request emergency supplemental

funds for military operations. We have been engaged in Afghanistan for over three years, and nearly three years have gone by since we invaded Iraq. Therefore, it is no surprise that funds are needed to support our servicemen and women overseas. The Administration should be building these costs into their regular budget submissions.

I am also disappointed that the Republican leadership failed to make in order an important amendment by Representatives HOOLEY and DELAURO to expand veterans' health care and mental health care. Our returning troops deserve whatever help they need to successfully transition to civilian life.

Finally, I am particularly angry that the Republican leadership is using this bill as a vehicle to move an unrelated piece of legislation, the Sensenbrenner "Real ID" immigration bill. The important bill before us provides critical resources for our servicemen and women overseas and badly needed disaster relief. It should not be used by the Republican leadership to fulfill their political promises. I hope the Senate will oppose this legislative gambit and confine the bill to address the serious needs it is intended to address.

However, in spite of my concerns, I believe it is our responsibility to provide our servicemen and women the resources necessary for them to fulfill their mission and come home safely. Protecting our troops, who are sacrificing so much on our behalf, and providing for their families, will always be my first priority, and that is why I am supporting this bill today.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this \$82 billion "emergency" supplemental bill. I also am opposed to the manner in which the REAL ID Act, H.R. 418, was attached to the Rule, thereby stealthily making the establishment of a national ID part of an "emergency" bill to which it is completely unrelated. Once again we see controversial bills being hidden inside another bill so that they are automatically passed where they otherwise might face opposition. I do not believe this is a wise practice.

This "emergency" supplemental is the second largest supplemental appropriations bill in United States history, second only to the one last year. The funds will be considered "emergency" funds so Congress can ignore spending caps that would require the billions in new spending to be offset by reducing spending elsewhere.

We are told that this is emergency spending, and that we therefore must not question this enormous expenditure. Does an emergency require sending billions of American taxpayers' dollars overseas as foreign aid an emergency? This bill is filled with foreign aid spending. If we pass this ill-conceived legislation, we will spend \$656 million for tsunami relief; \$94 million for Darfur, Sudan; \$150 million for food aid, most to Liberia and Sudan; \$580 million for "peacekeeping" overseas; \$582 million to build a new American embassy in Iraq; \$76 million to build a new airport in Kuwait (one of the wealthiest countries on earth); \$257 million for counter drug efforts in Afghanistan; \$372 million for health, reconstruction, and alternative development programs to help farmers stop raising poppy; \$200 million in economic aid for the Palestinians; \$150 million for Pakistan (run by an unelected dictator); \$200 million for Jordan; \$34 million for Ukraine.

Does anyone really believe that all this foreign aid is "emergency" spending? Or is it just

an opportunity for some off-budget spending? Just the above foreign aid equals almost \$3.5 billion. Does anyone believe that sending this much money abroad as international welfare is a good thing for our economy?

Is there a baseball emergency? There must be, because this "emergency" supplemental contains a provision to allow Washington, D.C. to use taxpayer money to build a baseball stadium.

Mr. Chairman, this bill is almost unimaginably expensive. It is our out-of-control spending that really is the greatest threat to the United States and our way of life. I urge my colleagues to reject this legislation.

Ms. KILPATRICK. Mr. Chairman, I rise in reluctant support for the \$81.1 billion emergency supplemental funding bill we are considering today. The only reason I am voting for the bill before us today is because it provides much needed equipment for our forces in theater, increases death gratuity to \$100,000 for families of soldiers who have died or were killed on active duty. My support for this measure is tepid at best.

What troubles me the most about this bill are two key concerns: One, there are no mechanisms for tracking if the money is properly spent. There is simply no mechanism for improving accountability of how taxpayers' dollars are spent. The Defense Department wants to take the money and provide little detail to Congress on how these dollars are being used or abused. The American people have a right to know how these dollars are spent. And, two, by increasing investments in our war and defense efforts, we further constrain budgetary resources for investments in education, highways, community development, first responders, health care, public health and more. What is at stake here is the very welfare of our states and communities, who find themselves financially strapped because of the economic policies of this administration. Our domestic economy cannot continue to pursue this trend.

Despite my many misgivings over this spending bill, I will vote for its passage. We in Congress must call on the Defense Department to provide better accountability for the spending decisions it makes.

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Chairman, today I voted in support of the Fiscal Year 2005 Iraq and Tsunami Relief Supplemental.

