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No. 14

House of Representatives

The House met at 10:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. ISRAEL).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
January 29, 2008.

I hereby appoint the Honorable STEVE ISRAEL to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 30 minutes and each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, limited to 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER).

HONORING THE LIFE OF GWEN BRITT

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, today, along with my colleagues from the Maryland delegation, I want to take this opportunity to honor the life and legacy of a beloved figure from our State who passed into God's hands on January 12, State Senator Gwen Britt.

Gwen lived a full, wonderful life. She was a wife, a mother, a grandmother, legislator, a civil rights leader and a friend. But she also was an inspiration, a woman of deep faith and conviction, with an unshakable commitment to

achieving justice, equality and fairness in our Nation.

The former Gwendolyn Greene grew up in northeast Washington at a time when our Nation was failing to live up to its promise of equal opportunity. She knew the racial divisions that existed in this segregated city, in our schools, in our stores, even in our parks.

And so in 1960, as an 18-year-old student activist of Howard University, Gwen and members of the District of Columbia's non-violent action group decided to take a stand. She walked into the Montgomery County park, then segregated, and tried to climb aboard a horse on a merry-go-round; something that all of us today would think is normal for any American, particularly any young American.

Yet as the Washington Post reported, the students' actions, as innocent and as unprovocative as they seem today, sparked 5 days of protests, and Gwen and other activists were arrested for trespassing, spat upon and harassed by counter-demonstrators.

This experience left Gwen undeterred. In fact, it fortified her already strong character, as well as her determination to do what she knew in her mind and in her heart was right.

Gwen took to heart Dr. King's words, "Make a career of humanity, and you will make a greater person of yourself, a greater Nation of your country and a finer world to live in." So said Martin Luther King, Jr.

Gwen Britt took that to heart. So she did make our Nation a finer place in which to live. That experience in Glen Echo Park was only the beginning of Gwen's civil rights work.

She left Howard University to join the Freedom Riders who challenged Jim Crow laws in the South and in our transportation system. And in 1961, she spent 40 days in a Mississippi jail for sitting in a whites-only train station.

JOHN LEWIS was one of Gwen Britt's friends. JOHN LEWIS, a hero, a Member

of this body. More people know about JOHN LEWIS because of his extraordinary leadership, but Gwen Britt was there by his side on Freedom Rides.

It is a testament to Gwen Britt's humility and quiet confidence that she never advertised her proud and very important civil rights work.

As Maryland State Delegate Victor Ramirez of Prince George's County recently said, "She talked about the civil rights movement if you brought it up, but she was one of those people who spoke softly but carried a big stick."

Since her passing, words of tribute have poured forth. Governor Martin O'Malley noted, "She was a leader long before her years in the Senate." How true that is. Lieutenant Governor Anthony Brown called her a "principled, active and fair-minded voice for equality."

And Prince George's County executive Jack Johnson said she was "one of the most honest people you ever met." And on The Washington Post's Web site, people who knew Gwen posted words of sympathy and tribute.

For example, Katey Boerner, the executive director of the Glen Echo Park Partnership for Arts and Culture, has said some, almost 50 years after the demonstration that occurred to open up Glen Echo's amusements to people of all colors, "We plan to include her story of bravery and shepherding change in our upcoming civil rights exhibition here at the park. We can now treasure her memory for the amazing story that was her life and the impact that she had on so many through her leadership."

Not surprisingly, Gwen Britt also made an important impact in the State Senate after she was elected in 2002. She rose to the position of deputy majority leader in 2007 and became an unwavering voice for those who have felt the cold chill of exclusion.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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Carl Snowden, the director of civil rights in the State Attorney General's Office in Maryland, said this, "She saw other groups that have historically been locked out of the system: women, Latinos, gays. And she felt all of those left out had to have a place at the table."

Gwen Britt was a woman of extraordinary character and courage, and all those she touched during her 66 years on this earth, her beloved family; her sons, who spoke so eloquently at her funeral; her husband, who himself was a Freedom Rider, who himself was a great warrior and advocate for justice in the civil rights movement.

The State of Maryland and our Nation have been enriched by her actions and her leadership, as a young person, as a State Senator, as a neighbor, as a friend.

Mr. Speaker, today I want to extend my condolences to Gwen's husband of 46 years, Travis; her two sons, Travis, Jr., and John; and all of her family and many friends.

We will miss her dearly, although we are comforted that her life and legacy will endure and that she now is at rest in God's hands.

Gwen will live as so many before, in the hearts and minds of those she impressed, of those she motivated, of those she enriched. We will miss Senator Gwen Britt, but our State, our community and our Nation have been made better by her life.

HONORING THE LIFE OF PATRICIA A. CORBETT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. SCHMIDT) is recognized during morning-hour debate for 5 minutes.

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Mr. Speaker, this morning when I woke up and read the clips from Cincinnati's *The Enquirer*, the headline said, "Cincinnati Philanthropist Dies." It should have read, "Cincinnati's Best Friend Dies." We have lost a great friend of the arts, Patricia Corbett.

When we say the name Patricia Corbett in Cincinnati, we don't have to explain who she is. Her name appears on buildings: the University of Cincinnati Performing Arts building, the Northern Kentucky Arts Performing Center, Music Hall, Riverbend. And in a few short months, the Cincinnati public schools new Performing Arts Center will again bear her name.

But it is not just the buildings that she so actively got involved in and helped build. It's also what she did for the arts itself.

The opera, the symphony, the Pops, the ballet, the May Festival all owe a deep gratitude to the financial support that this woman gave. Her generosity to the arts went beyond the boundaries of Cincinnati.

In my own local town that I grew up in, Loveland, Ohio, we received a Patricia Corbett award, and now we have a

stage company that has a small portion of the arts for our local residents to benefit from.

There are so many people in the newspaper today that talked about what a figure she was. But the one that brought to my mind the most was a woman by the name of Martha Winfrey of Westwood who worked as an usher at Music Hall, and she conveyed the kind of kindness that Patricia Corbett had that we don't know about. At Christmas, she would hand envelopes to the ushers and say, "Just be quiet with these." She had the most prestigious box at Music Hall, Box 5, and when it got crowded, she'd say to Martha, "I don't need to sit here. Let somebody else sit here instead of me," and she'd stand out in the hall and listen to the performance.

She didn't like people to know how old she was. I'm going to be kind and not tell you, since my own mother never wanted anyone to know how old she was. But we were blessed for many years to have Patricia Corbett be our gracious benefactor.

It is said over \$65 million from the Corbetts were given to enrich the lives of the citizens of greater Cincinnati. I was one of those citizens that benefited not from just her generosity, but her kindness. I had the pleasure to meet her on several occasions. Her warm smile, her gentle hand will be a lasting memory.

A few weeks ago, we lost Joni Herschede, another friend of the arts. And now we've lost the Grande Dame. I only hope that they are in heaven enjoying the harps of the angels and that they will continue to smile down on us in Cincinnati.

THE TIME FOR EARMARK REFORM HAS ARRIVED

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE) is recognized during morning-hour debate for 5 minutes.

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because the American people are tired of spending-as-usual here in Washington, DC, especially when it comes to earmarking. Now, earmarking, for the uninitiated, is a process in Congress which has expanded greatly over the last 15 years under Republican control of Congress and, as we saw last year, under Democrat control of Congress. It is where Members of Congress oftentimes, for perfectly meritorious and honorable reasons, request specific projects for their districts. But the American people know that something has gone wrong with the Federal budget process system, and the time for earmark reform has arrived.

This past weekend I'm pleased to report, Mr. Speaker, that House Republicans gathered in West Virginia and came together around a bipartisan challenge. We called on Speaker PELOSI and House Democrats to join us in a timeout on earmarking in Washington, DC.

House Republicans united behind a challenge for an earmark moratorium and the establishment of a new select committee that would engage in the kind of thoughtful analysis and hearings where we could truly change the way we spend the people's money.

When you are flying an airplane and the gauges start to tell you something is wrong with the engines, the first thing you do, Mr. Speaker, is put the airplane on the ground. Then you get under the hood and you figure out what is wrong.

Well, I have to tell you that the explosion of earmarks under Republican control in the past years and the inclusion of hundreds of unexamined earmarks in last year's omnibus bill, dropped in at the last minute under the color of darkness, are evidence that the gauge lights are going off.

We need to call a timeout, have a moratorium on earmark spending here in the Congress while we can come together, men and women, Republicans and Democrats, and figure out how we restore public confidence in the way we spend the people's money.

By challenging Speaker PELOSI and the House majority to join us in ending earmarks as usual in Washington, DC, House Republicans have thrown down the gauntlet of reform.

And I believe that while I still think our side should embrace an immediate moratorium on earmarks and lead by example, I applaud my colleagues for finding that common ground among Republicans wherein we can challenge, in a spirit of bipartisanship, our colleagues to join us.

Now, I still maintain nothing short of a full moratorium followed by public hearings and reform will be sufficient to restore public confidence in congressional appropriations.

But as those debates have gone on, it is amazing to me, Mr. Speaker, to look at the morning headlines here in Washington, DC. It shows you the difference between the Muncie Star Press and newspapers out here. Earmarks are page 1, the focus on the "President's sudden severity is drawing bipartisan criticism." Roll Call says, "Earmarks Still Roil GOP," and the Politico, not to be outdone, repeats the exact same headline: "Earmark Debate Roils GOP Ranks."

It is only in Washington, DC, where one party engages in a vigorous debate about how we restore public confidence in the Federal budget process that the focus then is on the debate of the party that wants to bring about change because the sound of silence from the Democrat majority is deafening.

Now, while Republicans are having a vigorous debate, and I'm still one of the people that believes that our party should even go farther, that we should embrace a 1-year moratorium, I have advocated that among my colleagues and will continue to. But nevertheless, it is remarkable to me that the Washington press corps is more interested in discussions among Republicans who

have arrived at a consensus challenging the governing majority to join us in an earmark moratorium than they are interested in the response of the majority who hold the reins of power.

I mean, headlines attest to a vigorous debate among the minority and dead silence among the majority.

And I must tell you, it has to be frustrating, Mr. Speaker, to millions of Americans who long for a Congress that will put integrity and the restoration of public confidence in the Federal budget above partisan differences.

So I say to my colleagues on the other side, what is your response to our challenge for an immediate moratorium on all earmark spending? What will Speaker PELOSI and House Democrats decide at their conference retreat this week?

My hope is as our challenge sits now on the table and is met with stark silence from the Democrats, that as your party meets, Mr. Speaker, as you consider how we can restore public confidence, that Democrats will join Republicans in an immediate earmark moratorium so we can put our fiscal house in order and restore public confidence.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 48 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until noon.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PASTOR) at noon.

PRAYER

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

All-powerful and ever-living God, direct Your love and highest inspirations within us.

Congress stands today between days of retreat for both Republican and Democrat Members of the House. May these days of reflection and planning be blessed with clarity of vision and unified resolve.

Filled with gratitude for the people and the many gifts bestowed upon this Nation, help them to be attuned not only to the problems and questions of Your people, but empower them to build upon their strengths and their hopes for the future.

You alone can lift Your servants above self-interest and fractured alliances to create a renewed solidarity that will bring this Nation to unity and peace.

Only by discerning such gifts within ourselves, Lord, can we bring the seed

of promise to others. For we place our trust not in money nor in munitions, but in the meaning You bring to Your people, now and forever.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CUELLAR) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. CUELLAR led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

SUPPORT ECONOMIC STIMULUS PACKAGE

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

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support the bipartisan economic stimulus plan that will help strengthen our Nation's economy and help millions of American taxpayers and their families.

