I was shocked to learn that one of those documented instances of the Pentagon domestic spying happened in my district.

A student protest against military recruiters at the University of California at Santa Cruz, which occurred this past April, was not only observed for suspicious activity, but the “threat” was declared “credible.”

I cannot condemn these actions strongly enough. Using government time and money to spy on people exercising their constitutional freedoms is just ridiculous.

I have already signed on to two letters about these violations of privacy, calling on the NSA to fully explain the constitutionality of their surveillances and calling on the Department of Defense and the Department of Justice to investigate NSA’s actions.

As Members of Congress, we must be diligent in our oversight of the Pentagon, but our job is next to impossible when the administration hides behind the cloak of national security to thwart the civil liberties of many Americans, as they have done with the Pentagon surveillance program.

The Pentagon must come forward with a plan about why they were spying on the UCSC rally.

The right to express differing opinions was one of the founding principles of this country.

The voices of the American people must always be heard, whether this administration agrees with them or not.

It is hypocritical for us to urge transparency in foreign governments while ignoring what our own government is doing in violation of its citizens’ civil liberties.

WE SHOULD BE SUPPORTING PRESIDENT BUSH

(Mr. BURTON Indiana asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, the liberal media and my liberal colleagues are attacking the President for protecting America. The wiretaps that he has ordered are legal, and he informed the Intelligence Committees 12 times about them.

What are we going to do? Are we going to wait around until terrorists attack us and then say we ought to be saying on the telephone to their al Qaeda buddies?

The fact of the matter is the President is defending the United States of America, and we should be supporting him.

The PATRIOT Act, which is being stuck in the Senate, needs to be passed. We need to get these guys and stop them before they attack buildings in New York or Indianapolis or California or Washington, D.C., and the President wants to do that. That is why the PATRIOT Act is so important.

Let’s talk about torture. Putting a guy on a water board who is about to blow up a bunch of soldiers in Baghdad and holding him under the water for a little bit to make him tell us what he is going to do or if he is going to cut somebody’s head off that is an innocent civilian, or go into a school and blow up a bunch of kids is not what I call terrible. We are not pulling out their fingernails or cutting off their heads.

We need to put pressure on them to tell us what’s going on so we can save Americans and American troops.

This is a war. It is not a tea party. And we need to win it. The President is doing it, and we need to support him. God bless President Bush.

FUNDING FOR SCHOOL DISTRICTS AFTER 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, we have all appreciated the great charitable spirit of Americans as they welcomed into their homes and into their neighborhoods and into their States the victims of Hurricane Katrina and Rita and Wilma. But this appropriations bill that is making its way through the Senate is crucial for survival of many of our school districts around the Nation.

Let me cite my colleagues a particular figure for Houston Independent School District. We are now paying $196,000 a day for the additional Katrina students who are in our school districts. We welcome them, but we cannot pay this burden alone. This is costing our school district an additional $30 million, and so far, we have been reimbursed by the Federal Government $164,000.

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We need these appropriations bills to be fully funded. We need the tax cuts to be put aside.

We need FEMA to be able to do its job for those who are still waiting, languishing in shelters and needing homes, languishing in tents and needing trailers. We need this system to work on behalf of the working people of America and those who are in need.

Americans have opened their hearts and pocketbooks to those in need. The Federal Government, the greatest safety net that people have, needs to do its job and do it now.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO SUSPEND THE RULES

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 623 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. Res. 623

Resolved, That it shall be in order at any time on the legislative day of Saturday, December 17, 2005, for the Speaker to entertain motions that the House suspend the rules relating to the following measures:

(1) The bill (H.R. 4519) to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize the Department of Defense to fund for the operation of State high risk health insurance pools.

(2) The bill (H.R. 2320) to provide for the collection and maintenance of cord blood stem cells for the treatment of patients and research, and to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize the C. W. Bill Young Cord Transplantation Program.

(3) The bill (H.R. 4568) to improve proficiency testing of clinical laboratories.

(4) The bill (H.R. 3902) to authorize appropriations for the Department of Justice for fiscal years 2006 through 2009, and for other purposes.


(6) The bill (H.R. 4925) to temporarily extend the programs under the Higher Education Act of 1965, and for other purposes.