This decision was difficult for me. I strongly opposed the REAL ID Act of 2005. The REAL ID Act has no place on a bill to fund support for our military families and tsunami victims. In fact, I voted against H.R. 418 when it was considered by the U.S. House of Representatives on February 10, 2005. This type of political game was vicious attempt to portray those who believe REAL ID is a bad policy as unpatriotic, and I refuse to make servicemembers and their families' losers of that game.

I voted for this spending bill because it includes equipment and services that our troops and their families need desperately. It includes additional funds for health care services, mental health for veterans, active duty servicemembers and their families, and financial assistance to help members of the National Guard transition back into civilian life. This legislation also provides an increase in the amount of life insurance for troops, an increase in the death benefit for families of fallen military members, and provides additional funding so our troops have the armored

humvees and personal protection they need while serving in Iraq.

With the knowledge we have today about the lack of protective equipment and inability of our system to serve military families, I do not believe that withholding funds from our military families and tsunami victims is the right way to solve the predicament the Bush Administration has created. I remain very concerned about the Bush Administration's lack of a clear exit strategy in Iraq and I will continue to fight for real immigration reform and for a clear plan so our troops can come home and democracy can thrive in an Iraq run by Iraqis.

The CHAIRMAN. There are no further amendments in order. The Clerk will report the last three lines of the bill.

The Clerk read as follows:

This Act may be cited as the "Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Tsunami Relief, 2005".

The CHAIRMAN. Under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PUTNAM) having assumed the chair, Mr. THORNBERRY, Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1268) making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2005, and for other purposes, pursuant to House Resolution 151, he reported the bill back to the House with sundry amendments adopted by the Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

Is a separate vote demanded on any amendment? If not, the Chair will put them en gros.

The amendments were agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT OFFERED BY MS. HOOLEY

Ms. HOOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentlewoman opposed to the bill?

Ms. HOOLEY. I am, Mr. Speaker, in its present form.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PUTNAM). The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Ms. HOOLEY moves to recommit the bill, H.R. 1268, to the Committee on Appropriations with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendment:

THE MILITARY HEALTH CARE AND JOB RETRAINING TRANSITIONAL BENEFITS AMENDMENT

On page 6, line 7, after the dollar figure, insert "(increased by \$50,000,000)".

On page 35, line 10, after the dollar figure, insert "(increased by \$100,000,000)".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. HOOLEY) is recognized for 5 minutes in support of her motion.

Ms. HOOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer a motion to recommit that would provide \$100 million in health and \$50 million in job training transitional assistance to help active duty forces make the transition to the veterans benefits system.

The gentleman from Washington (Mr. BAIRD) and I have been working on this issue together and trying to add \$1.3 billion for VA health care and reintegration services. While our amendment was ruled not in order, we now have a chance to ensure that this supplemental includes at least some funding for vital health and employment services.

America is currently asking more of its all-volunteer military force than it ever has before. Yet even as America prepares to continue its large and prolonged military campaign in Iraq, it has done very little to provide for the veterans of this war. Our obligation to support our troops does not end when they leave Iraq.

But how are we supposed to provide adequate health care to these new veterans when we did not even meet the needs of our current veterans? The fiscal year 2005 Omnibus was \$1.3 billion short in the amount that then Secretary Principi, as well as the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, stated was needed to just maintain the current level of veterans health care.

We also need to make sure that our returning soldiers have the readjustment assistance they need, particularly for members of the Guard and Reserve. You have to understand, these members do not go back to a base, they go back to their home State and then are scattered throughout that State. Members of the National Guard returning home face immense challenges in transitioning out of active duty deployment and back to civilian life. While the State Guard offices are working to provide these returning soldiers with important information regarding their health care, employment assistance and other transitional services, they simply do not have the money they need to complete the education and counseling necessary for a smooth transition back to civilian life. I think our returning soldiers deserve better.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this motion to recommit and keep our promise to our Nation's veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY).

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, let me simply congratulate the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. HOOLEY) for her motion. I would hope that every Member supports it. I think that the contents of it are important. In fact, we need to go further. We have increased in this bill insurance benefits for servicemen and women who die up to \$400,000, but servicemen and women who come back from combat who are brain damaged, who have lost their sight, who have lost their arms, who have lost their

legs, they come back to really very little assistance from Uncle Sam.