In my congressional district, the median household income is \$36,000, and those families face rising prices in utilities, food, and health insurance, which stretch their monthly budgets to nearly the breaking point.

Also, nearly 39 percent of these households are headed by single mothers living below the poverty level, who struggle to feed and clothe their children with limited budgets, as they are the sole earners.

The stimulus package will provide at least \$900 to single mothers and their families, which helps alleviate their burden.

Mr. Speaker, I am glad to support the bipartisan economic stimulus plan, and I ask my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join us today in supporting this legislation.

THE CHINESE CROCODILE

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, the Chinese attack on the Christian faith continues. For 60 days, the Chinese Government has held Shi Weiham, a Christian bookstore owner, in secret detention for praying.

As China readies for the 2008 Summer Olympics, it is trying to convince crit-

ics that it embraces religious freedom. But China is secretly moving religious believers to the dark, damp, hidden hideaway of jail.

China restricts all religious practice to state-sanctioned churches and certain places of worship. So Chinese don't dare pray or worship anywhere else, or off to jail they go. That is what happened to Shi Weiham.

China's religious tolerance is a public relations campaign draped in hypocrisy. China arrests thousands of Christians, Muslims, and Buddhists each year.

As religion is being attacked across atheistic Communist China, we should recall Winston Churchill's words about communism: "A communist is like a crocodile, when it opens its mouth, you cannot tell whether it is trying to smile or preparing to eat you up." The Chinese crocodile is devouring religious freedom among its people.

And that's just the way it is.

PERMANENT FIX FOR FISA

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call on the Democrat majority to pass a permanent fix to our Nation's foreign surveillance law and give our intelligence community the tools they need to protect American families.

It has been 6 months since this body passed a temporary patch to the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act. If Congress fails to pass a permanent fix, our Nation's intelligence community will once again be limited in their ability to track terrorists and defeat their efforts to murder Americans.

In his State of the Union address last night, President Bush reiterated to Members of both parties that the time to act is now. On this most important of issues, we owe it to the American people not to put American families at risk.

We can all agree that the safety and well-being of our Nation's families is our utmost priority, so let's work together on an agreement that will ensure that we meet the challenge of defending our Nation for the long term. Our enemies will not hesitate to exploit our intelligence loopholes. It is imperative that we not give them that opportunity.

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

DEMOCRATS REFORM EARMARK PROCESS

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

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, 7 years into his Presidency, President Bush is finally urging reform of the earmark process. He is a little late.

Congressional Democrats have already begun reforming the earmark process. We realized reform was necessary after the number of earmarks in appropriations bills skyrocketed under the Republicans. You didn't hear the President complaining then. In fact, he signed every appropriations bill that came to his desk.

Democrats, in stark contrast, have led the way in bringing transparency and accountability to the earmark process. We instituted a 1-year moratorium on earmarks in 2007 until a reformed process could be put into place. We also adopted rules that provided for unprecedented transparency in earmarks and then significantly reduced the number of earmarks last year.

Mr. Speaker, House Democrats are pleased to hear that the President is interested in reforming the earmark process. The Bush White House requests and receives funding for hundreds of earmarks each year, and we look forward to working with the President to both limit and bring increased transparency to the Presidential and congressional earmarks.

HONORING ARMY SERGEANT JON M. SCHOOLCRAFT III

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

Mr. JORDAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and recognize the ultimate sacrifice of a brave Ohio soldier, Army Sergeant Jon Michael "Mike" Schoolcraft III.

Mike attended high school in Wapakoneta and went on to study auto body repair at the Apollo Career Center in Lima. Teachers, coaches, family members, and friends all described Mike as a remarkable, reliable, hard-working young man who excelled at every activity in which he was engaged.

In his time on this Earth, Mike had a positive impact on people in his life. When he decided to join the military shortly after the September 11 attacks, he touched the life of every American family that lived under the blanket of safety he helped provide.

Mike Schoolcraft died on Saturday, January 19, while serving America in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. In recognition of his valorous service, he was posthumously promoted to sergeant.

Mike is survived by his new wife, Amber, who lives in Hawaii. Mike's mother, Cynthia, along with many friends and loving family members, lives near his boyhood home. His father, Jon, lives in Indiana.

Mike stood up and volunteered to serve this great country. He fought to promote freedom. He gave his life in defense of his family, his community, his State and his Nation.

For this, each and every American owes him and his family a great debt of gratitude.

EXTENDING PROTECT AMERICA ACT UNNECESSARY

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

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, the House made a serious mistake last August when it passed the Protect America Act. I opposed the legislation at the time because it authorized a massive, unregulated electronic fishing expedition, an approach guaranteed to ensnare innocent Americans and a sloppy, inefficient way to collect intelligence. It lacks the basic standard of court review of the government's actions.

If we have learned anything, it is when officials must establish before an independent court that they know what they are doing when they collect communications, we get better intelligence than we do through indiscriminate collection and fishing expeditions.

Extending the PAA is unnecessary because existing orders issued under it will continue for a year and are broad enough in scope to deal with any contingencies that may arise.

In November we passed in this body a good bill to replace the PAA. Congress should never pass legislation under duress brought on by propaganda, misinformation, and fear-mongering. I urge my colleagues to remember this when we debate the topic today.

PASS ECONOMIC STIMULUS PACKAGE

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

Mr. ALTMIRE. Mr. Speaker, economists say the most important thing Congress can do to stimulate our struggling economy is to act quickly, and that is exactly what this House is going to do today.

House leaders from both parties worked with the President to craft the bipartisan agreement that is before us. We came together, and by acting quickly, we are hoping that our actions spark our economy.

The package is going to provide some relief to middle-income families who have been left behind in many ways over the last 7 years. This bill gives 117 million Americans a tax rebate so they can begin to breathe a little easier when paying their bills in the coming months.

Equally important, this economic package also gives tax breaks to small businesses to help spur investment and job creation.

Mr. Speaker, economists said we need to act fast, and that is what we did. Let's get to work and pass this economic stimulus package today.

PASS ECONOMIC STIMULUS PACKAGE

(Mr. HALL of New York asked and was given permission to address the

House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HALL of New York. Mr. Speaker, times are rough right now. Signs of economic turmoil are multiplying, and we seem to be headed for, or already are in, a recession. Last week stock markets around the world dropped precipitously, and only an emergency rate change by the Federal Reserve prevented them from falling even farther.

The people I represent in the Hudson Valley have been particularly hard hit. Oil has passed the \$100-a-barrel mark, making it more expensive than ever for people to heat their homes and drive their cars. In suburban communities in the Northeast, like the area I represent, home heating bills are up by more than 30 percent over last year.

Expenses are rising; wages are stagnating. As a result, families struggle to pay their everyday costs. Our debts increase and investment in our future plummets.

Congress must act quickly. I am proud that this Congress will pass legislation today to stimulate the economy to help people and businesses, but especially the working families who need it most.

□ 1215

HEALTH CARE TAX DEDUCTION

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, my colleagues, last night while attending our President's final State of the Union, I was encouraged to hear him say: Ending the bias in the Tax Code against those who do not get their health insurance through their employer is one reform that would put private coverage within reach for millions, and I call on the Congress to pass this piece of legislation this year.

My colleagues, I'd like to draw your attention to the Health Care Tax Deduction Act of 2007, a bill which I have offered, and one that accomplishes this goal of insuring every American man, woman and child. This bill will allow individuals a tax deduction from gross income for health insurance premiums and unreimbursed prescription drug expenses for themselves and their family.

I urge you to cosponsor this bill and attack this problem with meaningful and responsible legislation. With this legislation, we can end the debate over inefficient government-run health care.

FISA

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, in August of last year, Congress passed the Protect America Act to close a dangerous loophole in our ability to collect intelligence information on foreign targets in foreign countries.

When this legislation expires on Thursday of this week, our intelligence community, responsible to collect intelligence on terrorist enemies, will lose their eyes and ears. Congress has stalled for 6 months to review the policy and come up with a solution to bring FISA up to date with our 21st century technologies and give our intelligence community the tools they need to fight terrorism.

Now the House wants to pass a 30-day extension. The Senate can't even agree to that. Democrats in Congress want to empower judges and lawyers in their discovery proceedings and frivolous lawsuits over intelligence needs.

The laws governing our intelligence collection should not be dealt with in the same way one pays rent for an apartment, month to month. We need to pass legislation to permanently create a solution that gives our intelligence community the tools they need to fight terrorism that threatens the security of every American.

VOTER ID MEDIA BIAS

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, two-thirds of Americans say voters should be required to show photo identification before voting, according to a new Fox 5-Washington Times-Rasmussen survey. But not one major newspaper, aside from the Washington Times, featured those poll results.

Instead, the national media have portrayed the voter ID issue as unpopular with voters. To the contrary, the new survey found strong bipartisan support for voter ID, including 63 percent of Democrats and Independents, as well as over three-fourths of Republicans.

Clearly, voter ID has broad support among Americans. It's unfortunate you'll never hear about it from the major media.

COMMUNICATION FROM STAFF MEMBER, COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from Paul Arcangeli, Professional Staff Member, House Committee on Armed Services:

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 28, 2008.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have received a subpoena for testimony issued by the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that compliance with the subpoena is consistent with the precedents and privileges of the House.

Sincerely,

PAUL ARCANGELI,
Professional Staff Member.

COMMUNICATION FROM ACTING CHIEF OF STAFF, HON. WILLIAM J. JEFFERSON, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from Roberta Y. Hopkins, Acting Chief of Staff, the Honorable WILLIAM J. JEFFERSON, Member of Congress:

JANUARY 28, 2008.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have received a subpoena for testimony issued by the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that compliance with the subpoena is consistent with the precedents and privileges of the House.

Sincerely,

ROBERTA Y. HOPKINS,
Acting Chief of Staff.

COMMUNICATION FROM DISTRICT MANAGER, HON. WILLIAM J. JEFFERSON, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from Stephanie R. Butler, District Manager, the Honorable WILLIAM J. JEFFERSON, Member of Congress:

JANUARY 28, 2008.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have received a subpoena for testimony issued by the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that compliance with the subpoena is consistent with the precedents and privileges of the House.

Sincerely,

STEPHANIE R. BUTLER,
District Manager.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later today.

RECOVERY REBATES AND ECONOMIC STIMULUS FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ACT OF 2008

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5140) to provide economic stimulus through recovery rebates to individuals, incentives for business investment, and an increase in conforming and FHA loan limits.

The Clerk read the title of the bill. The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5140

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ‘‘Recovery Rebates and Economic Stimulus for the American People Act of 2008’’.

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

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—RECOVERY REBATES AND INCENTIVES FOR BUSINESS INVESTMENT

Sec. 101. 2008 recovery rebates for individuals.

Sec. 102. Temporary increase in limitations on expensing of certain depreciable business assets.

Sec. 103. Special allowance for certain property acquired during 2008.

TITLE II—HOUSING GSE AND FHA LOAN LIMITS

Sec. 201. Temporary conforming loan limit increase for Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac.

Sec. 202. Temporary loan limit increase for FHA.

TITLE I—RECOVERY REBATES AND INCENTIVES FOR BUSINESS INVESTMENT

SEC. 101. 2008 RECOVERY REBATES FOR INDIVIDUALS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 6428 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended to read as follows:

‘‘SEC. 6428. 2008 RECOVERY REBATES FOR INDIVIDUALS.

