and dedicated to finding the cowards who continue to attack democracy and take the lives of innocent civilians. As co-chair of the Victory in Iraq Caucus, I am extremely proud of their success. By capturing and killing terrorists in Iraq, our troops are protecting American citizens from terrorists who threaten our freedoms and our way of life.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT
(Ms. WOOLSEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, the Violence Against Women Act has made a great difference for countless women and their families when confronting violence, and VAWA has made a significant difference in the health and happiness of hundreds of thousands of women, children and families.

With one in four women in this country experiencing domestic violence, clearly much more remains to be done. So we cannot abandon our commitment to them and to the women around the world.

Women have every right to feel safe in their own homes. They also deserve to know that law enforcement and health officials are equipped to deal with their special needs in these tragic situations, and we must include teaching young people that bullying and violence must be avoided. We must teach them how to handle situations of conflict and anger in other ways besides bullying and violence.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the reauthorization of VAWA to ensure these protections and make sure that resources are available.

HONORING DR. DAVID BUSHMAN
(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, September 30, 2005, is a significant day in American higher education. This day marks Dr. David W. Bushman’s inauguration as the 13th president of Lees-McRae College in Banner Elk, North Carolina.

Lees-McRae College is an institution of which the entire Nation can be proud. For 105 years, it has prepared young women to take their places as productive citizens. Committed to leadership and service, Lees-McRae is an integral part of the larger community, putting into practice its historic motto, “In the mountains, for the mountains.”

David W. Bushman is an outstanding scholar, educator and administrator. Under his leadership, Lees-McRae College reaffirms its commitment to academic excellence in the liberal arts tradition and to the moral and civic education of its students.

As David Bushman assumes the presidency of Lees-McRae College, I extend sincere congratulations to him and to the college. As President Bushman and Lees-McRae College begin this new chapter in their history, they do so with my best wishes for continued success.

REPUBLICANS FAKEING THEIR WAY THROUGH INQUIRY
(Ms. WATSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, yesterday House Republicans convened their partisan investigation into what went wrong in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. It is clear Republicans want to fix all blame on the back of former FEMA director Michael Brown.

Republicans were willing to ask tough questions yesterday, but that is simply not enough. For 5 years now, House Republicans have ignored their oversight responsibilities of the Bush administration. And as we now suppose, it is impossible to believe that House Republicans will conduct an investigation that will not only determine what exactly went wrong but also how we can prevent such a slow response from ever happening again.

The New York Times said that Washington is faking a Katrina inquiry. The paper determined that a government dominated by one party should be disqualified from investigating itself. Democrats here in the House strongly agree.

We simply will not be a part of a sham investigation. The American people want real answers, not a cover-up. An overwhelming 87 percent of Americans are demanding an independent commission similar to the 9/11 Commission.

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

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in praise of a new Medicare Part D prescription drug benefit that is available to all seniors beginning January 1, 2006.

This week, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid released information on organizations offering prescription drug plans in each of our 50 States, and the opportunity for sign-up begins November 15.

This announcement holds great news for seniors across America. In every State, seniors will have a choice among plan providers. In my home State of Georgia, for example, seniors will be able to choose from 18 different plans, ensuring they can find one that best suits their individual needs.

Mr. Speaker, there is more good news for our seniors. Not only will they be able to choose from a variety of plans, but they will receive this benefit for less money than previously expected, in some cases, for a premium as low as $20 a month. This is the power of competition, and our seniors will benefit from it. We do not need government price controls. The free market works.

Mr. Speaker, for years, our seniors have struggled with the rising cost of prescription drugs. Many are going without medicine they need to stay healthy. With Medicare part D, seniors will be able to reap the benefits of preventive care and live longer, healthier lives.

RECOVERY FROM HURRICanes
(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues this morning to begin to look at the recovery of Hurricane Katrina, and support thereof to include Hurricane Rita. Just 4 days in this region, a number of them at the Transtar Hurricane Emergency Center day and night, I can tell my colleagues that the frustration that is reflected in the Houston Chronicle, FEMA faulted yet again, and of course that in The New York Times, evacuees urged to stay away, is only a limited story of what we have faced in that region.

Going into the region directly hit just yesterday, I can tell my colleagues, as the local officials wanted me to say, there is no food, there is no water, there is no ice. They need help—they need leadership from the Federal Government. There are trucks parked on hotel parking lots that cannot be opened to share food because the military has not yet been directed to arrive to unload the trucks.

This is not a finger pointed in the direction of local officials. It is a finger pointed with a singular question: Who is in charge? When you are ordered to evacuate and there is no order, who is in charge?

An independent inquiry, a widespread understanding of how we can secure the homeland is absolutely imperative.

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

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, Katrina breaks my heart. When I consider the tragic aftermath of this extraordinary storm, now 1 month hence, I cannot help but think of that person in the Bible who speaks of how the rains came down, the winds blew and beat against the house, the floodwaters rose, and the house fell with a great crash.

Congress is now involved in a critical debate about relief and rebuilding and how we will pay for what could be hundreds of billions of dollars in recovery and reconstruction of the gulf coast.

Last week, House conservatives offered their own plan, a series of budget
cuts simply known as Operation Offset. It contained many good ideas, and it seems to have engendered, Mr. Speaker, an important debate here in Washington, DC, and all around the country.