In addition to what the gentlewoman is talking about, we also need to be looking at the huge hole that still exists in the earning power of those individuals, and we need to do a whole lot more than we are doing today.

I think the Hooley amendment is a great start, and I would urge every Member of the House to vote for it.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to claim the time in opposition to the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes in opposition.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion to recommit largely because I believe on both sides of the aisle the body recognizes that the reason for this supplemental is to provide as quickly as possible money flows in support of our troops.

This is a supplemental dealing with our challenges in the Middle East especially. It is a supplemental dealing with the crises that have resulted from the tsunami. But, in the meantime, the gentlewoman is suggesting that we should recommit this bill to add \$150 million. The best thing that we can do for our troops is to move this bill very quickly and send it on its way for a conference with the Senate. There is absolutely no question that to have a recommittal motion be successful that would add \$150 million to an \$82 billion package, the vast percentage of which is in support of our troops, at best is a technical exercise.

□ 1130

To recommit for the sake of recommitting is not a reflection of how seriously we are taking the challenge we have of supporting our troops. So I rise in opposition to the motion to recommit, and I urge Members on both sides of the aisle to recognize that we must move forward with this supplemental.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PUTNAM). Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Ms. HOOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of passage.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 200, noes 229, not voting 5, as follows:

[Roll No. 76]

AYES—200

Abercrombie Green, Gene
 Ackerman Grijalva
 Allen Gutierrez
 Andrews Harman
 Baca Hastings (FL)
 Baldwin Herseth
 Barrow Higgins
 Bean Hinchey
 Becerra Hinojosa
 Berkley Holden
 Berman Holt
 Berry Honda
 Bishop (GA) Hooley
 Bishop (NY) Hoyer
 Blumenauer Inslee
 Boren Israel
 Boswell Jackson (IL)
 Boucher Jackson-Lee
 Boyd (TX)
 Brown (OH) Jefferson
 Brown, Corrine Johnson, E. B.
 Butterfield Jones (NC)
 Capps Jones (OH)
 Capuano Kaptur
 Cardin Kennedy (RI)
 Cardoza Kildee
 Carnahan Kilpatrick (MI)
 Carson Kind
 Case Kucinich
 Chandler Langevin
 Clay Lantos
 Cleaver Larsen (WA)
 Clyburn Larson (CT)
 Conyers Lee
 Cooper Levin
 Costa Lewis (GA)
 Costello Lipinski
 Cramer Lofgren, Zoe
 Crowley Lowey
 Cuellar Lynch
 Cummings Maloney
 Davis (AL) Markey
 Davis (CA) Marshall
 Davis (FL) Matheson
 Davis (IL) Matsui
 Davis (TN) McCarthy
 DeFazio McCollum (MN)
 DeGette McDermott
 Delahunt McGovern
 DeLauro McIntyre
 Dicks McKinney
 Dingell McNulty
 Doggett Meehan
 Doyle Meek (FL)
 Edwards Meeks (NY)
 Emanuel Melancon
 Engel Menendez
 Eshoo Michaud
 Etheridge Millender
 Evans McDonald
 Farr Miller (NC)
 Fattah Miller, George
 Filner Mollohan
 Ford Moore (KS)
 Frank (MA) Moore (WI)
 Gonzalez Moran (VA)
 Gordon Nadler
 Green, Al Napolitano

NOES—229

Aderholt Brown-Waite,
 Akin Ginny
 Alexander Burgess
 Bachus Burton (IN)
 Baker Buyer
 Barrett (SC) Calvert
 Bartlett (MD) Camp
 Barton (TX) Cannon
 Bass Cantor
 Beauprez Capito
 Biggert Carter
 Bilirakis Castle
 Bishop (UT) Chabot
 Blackburn Chocola
 Blunt Coble
 Boehlert Cole (OK)
 Boehner Conaway
 Bonilla Cox
 Bonner Crenshaw
 Bono Culberson
 Boozman Cunningham
 Boustany Davis (KY)
 Bradley (NH) Davis, Jo Ann
 Brady (PA) Davis, Tom
 Brady (TX) Deal (GA)
 Brown (SC) DeLay