‘‘(a) IN GENERAL.—In the case of an eligible individual, there shall be allowed as a credit against the tax imposed by subtitle A for the first taxable year beginning in 2008 an amount equal to the lesser of—

- ‘‘(1) net income tax liability, or
- ‘‘(2) \$600 (\$1,200 in the case of a joint return).

‘‘(b) SPECIAL RULES.—

‘‘(1) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a taxpayer described in paragraph (2)—

‘‘(A) the amount determined under subsection (a) shall not be less than \$300 (\$600 in the case of a joint return), and

‘‘(B) the amount determined under subsection (a) (after the application of subparagraph (A)) shall be increased by the product of \$300 multiplied by the number of qualifying children (within the meaning of section 24(c)) of the taxpayer.

‘‘(2) TAXPAYER DESCRIBED.—A taxpayer is described in this paragraph if the taxpayer—

‘‘(A) has earned income of at least \$3,000, or

‘‘(B) has—

- ‘‘(i) net income tax liability which is greater than zero, and

- ‘‘(ii) gross income which is greater than the sum of the basic standard deduction plus the exemption amount (twice the exemption amount in the case of a joint return).

‘‘(c) TREATMENT OF CREDIT.—The credit allowed by subsection (a) shall be treated as allowed by subpart C of part IV of subchapter A of chapter 1.

‘‘(d) LIMITATION BASED ON ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME.—The amount of the credit allowed by subsection (a) (determined without regard to this subsection and subsection (f)) shall be reduced (but not below zero) by 5 percent of so much of the taxpayer's adjusted gross income as exceeds \$75,000 (\$150,000 in the case of a joint return).

‘‘(e) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section—

‘‘(1) NET INCOME TAX LIABILITY.—The term ‘net income tax liability’ means the excess of—

“(A) the sum of the taxpayer’s regular tax liability (within the meaning of section 26(b)) and the tax imposed by section 55 for the taxable year, over

“(B) the credits allowed by part IV (other than section 24 and subpart C thereof) of subchapter A of chapter 1.

“(2) ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUAL.—The term ‘eligible individual’ means any individual other than—

“(A) any nonresident alien individual,

“(B) any individual with respect to whom a deduction under section 151 is allowable to another taxpayer for a taxable year beginning in the calendar year in which the individual’s taxable year begins, and

“(C) an estate or trust.

“(3) EARNED INCOME.—The term ‘earned income’ has the meaning set forth in section 32(c)(2) except that—

“(A) subclass (II) of subparagraph (B)(vi) thereof shall be applied by substituting ‘January 1, 2009’ for ‘January 1, 2008’, and

“(B) such term shall not include net earnings from self-employment which are not taken into account in computing taxable income.

“(4) BASIC STANDARD DEDUCTION; EXEMPTION AMOUNT.—The terms ‘basic standard deduction’ and ‘exemption amount’ shall have the same respective meanings as when used in section 6012(a).

“(f) COORDINATION WITH ADVANCE REFUNDS OF CREDIT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The amount of credit which would (but for this paragraph) be allowable under this section shall be reduced (but not below zero) by the aggregate refunds and credits made or allowed to the taxpayer under subsection (g). Any failure to so reduce the credit shall be treated as arising out of a mathematical or clerical error and assessed according to section 6213(b)(1).

“(2) JOINT RETURNS.—In the case of a refund or credit made or allowed under subsection (g) with respect to a joint return, half of such refund or credit shall be treated as having been made or allowed to each individual filing such return.

“(g) ADVANCE REFUNDS AND CREDITS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Each individual who was an eligible individual for such individual’s first taxable year beginning in 2007 shall be treated as having made a payment against the tax imposed by chapter 1 for such first taxable year in an amount equal to the advance refund amount for such taxable year.

“(2) ADVANCE REFUND AMOUNT.—For purposes of paragraph (1), the advance refund amount is the amount that would have been allowed as a credit under this section for such first taxable year if this section (other than subsection (f) and this subsection) had applied to such taxable year.

“(3) TIMING OF PAYMENTS.—The Secretary shall, subject to the provisions of this title, refund or credit any overpayment attributable to this section as rapidly as possible. No refund or credit shall be made or allowed under this subsection after December 31, 2008.

“(4) NO INTEREST.—No interest shall be allowed on any overpayment attributable to this section.”

(b) TREATMENT OF POSSESSIONS.—

(1) MIRROR CODE POSSESSION.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall make a payment to each possession of the United States with a mirror code tax system in an amount equal to the loss to that possession by reason of the amendments made by this section. Such amount shall be determined by the Secretary of the Treasury based on information provided by the government of the respective possession.

(2) OTHER POSSESSIONS.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall make a payment to each possession of the United States which does

not have a mirror code tax system in an amount estimated by the Secretary of the Treasury as being equal to the aggregate benefits that would have been provided to residents of such possession by reason of the amendments made by this section if a mirror code tax system had been in effect in such possession. The preceding sentence shall not apply with respect to any possession of the United States unless such possession has a plan, which has been approved by the Secretary of the Treasury, under which such possession will promptly distribute such payment to the residents of such possession.

(3) DEFINITIONS AND SPECIAL RULES.—

(A) POSSESSION OF THE UNITED STATES.—For purposes of this subsection, the term ‘possession of the United States’ includes the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

(B) MIRROR CODE TAX SYSTEM.—For purposes of this subsection, the term ‘mirror code tax system’ means, with respect to any possession of the United States, the income tax system of such possession if the income tax liability of the residents of such possession under such system is determined by reference to the income tax laws of the United States as if such possession were the United States.

(C) TREATMENT OF PAYMENTS.—For purposes of section 1324(b)(2) of title 31, United States Code, the payments under this subsection shall be treated in the same manner as a refund due from the credit allowed under section 6428 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (as added by this section).

(c) APPROPRIATIONS TO CARRY OUT RECOVERY REBATES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The following sums are hereby appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, to implement the provisions of this section (including the amendments made by this section):

(A) For an additional amount for ‘Department of the Treasury—Financial Management Service—Salaries and Expenses’, \$52,510,000, to remain available until September 30, 2009.

(B) For an additional amount for ‘Department of the Treasury—Internal Revenue Service—Taxpayer Services’, \$48,920,000, to remain available until September 30, 2009.

(C) For an additional amount for ‘Department of the Treasury—Internal Revenue Service—Operations Support’, \$149,700,000, to remain available until September 30, 2009.

(2) REPORTS.—No later than 15 days after enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Treasury shall submit a plan to the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate detailing the expected use of the funds provided by this subsection. Beginning 90 days after enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Treasury shall submit a quarterly report to the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate detailing the actual expenditure of funds provided by this subsection and the expected expenditure of such funds in the subsequent quarter.

(d) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Paragraph (2) of section 1324(b) of title 31, United States Code, is amended by inserting ‘or 6428’ after ‘section 35’.

(2) Paragraph (1) of section 1(i) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking subparagraph (D).

(3) The item relating to section 6428 in the table of sections for subchapter B of chapter 65 of such Code is amended to read as follows:

“Sec. 6428. 2008 recovery rebates for individuals.”

SEC. 102. TEMPORARY INCREASE IN LIMITATIONS ON EXPENSING OF CERTAIN DEPRECIABLE BUSINESS ASSETS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (b) of section 179 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (relating to limitations) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(7) INCREASE IN LIMITATIONS FOR 2008.—In the case of any taxable year beginning in 2008—

“(A) the dollar limitation under paragraph (1) shall be \$250,000,

“(B) the dollar limitation under paragraph (2) shall be \$800,000, and

“(C) the amounts described in subparagraphs (A) and (B) shall not be adjusted under paragraph (5).”

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2007.

SEC. 103. SPECIAL ALLOWANCE FOR CERTAIN PROPERTY ACQUIRED DURING 2008.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (k) of section 168 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (relating to special allowance for certain property acquired after September 10, 2001, and before January 1, 2005) is amended—

(1) by striking ‘September 10, 2001’ each place it appears and inserting ‘December 31, 2007’,

(2) by striking ‘September 11, 2001’ each place it appears and inserting ‘January 1, 2008’,

(3) by striking ‘January 1, 2005’ each place it appears and inserting ‘January 1, 2009’, and

(4) by striking ‘January 1, 2006’ each place it appears and inserting ‘January 1, 2010’.

(b) 50 PERCENT ALLOWANCE.—Subparagraph (A) of section 168(k)(1) of such Code is amended by striking ‘30 percent’ and inserting ‘50 percent’.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Subclause (I) of section 168(k)(2)(B)(i) of such Code is amended by striking ‘and (iii)’ and inserting ‘(iii), and (iv)’.

(2) Subclause (IV) of section 168(k)(2)(B)(i) of such Code is amended by striking ‘clauses (ii) and (iii)’ and inserting ‘clause (iii)’.

(3) Clause (i) of section 168(k)(2)(C) of such Code is amended by striking ‘and (iii)’ and inserting ‘, (iii), and (iv)’.

(4) Clause (i) of section 168(k)(2)(F) of such Code is amended by striking ‘\$4,600’ and inserting ‘\$8,000’.

(5)(A) Subsection (k) of section 168 of such Code is amended by striking paragraph (4).

(B) Clause (iii) of section 168(k)(2)(D) of such Code is amended by striking the last sentence.

(6) Paragraph (4) of section 168(l) of such Code is amended by redesignating subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C) as subparagraphs (B), (C), and (D) and inserting before subparagraph (B) (as so redesignated) the following new subparagraph:

“(A) BONUS DEPRECIATION PROPERTY UNDER SUBSECTION (K).—Such term shall not include any property to which section 168(k) applies.”

(7) Paragraph (5) of section 168(l) of such Code is amended—

(A) by striking ‘September 10, 2001’ in subparagraph (A) and inserting ‘December 31, 2007’, and

(B) by striking ‘January 1, 2005’ in subparagraph (B) and inserting ‘January 1, 2009’.

(8) Subparagraph (D) of section 1400L(b)(2) of such Code is amended by striking ‘January 1, 2005’ and inserting ‘January 1, 2010’.

(9) Paragraph (3) of section 1400N(d) of such Code is amended—

(A) by striking ‘September 10, 2001’ in subparagraph (A) and inserting ‘December 31, 2007’, and

(B) by striking ‘January 1, 2005’ in subparagraph (B) and inserting ‘January 1, 2009’.

(10) Paragraph (6) of section 1400N(d) of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(E) EXCEPTION FOR BONUS DEPRECIATION PROPERTY UNDER SECTION 168(K).—The term ‘specified Gulf Opportunity Zone extension property’ shall not include any property to which section 168(k) applies.”

(11) The heading for subsection (k) of section 168 of such Code is amended—

(A) by striking “SEPTEMBER 10, 2001” and inserting “DECEMBER 31, 2007”, and

(B) by striking “JANUARY 1, 2005” and inserting “JANUARY 1, 2009”.

(12) The heading for clause (ii) of section 168(k)(2)(B) of such Code is amended by striking “PRE-JANUARY 1, 2005” and inserting “PRE-JANUARY 1, 2009”.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to property placed in service after December 31, 2007, in taxable years ending after such date.

TITLE II—HOUSING GSE AND FHA LOAN LIMITS

SEC. 201. TEMPORARY CONFORMING LOAN LIMIT INCREASE FOR FANNIE MAE AND FREDDIE MAC.