(7) The conference report to accompany the bill (S. 1281) to reauthorize the human space flight, aeronautics, and science programs of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and for other purposes.

(8) The conference report to accompany the bill (S. 467) to extend the applicability of the Terrorism Risk Insurance Act.

(9) A joint resolution making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2006, and for other purposes.

SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCCUHILL). The gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), my friend, pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution provides that certain specified measures may be considered under suspension of the rules at any time on the legislative day of Saturday, December 17, 2005.

Mr. Speaker, the Republican leadership of this House has set forth a positive legislative agenda for the remainder of this week and the balance of the first session of the 109th Congress. The goal of this plan is to address a number of outstanding issues remaining on Congress’s calendar before we adjourn for the holidays. The President’s main objective is to improve America’s economy and national security.

Over the past year, we have passed a number of important new education, health care, tax, trade and national security bills that will keep Americans safer and healthier, create new jobs and improve our economy. This rule will allow the House to consider a number of additional bills today under suspension of the rules that will ensure that Congress can complete some additional important work before we adjourn for the holidays.

This rule makes in order the consideration of nine bills under suspension...
of the rules. These bills accomplish necessary and noncontroversial goals, such as extending funding for the operation of State high-risk health insurance pools, providing for collection of human cord blood stem cells for medical treatment and research, and improving the efficiency testing of clinical laboratories.

The suspension authority will also allow us to consider legislation to authorize appropriations for the Department of Justice, improve medical benefits, extend important educational programs, and help NASA to continue its human space flight, aeronautics and science programs.

Perhaps most notably, it provides for consideration of the conference report to extend the applicability of the Terrorism Risk Insurance Act. Extending TRIA is a goal upon which I have worked very closely with my friends and fellow House conferees, Chairman MIKE OXLEY and Chairman RICHARD BAKER. I commend them for their hard work in preparing this bill for President Bush’s signature.

This legislation represents a fiscally responsible response to the threats that acts of terrorism pose to the American economy. It also includes important taxpayer protections and will ensure that this important program does not expire and leave the marketplace for terrorism insurance in uncertainty.

After the tragedy of September 11, the marketplace for terrorism insurance largely disappeared. This lack of terrorism coverage terminated or delayed billions of dollars in commercial property financing, threatening business operations and development and job creation and our overall economy.

TRIA has proven its ability to stabilize the market, and it will continue to provide essential protection for businesses of all sizes in our country. I urge my colleagues to take the opportunity later today to follow up on this program’s successful record and to reauthorize TRIA so that the program does not lapse and hurt businesses and policymakers around this great Nation.

Like TRIA, all of the bills scheduled for consideration by the Republican House leadership on behalf of all Americans enjoy broad support from Members of both the majority and the minority parties. This rule simply provides us with the tools needed to ensure that all of the important work is completed before we adjourn to our families and communities to celebrate for the holidays.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this uncontroversial and balanced rule.

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself of such time as I may consume, and I thank my friend from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS) for the time.

Mr. Speaker, I guess it is appropriate that we are providing for suspension of the rules, since we learned yesterday that the President has suspended the law regarding spying on American citizens. I heard one of our colleagues earlier say that it was the law. I would remind him that this House has passed no such measure permitting spying on American citizens, even babies know that.

Mr. Speaker, as my colleague has already noted, this rule will permit the House to consider nine pieces of legislation under suspension of the rules. While we will not extend the applicability of TRIA and intend to support the nine bills to which the rule applies, and I say that advisedly, taking into consideration the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY), my distinguished colleague, who will explain in detail the circumstances regarding Labor-HHS and the drastic implications for the finances of certain agencies.

I am deeply concerned that the House is again operating outside the boundaries of regular order.

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

Mr. SESSIONS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I, like my wonderful colleague, Mr. HASTINGS, am here doing the work of the American people. We are proud of what we are doing. It is just 1 week before Christmas, and we have a lot of work left to do. That is why we are here. We are here to work.

There are a number of my colleagues who showed up for work today prepared and ready. We know they miss their family and friends. NATAN DEAL of Georgia, TOM PRICE of Georgia, and JOHN SHMUKS of Illinois are just an example of three Members of Congress who, even on a weekend and even a week before Christmas, show up.