Gilchrest Linder
 Gillmor LoBiondo
 Gingrey Lucas
 Gohmert Lungren, Daniel
 Goode E.
 Goodlatte Mack
 Granger Manullo
 Graves Marchant
 Green (WI) McCaul (TX)
 Gutknecht McCotter
 Hall McCrery
 Harris McHenry
 Hart McHugh
 Hastings (WA) McKeon
 Hayes McMorris
 Hayworth Mica
 Hefley Miller (FL)
 Hensarling Miller (MI)
 Herger Miller, Gary
 Hobson Moran (KS)
 Hoekstra Murphy
 Hostettler Murtha
 Hulshof Musgrave
 Hunter Myrick
 Hyde Neugebauer
 Inglis (SC) Ney
 Issa Northup
 Istook Norwood
 Jenkins Nunes
 Jindal Nussle
 Johnson (CT) Osborne
 Johnson (IL) Otter
 Johnson, Sam Oxley
 Kanjorski Pearce
 Keller Pence
 Kelly Peterson (PA)
 Kennedy (MN) Petri
 King (IA) Pickering
 King (NY) Pitts
 Kingston Platts
 Kirk Weldon (FL)
 Kline Pomo
 Knollenberg Porter
 Kolbe Portman
 Kuhl (NY) Price (GA)
 LaHood Pryce (OH)
 Latham Putnam
 LaTourette Radanovich
 Leach Ramstad
 Lewis (CA) Regula
 Lewis (KY) Rehberg

NOT VOTING—5

Baird Roybal-Allard
 Cubin Smith (NJ)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE
 The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised there are 2 minutes remaining on this vote.

□ 1153

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PUTNAM). The question is on the passage of the bill.

Pursuant to clause 10 of rule XX, the yeas and nays are ordered.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 388, nays 43, not voting 3, as follows:

[Roll No. 77]

YEAS—388

Ackerman Becerra
 Aderholt Berkley
 Akin Berman
 Alexander Berry
 Allen Biggert
 Andrews Bilirakis
 Baca Bishop (GA)
 Bachus Bishop (NY)
 Baker Bishop (UT)
 Barrett (SC) Blackburn
 Barrow Blunt
 Bartlett (MD) Boehlert
 Barton (TX) Boehner
 Bass Bonilla
 Bean Bonner
 Beauprez Bono

Butterfield Buyer
 Calvert Calvert
 Camp Cannon
 Cantor Rohrabacher
 Capito Ros-Lehtinen
 Capps Royce
 Cardin Ryan (WI)
 Cardoza Ryan (KS)
 Carnahan Saxton
 Carson Schwarz (MI)
 Carter Sensenbrenner
 Case Sessions
 Castle Shadegg
 Chabot Shaw
 Chandler Shays
 Chocola Sherwood
 Cleaver Shimkus
 Clyburn Shuster
 Cole (OK) Simmons
 Conaway Simpson
 Conyers Smith (TX)
 Cooper Sodrel
 Costa Souder
 Costello Stearns
 Cox Sullivan
 Cramer Tancred
 Crenshaw Taylor (NC)
 Crowley Terry
 Cuellar Thomas
 Culberson Thornberry
 Cummings Tiahrt
 Cunningham Tiberi
 Davis (AL) Turner
 Davis (CA) Upton
 Davis (FL) Walden (OR)
 Davis (KY) Walsh
 Davis (TN) Wamp
 Davis, Jo Ann Weldon (FL)
 Davis, Tom Weldon (PA)
 Deal (GA) Weller
 DeFazio Westmoreland
 DeGette Whitfield
 Delahunt Wicker
 DeLauro Wilson (NM)
 DeLay Wilson (SC)
 Dent Wolf
 Diaz-Balart, L. Young (AK)
 Diaz-Balart, M. Young (FL)
 Dicks
 Dingell
 Doggett
 Doolittle
 Doyle
 Drake
 Dreier
 Edwards
 Ehlers
 Emanuel
 Emerson
 Engel
 English (PA)
 Eshoo
 Etheridge
 Evans
 Everett
 Fattah
 Feeney
 Ferguson
 Fitzpatrick (PA)
 Flake
 Foley
 Forbes
 Ford
 Fortenberry
 Fossella
 Foy
 Franks (AZ)
 Frelinghuysen
 Gallegly
 Garrett (NJ)
 Gerlach
 Gibbons
 Gilchrest
 Gillmor
 Gingrey
 Gohmert
 Gonzalez
 Goode
 Goodlatte
 Gordon
 Granger
 Graves
 Green (WI)
 Green, Al
 Green, Gene
 Gutierrez
 Gutknecht