(a) INCREASE OF HIGH COST AREAS LIMITS FOR HOUSING GSEs.—For mortgages originated during the period beginning on July 1, 2007, and ending at the end of December 31, 2008:

(1) FANNIE MAE.—With respect to the Federal National Mortgage Association, notwithstanding section 302(b)(2) of the Federal National Mortgage Association Charter Act (12 U.S.C. 1717(b)(2)), the limitation on the maximum original principal obligation of a mortgage that may be purchased by the Association shall be the higher of—

(A) the limitation for 2008 determined under such section 302(b)(2) for a residence of the applicable size; or

(B) 125 percent of the area median price for a residence of the applicable size, but in no case to exceed 175 percent of the limitation for 2008 determined under such section 302(b)(2) for a residence of the applicable size.

(2) FREDDIE MAC.—With respect to the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation, notwithstanding section 305(a)(2) of the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation Act (12 U.S.C. 1454(a)(2)), the limitation on the maximum original principal obligation of a mortgage that may be purchased by the Corporation shall be the higher of—

(A) the limitation determined for 2008 under such section 305(a)(2) for a residence of the applicable size; or

(B) 125 percent of the area median price for a residence of the applicable size, but in no case to exceed 175 percent of the limitation determined for 2008 under such section 305(a)(2) for a residence of the applicable size.

(b) DETERMINATION OF LIMITS.—The areas and area median prices used for purposes of the determinations under subsection (a) shall be the areas and area median prices used by the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development in determining the applicable limits under section 202 of this title.

(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—A mortgage originated during the period referred to in subsection (a) that is eligible for purchase by the Federal National Mortgage Association or the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation pursuant to this section shall be eligible for such purchase for the duration of the term of the mortgage, notwithstanding that such purchase occurs after the expiration of such period.

(d) EFFECT ON HOUSING GOALS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, mortgages purchased in accordance with the increased maximum original principal obligation limitations determined pursuant to this section shall not be considered in deter-

mining performance with respect to any of the housing goals established under section 1332, 1333, or 1334 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1992 (12 U.S.C. 4562–4), and shall not be considered in determining compliance with such goals pursuant to section 1336 of such Act (12 U.S.C. 4566) and regulations, orders, or guidelines issued thereunder.

(e) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of the Congress that the securitization of mortgages by the Federal National Mortgage Association and the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation plays an important role in providing liquidity to the United States housing markets. Therefore, the Congress encourages the Federal National Mortgage Association and the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation to securitize mortgages acquired under the increased conforming loan limits established in this section, to the extent that such securitizations can be effected in a timely and efficient manner that does not impose additional costs for mortgages originated, purchased, or securitized under the existing limits or interfere with the goal of adding liquidity to the market.

SEC. 202. TEMPORARY LOAN LIMIT INCREASE FOR FHA.

(a) INCREASE OF HIGH-COST AREA LIMIT.—For mortgages for which the mortgagee has issued credit approval for the borrower on or before December 31, 2008, subparagraph (A) of section 203(b)(2) of the National Housing Act (12 U.S.C. 1709(b)(2)(A)) shall be considered (except for purposes of section 255(g) of such Act (12 U.S.C. 1715z–20(g))) to require that a mortgage shall involve a principal obligation in an amount that does not exceed the lesser of—

(1) in the case of a 1-family residence, 125 percent of the median 1-family house price in the area, as determined by the Secretary; and in the case of a 2-, 3-, or 4-family residence, the percentage of such median price that bears the same ratio to such median price as the dollar amount limitation determined for 2008 under section 305(a)(2) of the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation Act (12 U.S.C. 1454(a)(2)) for a 2-, 3-, or 4-family residence, respectively, bears to the dollar amount limitation determined for 2008 under such section for a 1-family residence; or

(2) 175 percent of the dollar amount limitation determined for 2008 under such section 305(a)(2) for a residence of the applicable size (without regard to any authority to increase such limitation with respect to properties located in Alaska, Guam, Hawaii, or the Virgin Islands);

except that the dollar amount limitation in effect under this subsection for any size residence for any area shall not be less than the greater of (A) the dollar amount limitation in effect under such section 203(b)(2) for the area on October 21, 1998; or (B) 65 percent of the dollar amount limitation determined for 2008 under such section 305(a)(2) for a residence of the applicable size. Any reference in this subsection to dollar amount limitations in effect under section 305 (a)(2) of the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation Act means such limitations as in effect without regard to any increase in such limitation pursuant to section 201 of this title.

(b) DISCRETIONARY AUTHORITY.—If the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development determines that market conditions warrant such an increase, the Secretary may, for the period that begins upon the date of the enactment of this Act and ends at the end of the date specified in subsection (a), increase the maximum dollar amount limitation determined pursuant to subsection (a) with respect to any particular size or sizes of resi-

dences, or with respect to residences located in any particular area or areas, to an amount that does not exceed the maximum dollar amount then otherwise in effect pursuant to subsection (a) for such size residence, or for such area (if applicable), by not more than \$100,000.

(c) PUBLICATION OF AREA MEDIAN PRICES AND LOAN LIMITS.—The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall publish the median house prices and mortgage principal obligation limits, as revised pursuant to this section, for all areas as soon as practicable, but in no case more than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act. With respect to existing areas for which the Secretary has not established area median prices before such date of enactment, the Secretary may rely on existing commercial data in determining area median prices and calculating such revised principal obligation limits.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) and the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. McCRERY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that we extend the debate by 80 minutes, resulting in 2 hours equally divided between both sides.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to yield 20 minutes of my time to be controlled by the chairman of the Financial Services Committee, Congressman BARNEY FRANK of Massachusetts.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I have asked the nonpartisan Joint Committee on Taxation to make available to the public a technical explanation of the provisions of H.R. 5140. The technical explanation expresses the committee's understanding and legislative intent behind this important legislation. This explanation, document JCX–5–08, is currently available on the Joint Committee's Web site.

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

Mr. McCRERY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to allow the ranking member of the Financial Services Committee the ability to control 20 minutes of the time on our side.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. McCRERY. Mr. Speaker, we're here this afternoon to discuss a matter that the President, the Treasury Department, former officials of the Clinton administration, all agree is extremely important for the economic health of the country.

When we speak of the economic health, Mr. Speaker, we are talking about not only the rate of GDP growth,

not only the health of the financial markets, we're talking about the impact on real people of a decline in the country's economic health; that means job losses, that means financial hardship for individuals and families. So the leadership, Mr. Speaker, of the House, Democratic and Republican, have worked hand in hand with the White House, the Treasury Department, to craft a package that we can call an economic growth package, an economic stimulus package. It doesn't matter to me what we call it.

But it seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that the weight of the evidence, if we listen to the opinions of respected economists, respected former officials of the Treasury Department, current members of the Treasury Department, the weight of the evidence indicates to me, at least, that the downside of this Congress doing nothing right now is much greater than any downside of our doing something around the level that is being proposed by the leadership in this House and the White House in this package that we're considering this afternoon.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am eagerly awaiting passage of this. I hope that the other body follows suit in an expeditious manner, and that we can get this package to the White House for the President's signature. And we hope that this will have the intended effect, which is to avert a recession, and to reduce the downturn that everybody agrees is underway right now.

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

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

First, I want to thank Mr. MCCRERY for getting his views and his willingness to listen to mine, with both of us understanding that, at the end of the day, that people are not concerned with our differences, but they are concerned about the United States Government responding to their needs. And to that extent, of course, I want to thank our Speaker in recognizing the legislative and political pressures as she negotiated with using the skills of Secretary of the Treasury Hank Paulson and working with the distinguished minority leader in recognizing that we were a part of trying to make certain that the American people knew that we weren't able to do everything that we wanted to do, but we did not ignore our obligations to come together with some type of a compromise. And I think it was historic as we expanded to reach people who would have been ignored had it not been for changes that were made in how we get the money to people.

So I want to thank the leadership of the House, but make it abundantly clear that all of us thought, at the time that we agreed to this agreement, that the Senate was prepared to accept our agreement without change. It's my understanding now, as we talk, that the Senate Finance Committee is marking up their own stimulus pack-

age, and I assume that it will not deviate substantially from what the leadership of this House has done. But I do hope that it's made abundantly clear that the House has done its responsibility, and that if there's anything that impedes the Senate from complying to the mandate that the President has set on our Congress, that they too have an obligation to make the type of compromises that's necessary so that we can move forward.

I also would like to add that sometimes it's very difficult in being chairman of a committee that not only do we have partisan differences, but we have differences among my own party.

□ 1230

And while we are reaching out to provide assistance to people who are suffering economically, I cannot help but remind myself that these people were not selected out of any compassion of wanting to help the poor and those in need.

Indeed, the main reason that these people are targeted is because economists, conservative or liberal, agree that the assistance that we are giving has to be timely, fast. It has to be targeted to people that are going to have to spend the money, and it has to be temporary so that we don't do severe additional damage to the deficit.

I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that we are talking about the heart of America, hardworking American middle-class people that are now being targeted because they can't afford to take care of their families.

Yes, they have to spend the money to put food on the table, put shoes on their kids' feet, put clothing on their backs, to pay for shelter. And I submit that we shouldn't walk away from this House, because we give economic assistance, proud of the fact that millions of people in this country find themselves in that predicament and for that the Congress cannot be charged.

And I do hope after we finish going through this bipartisan effort, which we have to do, that we might find some way to tell these people that we are going to provide relief without considering a stimulus, but we are going to provide relief because it's the right thing to do.

And no man and woman in this country that works hard every day should have to be stigmatized that they can't afford to provide a different type of lifestyle for their family because they can't meet their obligations.

And so I hope in the way we, in a bipartisan way, have cooperated with this administration, that they recognize that the Tax Code, which is tilted toward the wealthy and therefore supposed to create the jobs of the wealth for the middle class, didn't work this time. And maybe we can think in terms of how we can bring more equity to the moneys that are available to disposable income to those people who work hard every day and not have to target them because of their inability

to meet their needs, but to know that we did what we should have done, and that's to provide them with the dignity and the means to continue to contribute toward the economy of this great Nation of ours.

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

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

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I would like at this time to recognize the majority whip from the sovereign State of South Carolina (Mr. CLYBURN) for 2 minutes.

Mr. CLYBURN. Thank you very much, Mr. RANGEL, for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this economic stimulus package, and I commend the House leadership on both sides of the aisle for their efforts in quickly getting this important legislation to the floor. And while the deal may not be perfect—very few, if any, are—it will go a long way towards stimulating our economy while helping many Americans struggling to make ends meet.

Mr. Speaker, these are turbulent times for many working families: unemployment numbers are up, and the housing market is down; energy costs are rising, and stock values are falling.

In short, Mr. Speaker, our economy is underperforming, and the American people are looking to us for leadership.

This measure seeks to stimulate growth by helping businesses and workers. It extends tax rebates to 117 million families and offers write-offs to small businesses to assist them in the creation of much-needed jobs. This legislation serves as an important first step towards moving our economy in a new direction.

I encourage my colleagues to support this legislation. The American people are looking for a new direction, and this legislation provides just that.

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

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Parliamentary inquiry. Is my understanding correct that, as the Chair of the Financial Services Committee, I will control 20 minutes?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is correct, under the order of the House by unanimous consent.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 3 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, what's in this stimulus package is, A, good; B, not enough. But I believe it is important to move it. I say "not enough" because the Committee on Financial Services has been dealing particularly with the subprime crisis and the troubles that's generated.

We have in this stimulus package, by agreement between both sides here and the administration, some things that would be very helpful. There are further things that are important that are not in this package. No one should think that because they're not in this

package we are not going to go and deal with them.