It seems that Members of Congress know and the American people know that raising taxes to pay for the national debt is no way for this national government to respond to the extraordinary costs of Katrina. We must ensure that a catastrophe of nature does not become a catastrophe of debt for our children and grandchildren through introducing tough budget cuts like Operation Offset.

[45x247]

and I urge the Republican leadership of that we do not lose that vital program, action extending the MILC program so immediately report out to this floor an dairy farmers. I urge the House agric- apiare at the end of this week. If that could be extended, the White House de- opened so that the MILC program in order to get that conference re- White House asking him to intervene side to accept that amendment. To pre- vent that from happening, the Repub- lican chairman of the conference gav- vented the meeting to a close, and we Repub- side to accept that amendment. To pre- vent that from happening, the Repub- lican chairman of the conference gav- vented the meeting to a close, and we never met again on the subject. Despite the fact that the President had said in my hometown on that same day that he favored the extension of the MILC program, when my office called the White House asking him to intervene in order to get that conference re- opened so that the MILC program could be extended, the White House de- clined.

That program is now scheduled to ex- pire at the end of this week. If that happens, we will have lost an impor- tant safety net for Wisconsin’s family dairy farmers. I urge the House agri- culture authorizing committee to im- mediately report out to this floor an action extending the MILC program so that we do not lose that vital program, and I urge the Republican leadership of the House to see to it that the com- mittee does just that.

[45x326]

CALLING FOR INDEPENDENT COM- mission regarding Hurricane Katrina

(Ms. BERKLEY asked and was given per- mission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her re- marks.)

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, last year in the conference on the disaster supple- mental, Senate conferences passed a pro- vision to extend the MILC program for 2 years, and the gentleman from Penn- sylvania (Mr. SHERWOOD) and I had lined up enough votes on the House side to accept that amendment. To pre- vent that from happening, the Repub- lican chairman of the conference gav- ed the meeting to a close, and we never met again on the subject. Despite the fact that the President had said in my hometown on that same day that he favored the extension of the MILC program, when my office called the White House asking him to intervene in order to get that conference re-opened so that the MILC program could be extended, the White House de- clined.

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[45x481]

FINDING A WAY TO PAY FOR HURRICANE DAMAGE

(Mr. BISHOP of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers, Ben Bernanke said: “Every effort needs to be made to try and offset the cost of Katrina and Rita by reductions in other government programs.” He sug- gested following through with elimin- ating or severely cutting 154 health care, education, and infrastructure pri- orities as proposed in the President’s budget in order to meet his goal of cut- ting the deficit in half in 5 years. What would these cuts entail? A $4.3 billion cut from the Education Depart- ment’s budget and $2 billion from the Health and Human Services budget, just to name a few.

But what did Mr. Bernanke not sug- gest might help this President reach his deficit reduction goals? Any hint of rolling back tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans who earn over $400,000 or scaling back the estate tax cut which has no impact on 98 percent of American families?

Mr. Speaker, it is imperative that we find ways to pay for the hurricane damage, but we cannot afford to hold sacred the tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans at the expense of the values, priorities, or needs of middle-class Americans. They deserve better.

[45x472]

MOTION TO GO TO CONFERENCE ON H.R. 2360, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2006

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1 of rule XXII, and by direction of the Com- mittee on Appropriations, I move to take from the Speaker’s table the bill (H.R. 2360) making appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2006, and for other purposes, with a Senate amendment thereto, disagree to the Senate amendment and agree to the conference asked by the Senate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHAW). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ken- tucky (Mr. ROGERS).

The motion was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT OFFERED BY MR. SABO

Mr. SABO. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion to instruct conferees.

The Clerk read as follows:

MOTION TO INSTRUCT HOUSE CONFERENCES H.R. 2360, FY2006 HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS BILL OFFERED BY MR. SABO

Mr. Sabo moves that the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the bill, H.R. 2360, be instructed to insist on the readings and appropriate accounts in Title III of the House-passed bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under rule XXII, the gentleman from Min- nesota (Mr. SABO) and the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. ROGERS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. SABO).

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

Mr. Speaker, Hurricane Katrina shined a bright spotlight on troubling gaps in our Nation’s homeland secu- rity. We all saw what it means to be unprepared: people die and suffer need- lessly.

Americans are patiently waiting for competence and accountability from the Congress and the President. Our ca- pacity to deal with catastrophe may actually have gotten worse since the Department of Homeland Security was created in 2003. The people demand that we fix what is broken.

Last week, Secretary Chertoff told me about his vision for the na- tional preparedness and response. What he said scares the living daylight out of me. In the Department’s sixth reor- ganization plan in 2½ years, the Sec- retary proposes to sever the last ties between Federal disaster preparedness and response. He unveiled this proposal in July, before Katrina; and he is still determined to implement it on October 1.

With all due respect, the Secretary is dead wrong about what is most needed at the Federal level to coordinate and lead local, State, and Federal agencies in preparing for and responding to a major disaster, whether it is natural or man-made. If we have learned one thing in the past month, it should be that disaster preparedness and re- response must go hand in hand. Not long ago, FEMA did that well. The agency was robust, proactive and proved how critical it was to offset the costs. Congress should demand a pause before Sec- retary Chertoff implements more orga- nizational changes that will further...