Hall
 Harman
 Harris
 Hart
 Hastings (WA)
 Hayes
 Hayworth
 Hefley
 Hensarling
 Herger
 Herseth
 Carson
 Hinojosa
 Hobson
 Hoekstra
 Holden
 Honda
 Hooley
 Hostettler
 Hoyer
 Hulshof
 Hunter
 Hyde
 Inglis (SC)
 Inslee
 Israel
 Issa
 Istook
 Jackson (IL)
 Jefferson
 Jenkins
 Jindal
 Johnson (CT)
 Johnson (IL)
 Johnson, E. B.
 Johnson, Sam
 Jones (NC)
 Jones (OH)
 Kanjorski
 Kaptur
 Keller
 Kelly
 Kennedy (MN)
 Kennedy (RI)
 Kildee
 Kilpatrick (MI)
 Kind
 King (IA)
 King (NY)
 Kingston
 Kirk
 Klime
 Knollenberg
 Kolbe
 Kuhl (NY)
 LaHood
 Langevin
 Lantos
 Larsen (WA)
 Larson (CT)
 Latham
 LaTourette
 Leach
 Levin
 Lewis (CA)
 Lewis (KY)
 Linder
 Lipinski
 LoBiondo
 Lofgren, Zoe
 Lowey
 Lucas
 Lungren, Daniel
 E.
 Lynch
 Mack
 Manullo
 Marchant
 Marshall
 Matheson
 Matsui
 McCarthy
 McCaul (TX)
 McCotter
 McCrery
 McHenry
 McHugh
 McIntyre
 McKeon
 McMorris
 McNulty
 Meek (FL)
 Meeks (NY)
 Melancon
 Menendez
 Mica
 Michaud
 Millender-
 McDonald

Miller (FL)
 Miller (MI)
 Miller (NC)
 Miller, Gary
 Mollohan
 Moore (KS)
 Moore (WI)
 Moran (KS)
 Moran (VA)
 Murphy
 Murtha
 Musgrave
 Myrick
 Nadler
 Napolitano
 Neal (MA)
 Neugebauer
 Ney
 Northup
 Norwood
 Nunes
 Nussle
 Oberstar
 Obey
 Oliver
 Ortiz
 Osborne
 Otter
 Oxley
 Pascrell
 Pastor
 Pearce
 Pelosi
 Peterson (MN)
 Peterson (PA)
 Petri
 Pickering
 Platts
 Poe
 Pomo
 Pomeroy
 Porter
 Portman
 Price (GA)
 Price (NC)
 Pryce (OH)
 Putnam
 Radanovich
 Rahall
 Ramstad
 Regula
 Rehberg
 Reichert
 Renzi
 Reynolds
 Rogers (AL)
 Rogers (VA)
 Rogers (KY)
 Rogers (MI)
 Rogers (MI)
 Rohrabacher
 Ros-Lehtinen
 Royce
 Ryan (WI)
 Ryan (KS)
 Saxton
 Schwarz (MI)
 Sensenbrenner
 Sessions
 Shadegg
 Shaw
 Shays
 Sherman
 Sherwood
 Shimkus
 Shuster
 Simmons
 Simpson
 Skelton
 Slaughter
 Smith (NJ)
 Smith (TX)
 Smith (WA)

Snyder	Thompson (MS)	Watt
Sodrel	Thornberry	Waxman
Solis	Tiahrt	Weldon (FL)
Souder	Tiberi	Weldon (PA)
Spratt	Turner	Weller
Stearns	Udall (CO)	Westmoreland
Strickland	Udall (NM)	Wexler
Stupak	Upton	Whitfield
Sullivan	Van Hollen	Wicker
Tancredo	Visclosky	Wilson (NM)
Tanner	Walden (OR)	Wilson (SC)
Tauscher	Walsh	Wolf
Taylor (MS)	Wamp	Wu
Taylor (NC)	Wasserman	Wynn
Terry	Schultz	Young (AK)
Thomas	Watson	Young (FL)

NAYS—43

Abercrombie	Jackson-Lee	Paul
Baldwin	(TX)	Payne
Blumenauer	Kucinich	Rangel
Capuano	Lee	Sanders
Clay	Lewis (GA)	Schakowsky
Coble	Maloney	Serrano
Davis (IL)	Markey	Stark
Duncan	McCollum (MN)	Thompson (CA)
Farr	McDermott	Tierney
Filner	McGovern	Towns
Frank (MA)	McKinney	Velázquez
Grijalva	Meehan	Waters
Hastings (FL)	Miller, George	Weiner
Hinchev	Owens	Woolsey
Holt	Pallone	

NOT VOTING—3

Baird	Cubin	Sweeney
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□ 1201

Mrs. JONES of Ohio changed her vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 2 of House Resolution 151, the text of H.R. 418, as passed by the House, will be appended to the engrossment of H.R. 1268.