As soon as this is done today, the staff of the Committee on Financial Services will be working closely, we've been in consultation with the Senate and others, on a broader set of measures that will both diminish the economic problems that the subprime crisis causes and also try to deal with the distress that results.

But let me talk today about what we do. We increase in this bill loan limits for the FHA and for Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. We made a mistake at some point in public policy by setting as a limit for those three agencies, which deal with housing finance and facilitate housing finance, one flat nationwide dollar limit. In fact, nothing in our economy varies in the pricing area as much as house prices, because houses are immobile. Automobile prices, clothing prices, food prices, there are some regional variations; but they tend to be closer.

House prices have a very great variation, for obvious reasons; and, in fact, the limits that have been set which were intended to prevent luxury housing from benefiting from these public or public/private programs in much of the country excludes not just luxury housing but housing for people of moderate and middle incomes.

Now, that's always been a problem to many of us, but recently it's become part of an economic problem. The mortgage market, we understand, has been suffering at the lower end, at the subprime end, because people with weaker credit were charged too much with, we should always note, a racial and ethnic discriminatory factor; but, in general, there was a problem there.

What we now face, and have for some time, is a problem at the higher end. Because of the uncertainty in the mortgage market, people are unwilling to invest. People are unwilling to buy the mortgages. We have come to be dependent, unhealthily so it seems to me, on the secondary market in which the originators have to sell their loans.

People will not now invest in buying loans that are above the levels at which the FHA, Fannie Mae, and Freddie Mac can provide assurance. Those levels are too low.

So what we do in this stimulus bill is to raise the levels of Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac and the FHA, not uniformly but sensibly, as a percentage of median income with a cap. And that's a very important piece in trying to unlock the mortgage market and getting money flowing again.

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

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

I rise in support of the bipartisan economic stimulus package, and let me share with the Members a conversation I had yesterday.

I traveled to New York City, and there I met with 20 to 25 of the financial leaders of our country. The execu-

tives were from some of the largest banks and other lending institutions, insurance companies, in America. And almost to the person they told me that they had been talking to businesses all over the United States, and the message they continue to get from the majority of those business leaders is our business is good, we're making the money, we are receiving new orders, we want to expand, we want to hire people, we want to invest in new equipment, we want to invest in new technology. But we're holding back because we hear that things are getting worse, we hear that things may get worse, we're reading that in the newspaper, and we're not sure.

So I believe that what we have here in America today, and let's not minimize the problems. I'm going to speak about the housing market in a minute, and as Chairman FRANK said, I'll not minimize the difficulties that we have in the housing market or subprime, but let me say to the Members, let's not talk ourselves and the American people into a recession. And I'm not saying that any of us are. This is not directed at any Member. I say it this way: I want to encourage the Members and all Americans to have confidence in this country, have confidence in our market, because I will tell you that people in New York that are looking out there in America are saying that a lot of businesses are good, they want to invest, they want to hire people.

So part of what I think is so good about this stimulus package is that I believe it will encourage people to have confidence. It will encourage people to invest or spend.

The Financial Services Committee, as Chairman FRANK said, was responsible for the housing portion of the stimulus package, and I will direct some statements to those portions in a minute.

Before I do, I want to add a few words in strong support of the tax cuts contained in this stimulus package, and they are tax cuts. The stimulus package that we're considering today recognizes the basic economic reality that getting money back in the hands of people who earned it is the best way to help our economy.

The tax element of this package has been called a rebate, but in essence, it's a tax cut, a tax cut for millions of low- and middle-income Americans, those who need it the most, those with a moderate income.

I believe this will be immediate tax relief for hardworking taxpayers, and the improvement into our economy that always results from allowing taxpayers to decide how their hard-earned money will be spent will be beneficial.

Some have said not all Americans will spend this money. Some will save it. I think our answer to that ought to be, yes, some will spend it, most economists tell us that the vast majority. Some will save it, but that's their choice, not our choice. That's America. I am confident that whether they save

it, whether they spend it, whether they pay down their bills, whether they invest as businesses will in new equipment, that it will all be good for America.

Hopefully, it will stimulate not only the economy but it will also prompt my colleagues to enact additional tax cuts in the future and make the Bush tax cuts that have worked so well permanent.

It is widely recognized that the troubled housing market is a significant contributor to the current downturn in our economy. It is not contributing to our economy as it has in the past. We all know housing prices are down. This stimulus package includes several provisions designed to address that lack of liquidity, that weak market in certain segments of the mortgage market. The bill increases, but only on a temporary basis, the loan limits that apply to mortgages that can be purchased by the housing GSEs, Fannie and Freddie, and by ensuring that the Federal Housing Administration and those that are insured by the Federal Housing Administration, most people refer to as FHA, it will increase the size of those mortgages and mortgages that they can insure and offer.

Greater availability of higher-cost mortgages and FHA-insured loans will help get prospective homebuyers off the sidelines and into the housing market. We're hearing that today from the national Realtors. In those markets, there have been price declines. In some they have been particularly severe.

This legislation will assist existing homeowners to refinance loans that they're struggling with. It will also allow those who want to buy and are on the sidelines now to begin making offers and to restore our housing market.

□ 1245

The combined changes, I believe, will help restore confidence to our economy, and we need that confidence. The higher GSE and FHA loan limits, like the other provisions of the package, are both targeted and temporary, they expire at the end of this year, thereby addressing the concerns of those who fear that expanding the eligibility for the GSEs and FHA loan products will unduly increase Federal housing subsidies. I share those concerns.

While I would have preferred that the increases be implemented as part of a comprehensive GSE and FHA reform, I'm encouraged, very encouraged, by the commitments that Chairman FRANK and the chairman of the Senate Banking Committee have made to us that achievement of those broader reforms in the GSEs and FHA are a priority for them, also, and that achievement of those broader reforms will be among the highest priorities of this congressional session. I look forward to that important work.

As the GSEs purchase larger mortgages and take on more risk, it is incumbent that this Congress produce legislation that creates a world-class

regulator for these enterprises and fully protects U.S. taxpayers. We have heard from both the Treasury Secretary and the President about the need for this reform. This House has passed legislation making that reform law. I urge my colleagues in the Senate to follow our example.

Let me close by saying the bottom line, I believe, is we must not only take the measures we do today, which are going to offer real solutions, but also do whatever we can to increase and encourage optimism among Americans. That's what we need. Hope has been mentioned very often in this Presidential campaign. Our message needs to be to the American people that our economy is strong. There are businesses that are ready to hire, ready to invest, ready to buy new technology. There is a legitimate reason for optimism today, and we should promote that optimism.

Mr. Speaker, let me conclude by commending President Bush, Chairman FRANK, Chairman RANGEL, Ranking Member MCCRERY, and all the Republican and Democratic leadership of the House for coming together so quickly for this stimulus package. There is hope for America. There is reason for optimism. This package, I believe, will contribute to that optimism and that hope.

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

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, as we move forward to pass this historic piece of legislation that has been requested of us, I am, indeed, honored to yield 1 minute to our Speaker, who, on December 9, called us together to decide what we should be doing if, indeed, the economy was moving the way it has. Not only did she bring us together, but she brought Republicans and Democrats together in dealing with the administration in a way that some of us never thought was possible. It's a great honor for me to support and yield 1 minute to our distinguished Speaker.

Ms. PELOSI. I thank the gentleman for his kind and generous remarks. I especially thank him for his tremendous leadership, because under his leadership we are able today to vote on something that is relevant to the lives of the American people.

I commend Leader BOEHNER for his leadership as well. It has been a privilege to work in a bipartisan way to help relieve the pain of the American people.

For a long time now, homemakers, homeowners, and hard workers across America have known that there is a problem in our economy. They've had a hard time making ends meet, living paycheck to paycheck, with rising costs for gasoline, for groceries, for health care, you name it. American families felt this pain early on, and they knew that our economy was facing perhaps a serious downturn, but a downturn nonetheless.

On December 7, actually, I remember because my seventh grandbaby was

born that day, Thomas Vincent, on December 7 we had a meeting, a bipartisan meeting with leaders from the business community, economists, leaders of industry, of labor, the academic community, people representing workers in the diversity of our country, and we talked about what we could do to head off a serious downturn in our economy. We knew from that meeting that it would have to be timely, that we would need to act quickly; that it would have to be targeted, that it would put money in the pockets of hardworking Americans who would immediately spend the money to meet their needs, inject demand into the economy to help create jobs; and it had to be temporary. The tax incentives in the package would have to be such that they would have to be acted upon in this calendar year so that the full impact could be felt for job creation and stimulus to the economy. Previous stimulus packages have not had that. They had a 2-year period of time in which the incentives would work, and therefore they lost impact. Previous stimulus packages did not have a cap on who received the rebate, or the tax cut as Mr. BACHUS calls it. And so, therefore, a lot of money went into the hands of people who never really spent it and injected it back into the economy.

But this is timely. We're acting very quickly, not hastily, but quickly and firmly in a disciplined way on a package that has as its one criterion for anything that's in the package, is it stimulus, is it stimulus, and does it meet the test of enabling us to move in a timely fashion, targeted and temporary.

I was pleased that, working with my colleague, Mr. BOEHNER, and with the administration under the leadership of Secretary Paulson, that we were able to come to terms on how we would proceed. We could only do that because of the extraordinary respect in which Mr. RANGEL is held, and Mr. MCCRERY, and them working cooperatively as they have for a while. We could only include in the package those features that related to the subprime crisis because of the extraordinary reputation of the distinguished chairman of the Financial Services Committee, Mr. FRANK, understanding the terms under which we wanted to proceed, and respecting his expertise in those areas and those of Mr. BACHUS as well. So, this has been bipartisan in terms of committee, in terms of working together over time, and bipartisan in terms of the leadership working together a short time frame, benefiting from the work that had gone before us.

It's important in this package to have a level of discipline, because one of the features that the economists, business leaders, labor leaders, et cetera, had told us in the course of all these discussions is you don't want to do anything in a stimulus package that will hinder your ability to act in a recovery.

So, it's important that this bill not get overloaded. I have a full agenda of things I would like to have in the package, but we have to contain the price, and in doing so, you have to establish your priorities. And the priority we had was to put \$28 billion in the hands of 35 million families who had never received a rebate or a child tax credit before, and to do it quickly. That was our priority. Because if you do, to do that, again, is true stimulus. All the other things, while worthy and important, again, we made a decision, because that's where we could find our common ground. But if we heap too much on top of that package, it will then take us deeply into debt.

And PAYGO is important to us. And while in recession the PAYGO law allows for us to take certain initiatives, you don't want to abuse that by again adding to the deficit for items in the package that are not strictly timely, temporary, targeted or stimulus.

So, I think we have a good product here. It's all a compromise. It's all about decisions and priorities that have to be established. But it also speaks to the fact that we really do, hopefully, we need to work in a bipartisan way, to have a very aggressive initiative for job creation in our country. And we've already laid the framework for that in a bipartisan way. We've had overwhelming votes in this Congress, for example, on SCHIP, expanding health care to many more children in America. Health care needs health-trained professionals at every aspect of the delivery of health care. So, it creates good-paying jobs in America when you expand health care accessibility to Americans.

Education, innovation, all of those are about keeping us competitive, keeping us number one; again, creating good-paying jobs in America so that we prevail in the global marketplace.

And we talk about infrastructure, that we must have a package for rebuilding our roads, our highways, mass transit, taking initiatives for new projects as well, creating good-paying jobs in America. And global warming. We, as a generation and as a Congress, will be judged by posterity as to how we deal with the issue of a global climate crisis. This affords for us a whole new world of job opportunity where we're all on the ground floor, largely, where we go into urban America and our inner cities or we go into rural America and create good-paying green jobs that are new.