So it is my hope that this same spirit we all talk about today, of accomplishing our work on behalf of the American people, the importance of completing our work because we said we would do it, to be responsible to the people of this whole country, all the people, that that spirit will carry through because that is why we are here today.

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

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I have to say I was struck by the gentleman from Texas crediting his fellow Republicans for showing up. Because if it were not for the combination of institutional incompetence and ideological extremism that dominates the Republican Party, we would have had to be here. So I guess we all deserve recognition as victims of that.

I actually think this motion should have been retitled. It should have been called Subversion of the Rules, not Suspension of the Rules, because that is what is happening. We are being at almost gunpoint, the metaphorical, parliamentary equivalent of gunpoint, being asked to debate under very restrictive measures bills that deserve more.

Let me talk about one, the terrorism risk insurance. I think it is an important bill, and I agree substantively with what the gentleman from Texas said. Unfortunately, we are involved in the economy of this country said that that would be irresponsible, they did the next best thing. They have forced us to deal with it in a constricted and inappropriate way.

We did take it up, and we had a full markup in our committee, and we voted on it on the floor. In the Senate, and let us praise the rule change that now allows us to tell the truth about what goes on in the Senate, the Senate passed a very restricted version of this. The Senate chairman of the banking committee then refused to appoint conferees.

Interestingly, we are going to have to amend this rule, because the rule, recently, said let us suspend the conference report on TRIA. And then the Rules Committee had to be reminded that there is no conference report on TRIA, because the Republican Senate chairman, knowing that he would have been outvoted in the conference, refused to allow one and, instead, individually dictated what would be in it.

So we are going to have to amend it, because if we had conference report on TRIA, we would have no TRIA. They would not have a conference. The regular order has been totally subverted. Unfortunately, we have to accommodate it because we are united against a Democratic president.

By the way, if the House Republican leadership had not delayed consideration of this bill, we could have done it months ago and not been vulnerable to that kind of extortion.

What we have now is a bill that leaves out, for example, the commission on how to deal with terrorism insurance that the families of September
I yield myself such time as I may, Speaker, at this particular moment I serve the balance of my time.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. SESSIONS: In the 8th paragraph, strike "conference report accompanying the House-passed bill" and insert "conference report accompanying the Senate bill and the House-passed bill".

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for their thoughtful comments this morning about the circumstances, as we are here on December 17, almost a week before Christmas. That is why I would like to thank all my colleagues for coming down and speaking clearly.

There is a lot of frustration, but I believe the process is important for us to follow through. I am proud of what we are doing. We can accomplish it all together.

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

The previous question was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The amendment was agreed to.

Mr. SESSIONS. The amendment was agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution, as amended.
The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. OBIEY. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The Speaker pro tempore. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 213, nays 190, not voting 30, as follows:

[Roll No. 663]

ADAMS

Baker

Barr, (

Bartlett, (MD)

Blumenauer

Boren

Boucher

Boyd

Brown

Brown, Corinne

Burr

Capuano

Cardin

Carson

Cassidy

Cleaver

Clyburn

Conyers

Costello

Costello

Crawley

Crowley

Davies

Davis (AL)

Davis (CA)

Davis (TN)

DeFranco

Delahunt

DeLauro

DiBianco

Doyle

Edwards

Emmanuel

Engel

Eskimo

HAdvance

Hayes

Hayworth

Hefley

Henderson

Horn

Hoskins

Hoskison

Hostettler

Hulshof

Jackson (NY)

Jackson (NC)

Jackson-Lee

Jankowski

Jayapal

Johnson, Joe

Johnson, John

Johnston, J.

Johnson, Sam

Johnson, Steven

Johnson, Tom

Johnson, Wally

Jones

Jones, James

Jones (AL)

Jones (GA)

Jones (WI)

Jordan

Jolly

Kaptur

Kaptur

Kennedy

Kerry

Kilpatrick

Kind

Kinc neuropathy; (2) to the request of the gentleman (Mr. DEAL) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. Brown) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and pass the bill (H.R. 4568) to improve proficiency testing of clinical laboratories, as amended.

The Clerk reads as follows:

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I object to the request of the gentleman (Mr. DEAL) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. Brown) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. 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 bill.

The Speaker pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Each year, the licensed physicians and cytotechnologists who screen and interpret Pap tests save the lives of thousands of women by detecting the