(For text of H.R. 418, see prior proceedings of the House of February 10, 2005, at Page H536.)

THANKING STAFF AND MEMBERS FOR ASSISTANCE ON H.R. 1268

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

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I very much appreciate the Chair giving me a moment to express my deepest appreciation to the entire House for the way they handled the discussion on the bill that has just been passed.

I especially want to express my appreciation for the fabulous staff work on both sides of the aisle who allowed us to move this bill as expeditiously as we have.

The bill involves sizeable amounts of money designed essentially to support our troops, wherever they may be, but especially in the Middle East.

Mr. Speaker, I want to also express my deep appreciation to my colleague, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY), who cooperated every step of the way, a demonstration that we do not have to agree on everything; but in terms of supporting our troops we are in agreement. I very much appreciate the work of the House, as well as the committee.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone underground proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later in the day.

AMENDING INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1986 EXTENDING LEAKING UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK TRUST FUND FINANCING RATE

Mr. CHOCOLA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1270) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the Leaking Underground Storage Tank Trust Fund financing rate.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 1270

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

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF LEAKING UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK TRUST FUND FINANCING RATE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (3) of section 4081(d) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (relating to Leaking Underground Storage Tank Trust Fund financing rate) is amended by striking “April 1, 2005” and inserting “October 1, 2005”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. CHOCOLA) and the gentleman from California (Mr. STARK) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. CHOCOLA).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CHOCOLA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1270, which would extend financing for the Leaking Underground Storage Tank Trust Fund. The Leaking Underground Storage Tank Trust Fund is financed with an excise tax of 0.1 cent per gallon imposed on the sale of gasoline, diesel, and other motor fuels. This tax is set to expire on March 31, 2005.

This bill would extend the trust fund's financing through September 30, 2005, the same date that the other motor fuels excise taxes expire. The administration supports the extension of this financing.

Monies appropriated from the leaking underground storage tank trust fund are used for detention, prevention, and cleanup of leaking underground storage tanks. Leaking tanks can contaminate groundwater that is ultimately used for drinking.

Since this program began in 1984, the program closed nearly 1.6 million tanks and reduced the severity of leaks from underground storage tank systems that remain in service. Approximately 675,000 tanks remain in service and are subject to regulations. However, there remains a backlog of over 100,000 sites that require remedial action. Extending the tax for 6 months will allow us time to discuss possible reforms to the program while not allowing for the disruption of the collection of the tax.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I would like to inquire how long has it been since we have really had any fun around here, and would it not be a lot better if we just cut out this leaking underground storage tank stuff; we are talking about a LUST bill. I thought we might as well get that on the record and endure whatever the smirks are, because it is really an important bill. It is not controversial. It is a straightforward extension for 6 months, and I got a smile from Mr. Speaker.

It is a 0.1 cent per gallon excise tax. It will go to clean up drinking water and the environment. I appreciate the support of the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. CHOCOLA) for this bill and look forward to its passage.

Mrs. CAPPES. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the House is continuing the funding mechanism for the Leaking Underground Storage Tank Fund or LUST fund.

Across this country there are hundreds of thousands of leaking underground storage tanks.

Many, if not most, of these have MTBE in them and have been linked to the contamination of groundwater in thousands of communities.

So it is important that we continue funding for the Trust Fund that helps communities get these messes cleaned up where responsible parties can't be found.

But I agree with my colleagues who, noting the needs that are out there, have called for a longer extension of this funding mechanism.

Clearly, we have to give states more support and the ability to know that the LUST fund will back up their efforts.

Mr. Speaker, I believe it is also important to note how inadequate the efforts of this Administration have been in addressing the problem of leaking tanks.

For example, the LUST fund could take in approximately \$200 million in revenues this year alone.

And yet the Administration proposes to spend only slightly more than a third of that to address the problems caused by these leaking tanks.

This is a completely inadequate response to addressing the 136,000 spills across the country.