It's about being entrepreneurial about this, to thinking in new and different ways about how our decisions have to be seen in the light of "do they create good-paying jobs in America."

So, again, while we stand ready to present a stimulus, if need be, we want to, in the long term, not that long term but longer term than a stimulus, create jobs to avoid such a downturn and, in any event, raise the living standard of the American people. And so, whether it's about this rebate and

what it means to these hardworking Americans who are facing rising costs and need help to live paycheck to paycheck, and I'm telling you, that's not just the working poor, that is the middle class in America. This is a middle-class tax rebate bill. We call it the Recovery, Rebate and Economic Stimulus for the American People Act. It targets the middle class and those who aspire to it. And for that same middle class, we must have an ongoing aggressive initiative for job creation so that across the board America's families have the confidence that they need. Because in a downturn, what you need is confidence. You need consumer confidence. You need confidence in the markets. And as Mr. RANGEL always tells me, a message of confidence is given to the American people when Members of Congress can work with the administration in a bipartisan way to put the American people first.

So, I thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I thank Mr. FRANK, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. MCCRERY, and Mr. BACHUS, and to my colleagues, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, and CHARLIE RANGEL, again, for all their leadership in terms of the territories, which is a very important part of this legislation.

I think it's a good day for us here. And let's hope that the Senate will take its lead from us and be disciplined, focused, fiscally responsible, and act in a timely, temporary, and targeted way on behalf of meeting the needs of the American people.

Mr. MCCRERY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER).

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 5140.

There is no question that our economy is in trouble, and the best way Congress can help fix it is to cut taxes. But this bill is too little and too late.

Rather than sending checks that won't arrive until June, 5 months from now, Congress can give the economy the immediate shot in the arm it needs by eliminating Federal income tax withholding for a month or two. That would give wage earners a boost in their take-home pay next month, which they can spend or save or reduce their debt. Individual income tax rates could be adjusted so that taxpayers won't be hit when they file their 2008 tax returns a year from now.

Rather than telling the country that the check's in the mail in June, let's do the right thing that will put money into taxpayers' pockets in the quickest and least bureaucratic way possible by canceling Federal income tax withholding for a limited period of time.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I now yield 2 minutes to the chairman of the Subcommittee on Capital Markets, a man who had a major role in our dealing with the structural issues going forward, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KANJORSKI).

□ 1300

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise to applaud the President and the bipar-

tisan House leadership for quickly coming to an agreement to stimulate the economy through legislation that is timely, targeted, and temporary.

The bill before us today contains an important provision that I helped to craft as the chairman of the subcommittee of jurisdiction. This reform will temporarily increase the conforming loan limits of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac to enhance the liquidity of several local mortgage markets. I support this short-term change.

I would, however, also like to take the opportunity to encourage the Congress to expand the economic stimulus plan to include cash benefits for those citizens whose only source of income is Social Security. Our Nation's seniors and disabled individuals are facing difficult economic times. For years these men and women have been forced to survive on less and less, and their costs continue to increase and their incomes remain the same.

In my home State of Pennsylvania, home heating prices are up 19 percent in the last year. Gas prices are up 86 percent in 5 years. Food prices continue to rise. And seniors continue to struggle with high prescription drug costs. Low-income senior citizens and disabled individuals are forced to make terrible choices to try to cope with these realities. These Americans need cash rebates just as much as the individuals currently included in this stimulus bill.

Mr. Speaker, once again, I applaud the bipartisan effort that brought this economic stimulus package to the floor. We should also work to ensure that our Nation's seniors and disabled individuals are included in this worthwhile legislation.

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, at this time I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING).

Mr. HENSARLING. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in unenthusiastic support of this legislation. Perhaps it is a true sign of bipartisanship. I think if we were all honest with ourselves, we would say there was much about this legislation that disappoints us; yet most of us will support it.

Mr. Speaker, my own personal disappointment is I see very little economic stimulus in this so-called economic stimulus package. I see tax relief, income tax relief, for those who do not pay income taxes. I see tax relief for middle-income families, which is very important, very important, Mr. Speaker, at a time when their paychecks are squeezed with high energy costs, with high food costs, and high health care costs. But I don't confuse temporary tax rebates with economic growth.

Now, I did look closely, and there is some economic growth component of this legislation of which I approve. But ultimately, true growth doesn't come from temporary tax rebates. It comes from allowing entrepreneurs and families and capitalists to actually have

their own capital to expand and grow the economy.

The last time our Nation was facing a recession, I went to a small factory in my district called Jacksonville Industries. They employed 21 people. They were an aluminum die cast business. Because of competitive pressures, they were on the verge of laying off two people. But because of the tax relief passed by this Congress, particularly expensing capital gains tax relief, they bought a new piece of equipment. And that new piece of equipment made them more competitive, and instead of laying off two people, they hired two new people.

So, Mr. Speaker, I ask the question, surely middle-income families, I know they need help, but this package, I fear, is more akin to helping them pay one month's worth of credit card bills at a time when people are getting laid off at the local factory when, instead, what they really need to know is that their paycheck is preserved and that they have opportunities to even grow that paycheck and that their employer can become more competitive and give them more opportunities to advance and grow that paycheck. And, Mr. Speaker, unfortunately those components are sadly lacking.

If we wanted those components in the bill, the first thing we would do, Mr. Speaker, is try to prevent all of these scheduled tax increases on families and the economy that our friends on this side of the aisle have put in place. The second thing we would do, Mr. Speaker, is try to make our business tax rate more competitive with our international competitors. We have the second highest corporate tax rate in the industrialized world. That's what we need to do.

Now, Mr. Speaker, many people here come with their theories. I come with evidence. If you look early on in 2003, if you look to the Reagan administration, the Kennedy administration, when you're faced with a recession, lower marginal tax rates, lower capital gains rates, and you will grow people's paychecks. That's the economic growth that we need.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, the committee has reported out a bill that reduces corporate taxes from 35 percent to 30.5. I'm not saying that we have all of the answers, but it does challenge the administration to come forward either with support, opposition, or compromise. But I agree with the last speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it's my great honor to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON), the vice chairman of our caucus, a leader in the Democratic Party, a leader in the Congress and in our country.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. I thank the chairman for those generous remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to commend Speaker PELOSI and commend Leader BOEHNER for working together to bring this package before us and working in

conjunction with the President. Speaker PELOSI, I think, was correct in reaching out to the President first through letter and then, of course, by making sure that we could bring to fruition this important package. It wouldn't happen, though, without the leadership of CHARLIE RANGEL and JIM MCCRERY, who have epitomized in this Chamber what working together is all about and the productive results that can come from that.

I am so pleased and honored to see that this package reaches out to 35 million people, 35 million Americans who would otherwise never know the benefits of a stimulus package and debunks once and for all the myth that they do not pay taxes. They pay the most regressive of taxes. And, therefore, this is money that will help stimulate this economy immediately. And, again, I commend the leadership for coming up with this progressive approach.

We also recognize that there is much more that needs to be done as well. Again, I want to commend our chairman, CHARLIE RANGEL, for recognizing the kind of long-term stimulus that we're going to need.

President Roosevelt said of another generation they had a "rendezvous with destiny." For America today what Mr. RANGEL understands and recognizes is that we have a rendezvous with reality. It's a reality that people face every day when they stare across the kitchen table and look at their spouses and understand what's happening to our economy. When you look at the national debt, when you look at the trade imbalance, when you look at personal credit card debt, when you look at the college tuition debt that people are experiencing, that's what's happening with this middle-class crunch. That's why long-term investment in infrastructure is so important. And, again, I commend Mr. RANGEL and the entire body for pursuing it.

Mr. MCCRERY. Mr. Speaker, at this time I yield 2 minutes to a distinguished member of the Ways and Means Committee, the ranking member on the Health Subcommittee, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CAMP).

Mr. CAMP of Michigan. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, Americans are increasingly concerned about the U.S. economy, and in Michigan economy is the number one issue families worry about. It's critical for Congress to address this issue and enact legislation that will encourage job growth, renew consumer confidence, and spur new business investment today. We can't afford to wait and waste time loading up a bill with extra spending measures.

The bill before us is a positive step and one we should take. I want to thank Chairman RANGEL and Ranking Member MCCRERY and the leadership on both sides for bringing this bill forward today. However, I don't know a single American who prefers a tax rebate, even a rebate as generous as this

one, to a good-paying job. So by no means is this the only step we should take if we are to become truly competitive and create long-term job growth in this country. The Tax Code continues to be a drag on families and businesses. If we're serious about putting America on a growth track, we must tackle substantive tax reform sooner rather than later.

In 1960 America was home to 18 of the world's 20 largest corporations and their employees. By 1996, however, only eight of the world's largest companies and their employees were based in America. This shouldn't surprise us. The United States has the second highest corporate tax rate in the industrialized world. While the average rate is 31 percent, the U.S. rate is a whopping 39 percent, exceeded only by Japan at 40 percent.

So before we congratulate ourselves on this economic stimulus package, we ought to address this jarring trend that is far more dangerous to American prosperity than next quarter's economic forecast.

I urge my colleagues to send this bill to the President as quickly as possible and to begin to address long-term strategies such as regulatory relief, tax reform, and expiring tax relief measures for sustained job creation and economic growth.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I now yield 2½ minutes to the Chair of the Housing Subcommittee of our committee, who has played a very significant role and will be in a major role as we go forward in the necessary next steps after this, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS).

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker and Members, I first would like to thank all of our leaders who were involved in the negotiations on this most important stimulus package. Despite the fact there are some differences and some things we would have liked to have seen differently, this was a good effort, and I think we all have to get behind this effort and move forward with it. I'm thankful for the work that the Speaker did in particular.

And I rise in support of the economic stimulus package before us today. It is urgently needed in light of home foreclosure rates that are 70 percent above the same time last year. Labor Department figures show that a sharp slowdown in job creation actually took place in December and the worst holiday season in over 5 years.

Americans need help, and I applaud Speaker PELOSI for working with the administration and Minority Leader BOEHNER to provide it to them and quickly. This package will provide rebates to 117 million households, the kind of broad-based relief required to help jump-start consumer spending and the economy. Individuals can look forward to up to \$600 in tax relief, while married couples may get as much as \$1,200 to meet their expenses, including skyrocketing costs of fueling their cars and heating their homes.

Equally critical, this package is not tilted toward the high income to the extent that the President's original proposal was. Indeed, thanks to Speaker PELOSI's efforts, the package includes tax relief of up to \$300 for 35 million working individuals who earn too little to pay income taxes, a group that had been left out of the initial plan. Further, the bill will temporarily raise loan limits for the GSEs and the FHA, which will allow these entities to play an increased role in helping distressed homeowners across the country, especially in high-cost housing markets like my home State of California. As the lead sponsor of H.R. 1852, the Expanding American Homeownership Act of 2007, I am pleased that the bill incorporates loan limit increases for loans written by the Federal Housing Administration. The reforms in H.R. 1852 are critical in addressing the current foreclosure crisis, and I look forward to ensuring enactment of other elements of this much-needed legislation.

There are a few critical measures to assist our Nation's lowest income households, those who are most likely to inject any assistance they receive directly into the economy, that I am disappointed were left out of the final stimulus package.

In particular, extension of Unemployment Insurance benefits and a 10 percent increase in Food Stamp benefits would provide critical assistance to the Nation's poor families. Moreover, both could start injecting more consumer purchasing power into the economy within 1 to 2 months, even faster than the planned rebate checks are likely to go out. A recent analysis by Economy.com found that for each dollar spent on extended Unemployment Insurance benefits, \$1.64 in increased economic activity would be generated and for each dollar in increased food stamp benefits, \$1.73 in new economic activity would be generated. This is substantial "bang-for-the buck" in fiscal stimulus.

Nonetheless, I recognize that Speaker PELOSI had to make some hard choices in negotiations with the Administration and our colleagues from across the aisle, who view appropriate economic stimulus very differently; therefore, I urge my colleagues to support this negotiated proposal.

□ 1315

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. NEUGEBAUER).

(Mr. NEUGEBAUER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, I have some reservations about the effectiveness of this economic stimulus package and its impact on our Federal deficit; however, I am going to support it. One of the reasons I am going to support this package is it takes an important step toward providing more options for homeowners and homebuyers in America. By temporarily increasing the size of mortgages for our GSEs and FHAs, they will be able to purchase mortgages in high-cost areas across the country where some of those people

have been locked out of those particular markets.

By bringing additional buyers into this marketplace and rather than leaving them on the sidelines, we are going to help reduce housing inventories that, as you know, have been increasing all across the country. Increasing these conforming loan limits for these particular entities adds additional liquidity to a marketplace that is in dire need of additional liquidity and will help provide additional mortgages around the country.

However, their taking this action is not nearly enough. Congress has completed important legislation that reforms FHA, and we must complete this legislation. We have passed legislation that brings reform to our GSEs. It's time for Congress to sign that legislation as well. We need to do this without siphoning important resources from these entities at a time where we are going to be relying on them to help provide additional mortgages and liquidity in the marketplace.

In order to increase the loan limits to have its full desired effects, we need to also make sure that we increase the portfolio caps of Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae. Congresswoman BEAN and I have introduced legislation to increase these caps, and I urge the administration and Congress to act on these immediately. This marketplace is in need of liquidity, and by raising the loan portfolio limits and the caps, it will allow Freddie Mac, Fannie Mae, and FHA to come into the market and help bring back additional robustness in those markets.

In hindsight, we see that borrowers, lenders and investors made poor decisions. In Congress' attempt to help stabilize this downturn we must avoid more poor decisions.

Congress must ensure that we cause no further harm as we facilitate bringing more liquidity to the marketplace.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL), the Chair of our Democratic Caucus. No one has received more creative ideas of how to improve this legislation than him. But I want to thank him publicly for his leadership and directness toward this bipartisan historic legislation.

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank my chairman.

While other speakers have noted some of the shortcomings and their reluctant support, I enthusiastically support this legislation. Unlike the 2001–2003 tax cuts, in 2001, 36 percent of the tax benefit went to folks earning more than \$200,000 a year. In the 2003 tax cut, 67 percent of the tax rebates and tax refunds and tax cuts went to those earning over \$200,000 a year. In this stimulus package, zero. The lion's share of the tax rebate goes to people earning between \$40,000 and \$80,000 a year.

I enthusiastically support the middle class of this country, and we are doing it in this bill. Thirty-seven million Americans who were left out of the 2001

and 2003 tax cut will get close to \$28 billion of this tax cut. I enthusiastically support that type of economic prosperity.

Like my colleague on the other side from Michigan, once we right this economy hopefully with this stimulus package and interest rate cuts, we need to deal with long-term issues. On those issues, how did we get here? In the last 7 years, our debt went from \$5.7 trillion to \$9.2 trillion. President Bush inherited 3 years in a row of surplus, to 6 years in a row of deficit spending. Health care costs went from \$6,000 for a family of four to doubling to \$12,000 for a family of four. College costs increased by over \$2,000 a year for a middle-class family. Energy costs went from \$1.39 a gallon to \$3.07 a gallon.

So I look enthusiastically to debating long-term future economic challenges the middle class have been feeling. The reason this is so important is because we are reversing and beginning to reverse the economic policies leading, and have been the leading causes, to middle-class squeeze: rising energy costs; rising health care costs; rising home values that shut out the middle class; depleting savings rates in this country; and a median household income that has shrunk by \$1,000 in the last 6 years, while in 2000, over the last 6 years leading into 2000, median income rose by \$6,000.

So in the long-term debate about this country, we have got to come to the rescue of middle-class families, and this stimulus package begins to do that.

Mr. MCCRERY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ENGLISH), a ranking member on the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania. I thank the gentleman.

Over the last couple of months I have watched with growing trepidation as the economic news turned worse and increasingly in the market there were uncertainties about the large tax increases being threatened from the other side of the aisle, and generally a sense of pessimism about the economy. I came to the conclusion we needed to consider moving forward with a stimulus package.

Today, Mr. Speaker, I am proud to say our Chamber has an opportunity to find common ground and rally, despite our ideological differences, behind a short-term stimulus package that will have limited utility but will provide the ailing American economy with the right incentives at exactly the right time.

Through bipartisan dialogue and agreement, we have been able to settle on a plan that will benefit both wage earners and job creators, encourage investment, and put more money back in the pockets of America's hardworking middle-class families. As a result of this plan, working Americans will have access to extra cash to cushion increased costs in food and energy; fami-

lies, in fear of losing their homes, will have new opportunity to refinance their mortgages and retain homeownership; and businesses will be rewarded for making capital investments here in the domestic economy, which, in turn, will jump-start spending and create more good-paying jobs.

This compromise was negotiated as a simple, clean, and targeted bill. It is the best that we can do that we can pass quickly and accomplish our goal of stimulating the economy in the near term. I urge my colleagues to join me to vote for jobs, to vote for American workers, and to vote for economic growth.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I now yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. BEAN), a member of the Financial Services Committee, who has been particularly creative in trying to make sure that there are tax incentives in here that will help the business community play its most productive role.

Ms. BEAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5140, the stimulus package that will strengthen the economic health of our businesses, our Nation, and the families we represent. Recently, I introduced legislation to double the section 179 expense tax deduction, which allows small business owners to write off expenses immediately. I am pleased that this meaningful tax incentive was included in the House stimulus package, which encourages small businesses to increase investment and hiring.

In my district, Chris Dahm, owner of Dahm Trucking in Woodstock, Illinois, is an example of how this will make a difference. In 1980, Chris started his company with one truck; 28 years later, he has a fleet of 33. His success, like small businesses across the country, is a cornerstone of our economy. However, over the last 3 months, his business has declined and he has reduced the workweek for many of his drivers. When I talked to Chris about this incentive, he said, "If something like this came out, I'd go full speed." Instead of stalling expansion plans, he would invest now.

I commend our leadership and administration in crafting this bipartisan legislation and urge its swift passage.

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE).

Mr. PENCE. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

One year into the liberal Democrat majority in Congress, the economy is struggling. In the wake of more government spending, threats of tax increases, and energy legislation that did nothing to expand our access to domestic reserves, this massive American economy is slowing down. The time has come for Congress to act to stimulate the economy and stave off the possibility of a Democrat recession. This stimulus bill that will come to the floor today, while welcome, will not do enough to stimulate this economy.

Congress must do more. The Recovery, Rebate and Economic Stimulus Act is a shot in the arm for a patient in need of major surgery.

I will support this bill because I believe the American people are over-taxed. Putting money in the pockets of American families is a good thing. I never met a tax cut I didn't like. But this one comes close. Showering the landscape with government rebates is no way to truly strengthen the foundations of a free market economy. If we are serious about bolstering this economy and helping America's working families, we must make the President's tax cuts permanent and implement other tax reform focused on capital formation.

Congress should do more. But this is a small move in the right direction. For families struggling to make a mortgage payment or meet a college loan, for families ready to invest in a new car or a home, or for families simply fighting to keep food on the table, this relief is needed and welcomed. With this rebate, the American consumer will do their part to revive this economy, but I challenge Congress and all of our colleagues in both parties to do our part and demand that this legislation ultimately include tax relief for the wage payer as well as for the wage earner.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to share with the gentleman from Indiana the fact that we should blame the Congress for this because clearly we have had no leadership from the executive branch. So I guess the blame has to fall on us. For those who are concerned about tax reform, we waited 7 years, and we have got nothing. So either accept what we have got, or ask the President to at least bring something to the Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT), who is a subcommittee chairman of this committee, that has fought hard for the creation of jobs but has just as much compassion for those who, through no fault of their own, have lost their jobs. I publicly thank you for your service.

(Mr. MCDERMOTT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, the stimulus package before us today is a call to arms for Congress to act on behalf of the American people. The President waited too long and offered too little. While he spent months pretending the economy was just fine, Americans were losing their jobs, their homes, and their confidence.

Last week, he apparently woke up, noticed the problem, and, to her credit, Speaker PELOSI negotiated a stimulus package that, for the first time in 7 years, recognized our first responsibility to the middle class and America's vulnerable families. People earning \$200,000 a year don't need a rebate to weather the economic storm, but people earning \$20,000 do need one.

But, for all the stimulus package does, we must recognize it is a work in progress, because there is unfinished business we must address in the coming months. This package falls silent on the plight of Americans who have already lost their jobs in the economy, and this package does not address the reforms needed to our unemployment insurance programs to deal with the reality of the modern-day workforce competing in a global economy.

Two-thirds of the people who pay unemployment insurance can't draw benefits. People with part-time jobs can't draw benefits. Spouses whose husbands are transferred elsewhere and lose the second job the family has been depending on can't draw benefits. Those are the kinds of things that need to be done. But there's nothing new today.

The gentleman from Indiana was a wonderful counterpoint. In 1935, when we passed the Social Security Act in Congress, during the middle of the Depression, and unemployment insurance was right in the middle of it, the last issue the Republicans fought in the United States Senate at the very end of the bill was whether or not they should have unemployment insurance. The gentleman from Indiana would have fit beautifully in the Republican caucus in the U.S. Senate in 1935. And that is why we got rid of them.

This is not a day for a victory lap. It's a day when we begin to restore the faith of the American people in the ability of their government to act as an agent for positive change. This is the first day, but it must not be the last day, or we will fail the American people when they need us most. But I don't want to see unemployment brought out here, married to the war funding, like we had to accept when we had the raise in the minimum wage. This ought to stand on its own. We should stand behind the American workers in their time of need. It shouldn't be mixed with a lot of other things.

Mr. McCRERY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY), a member of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I don't need much of an excuse to give people back their own tax money, especially the way we spend it up here in Washington. So I support this measure and appreciate the leadership of President Bush and the bipartisan way this came together.

But let's not hold a parade for ourselves just yet. While economic estimates vary, I am somewhat skeptical about how much impact this tiny package will have on America's large and complex economy. I hope it does. But I worry this yet may become more a political stimulus package than a true economic stimulus.

The truth is our economy is so strong and resilient that it bounces back and recovers quickly from major challenges, whether it's the attacks of 9/11

or the dot-com crash. There's no question the housing downturn and future credit crunch are real and serious, and we ought to look at every way to limit their impact, but not in any way that prolongs those problems or creates an excuse for a spending spree that we cannot afford.

Our goal as a government should be to do no harm. At this point, this package accomplishes that.

□ 1330

In fact, incentives for small businesses I think will help create new business investment in the economy, which keeps and creates jobs. And we should never miss an opportunity to help families at all income levels to stretch their budgets, especially with prices so high.

In the end, we should remember that it is not Washington that creates jobs, but rather a business climate that rewards rather than punishes Americans for working smarter, for succeeding, and developing the innovations that our changing world demands.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO), the member of the leadership who has had a major role in recognizing the need for this package.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, from negative economic data on wages and consumer prices, to a falling stock market, there is almost no margin for error in today's tight economy. We face an urgency and a moral obligation to get it right and ensure no American is forced to live in those margins.

This legislation represents a strong bipartisan agreement on an economic stimulus package that will begin to provide financial relief and income security to middle-class Americans most at risk in a prospective recession.

Building on our work to extend the child tax credit, and my belief that all hardworking low- and middle-income families should receive at least a partial credit, this package will ensure that any family that pays taxes and earned at least \$3,000 last year will get a \$300 rebate per child. It is long past time that we finally recognize that the child tax credit should be available to all families, including those who serve in our military.

With the economy in so much difficulty, this is the right approach: immediate, focused on those who need resources, and who will spend it. Unlike previous efforts to stimulate the economy, this package is focused on the middle class, and provides real, not token, relief. That includes \$28 billion in tax relief for 35 million families who work but make too little to pay income taxes, but they pay sales tax, FICA tax, property taxes, families who otherwise would not have been included in this recovery effort, more than 19 million of them with children.

To meet our obligation, boost our struggling economy, and provide real assistance for middle-class Americans, I urge a "yes" vote.

Mr. McCRERY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to a member of the Ways and Means Committee, the distinguished gentleman from Illinois (Mr. WELLER).

Mr. WELLER of Illinois. I thank the gentleman from Louisiana for the opportunity to speak. Of course, I come before this body today to stand in support of our bipartisan agreement put together by the President and our leadership in an effort to boost our economy. I do want to express to my chairman and my ranking member my disappointment, however, that this product didn't come through the committee, since I know we have good leaders, beginning with our chairman and ranking member, who have good ideas; and I believe this product should have come through the committee with committee action and committee input. But I do stand in support of what I feel is a good compromise.

Under this plan, a family of four making \$70,000 a year in the district I represent in Illinois will see an extra \$1,800 that they can use for family expenses, and that is a good thing, money that can be spent locally and creating local jobs.

I would like to focus on the component that I feel is the centerpiece of this stimulus package, which is the 50 percent bonus depreciation, a mechanism that works. It should be called, rather than bonus depreciation, it should be called the "invest in American jobs component" of the stimulus package. Because this extra 50 percent bonus depreciation goes to invest in new computers and company equipment and assembly lines, manufacturing lines, they are going to get an extra 50 percent for depreciation purposes.

That is an incentive to invest in American jobs here in America, and that is why bonus depreciation is so important. Because when we did it in 2003, it worked. You look at this chart here; and when bonus depreciation was passed into law, we saw an immediate jump in demand for U.S. manufactured goods. The law had an impact, and it had a big impact.

Now, I have heard reports today that our friends in the Senate, the Senate Finance Committee, according to reports, may be considering cutting in half the bonus depreciation. Well, in 2001, in the first Bush tax cut, we tried 30 percent bonus depreciation back in this period of time; and as you can see on the chart, it had a little bit of an impact, not very much.

As the House and Senate work out our differences if we pass different legislation, I urge that we keep the 50 percent bonus depreciation, again, the "invest in American jobs" provision that is in the stimulus act.

Mr. Speaker, I urge bipartisan support of this important legislation.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield 2 minutes to Mr. LEVIN of Michigan and congratulate him for the outstanding contribution that he

makes to the committee and the Congress.

Mr. LEVIN. Thank you, Mr. RANGEL, for your kind words, and congratulations to the bipartisan leadership that has worked this out.

Yesterday in this very place, the President said: "Our economy is undergoing a period of uncertainty." For millions of people in this country, our economic difficulties are very, very certain indeed, and that is true of the over 7 million who are unemployed.

Economists agree that unemployment insurance is one of the most stimulative approaches that can be undertaken. Unemployment is rising significantly. In December, the total number of unemployed was 900,000 higher than the same month in the prior year, and long-term unemployment is now twice as high as it was in the last recession. Almost a fifth of those who are unemployed have been unemployed over 26 weeks, and in Michigan, 72,000 people will exhaust their jobless benefits in the first half of this year.

In the past, the extensions of unemployment compensation have come too late. The time for action on extension is here and now.

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. CAMPBELL).

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I guess this afternoon I am going to be a fairly lonely voice in opposition to this bipartisan agreement, and I hope that my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will listen as in the next 3 minutes I present to you five reasons why I think we should not be passing this bill.

First of all, it is not really going to be stimulative. Look at what caused the problem that we are in right now. This is a credit problem and a capital problem. We got into this arguably because people borrowed and spent too much money. So what are we going to do? We are going to send people a check and say, spend it. Go buy a flat screen TV and save America. I just don't think that is the proper stimulus or the right way to go about this.

Second, it is really wealth redistribution. People who pay well over 50 percent of the taxes in this country get nothing, zero, nada. But yet a substantial portion of this package will go to people who pay nothing in taxes. So we call it a tax rebate, but people are going to get a rebate who paid nothing, and people who paid most of the taxes will get nothing.

Third, it increases the deficit. We have had three years of decline in this deficit. We are finally seeing perhaps the end of these deficits. And now with this and everything going on, we are looking at increasing it for the first time in 4 years, maybe going back to a deficit as much as \$400 billion, which gets us back almost to where we were before 9/11.

Fourth, I know that it says in there that nonresident aliens, meaning ille-

gal aliens, are not supposed to get a check. However, this is a 2007 1040 form, and if you look at it, you can look around all over the place and see there is no box to check where it says I am a nonresident or illegal alien and therefore am not eligible to receive this check. This thing is ripe for fraud, because you send in a tax return paying no money and get a check. So there will be opportunities for fraud.

Finally, fifth, it goes against all of our long-term goals. We all sit in here on a bipartisan basis, particularly my friends on the Democratic side have talked about reducing the deficit and getting to a balanced budget. We have talked in this country that we don't save enough. We talked in this country that many times we need to invest more, as some of our friends in some of the emerging markets are doing.

We are sending completely the wrong message here, a message which is don't save, spend; a message for the government which is don't save, don't balance, but spend. We do need stimulus.

We should be providing stimulus that attacks the problem. If your leg hurts, don't do something to try and help your arm. Help your leg. Our leg hurts. The leg that hurts is credit and capital, and there is stimulus we could do that would enhance the availability of credit and encourage the movement and investment of capital. Unfortunately, this doesn't do that.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, as I listened to my friend from California, I was struck as he excoriated the President's program, that in his metaphor he seemed to think the President can't tell one body part from another, which is a troubling thing.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to have the remainder of my time be controlled by the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Connecticut will control the time.

There was no objection.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to our very distinguished majority leader, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER).

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Before the gentleman who spoke before me leaves, I just wanted to make sure that we correct the record. He said we might go back to the deficits that we had prior to 9/11. I will remind the gentleman that this President inherited a surplus and we had three surplus years preceding the fiscal year 2001, and in fact the Clinton administration ended up with a net surplus, the only President in our lifetimes to have done so. I know he misspoke and I knew what he meant, and I share his view on the deficits.

However, I am very supportive of this package because uniquely deficits I think are justified in the time when you have a crisis economically confronting you and you want to stimulate

the economy. That is in fact I think classic economics in many ways, and it is what we hear almost every economist telling us, from conservative economists to liberal economists and in between.

Mr. Speaker, for several years the American people have been confronting an economy that most working people are not being advantaged by. We were told that if we adopted an economic policy in the early part of this administration that that would turn our economy around, grow jobs, stimulate growth. In point of fact, of course, less than one-third of the number of jobs that were created from 1993 to 2001 have been created from 2001 to today, less than a third in the private sector, 6 million versus 20 million under Bill Clinton.

This prediction of economic well-being was not in fact true, and it is now abundantly clear that millions of hardworking American families are struggling and that the American economy needs a strong shot in the arm.

I want to congratulate my friend Hank Paulson, the Secretary of the Treasury. I want to congratulate the Joint Economic Committee that provided good statistics, our Budget Committee and Ways and Means Committee for the work they have done. I want to congratulate Mr. BOEHNER and Mr. BLUNT for the leadership they have shown, and I certainly want to congratulate our Speaker, Speaker PELOSI, all of whom worked together tirelessly to try to come to agreement. And I want to congratulate Mr. RANGEL and Mr. MCCRERY, who in a bipartisan way worked together to try to get us to where we are today.

I think this is good news for the American public, because we are going to vote in an overwhelmingly and bipartisan fashion to reach out to try to get this economy moving and help a lot of Americans.

The number of Americans living in poverty and the number of uninsured is up by 5 million and 7 million respectively. Job growth has been unimpressive. Foreclosures have hit record levels, and Americans all across this country are struggling with exploding gasoline prices, higher grocery bills, and increasing college and health care costs.

□ 1345

Thus, I am very pleased that Members on both sides of the aisle and the White House have come together in the spirit of bipartisanship and good faith to produce the economic stimulus package that we will have the opportunity to vote on today.

In particular, the Speaker, the minority leader, Mr. BOEHNER, as I said, and Treasury Secretary Paulson deserve great credit for their efforts. The Speaker clearly, as someone who has watched her work on this for the last 2 weeks, I can tell you, she was indefatigable and focused, as was Mr. BOEHNER.

In short, this stimulus will put money in the hands of hardworking

Americans to give them the help they need and at the same time stimulate the economy. That is what economists tell us we ought to be doing.

Former Treasury Secretary Larry Summers told the New York Times last Friday about this stimulus package: "It is a much-needed and very constructive step. It will provide some confidence, but policy-making will need to be on standby, because more may be needed." That is obviously a fact. We hope this will do the job, but we will be on alert to make sure that we do not recede further.

I am pleased that this stimulus package adhered to the principles that Democrats have stressed for weeks, that an economic stimulus package be timely, targeted, and temporary. That is not just an alliterative phrase that rolls from your mouth relatively easily. It is a premise on which we have based this package so it would be stimulus, so it would be temporary and not exacerbate long-term deficits, and would be targeted to those people who need it and will help stimulate the economy.

Democrats are particularly pleased that under this package 35 million working families who would not otherwise have been helped will receive tax relief. My friend who spoke before me spoke about transfer of wealth from one to the other. We treat, unfortunately, 50 percent of America who pays more FICA taxes than they do income taxes, 50 percent of working Americans pay more FICA tax than they do income tax, we treat them as if somehow they are not paying taxes. They pay property taxes, franchise taxes, excise taxes, sales taxes. They pay a lot of taxes, and they are hurting. This is a tight economy for them, and this bill added 35 million additional Americans, middle-income and lower-income working Americans, with help. They will help stimulate the economy.

This economic package also will expand financing opportunities for Americans in danger of losing their homes. I congratulate Mr. FRANK for the extraordinary leadership he has shown on this issue. The mortgage crisis obviously is squeezing many, many Americans and putting them in danger. Too many have already lost their homes, and many are in danger of losing their homes.

It also gives that business stimulus that is a concurrent partner of this stimulus package, not only giving people the opportunity to purchase but giving people the opportunity to expand jobs, expand their businesses, and grow our economy.

I commend it to both sides. I thank both sides for working on this. My friend CHARLIE RANGEL said during the course of these negotiations, he said that not only will the stimulus package through its economic impact give confidence to our country, but the fact that we have in a bipartisan way come together and concluded that we can work together in time of challenge will

also give our citizens confidence. I think they will be pleased with the work we do this day.

Mr. MCCRERY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to a distinguished member of the Ways and Means Committee, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR).

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to congratulate the Speaker and the leader for bringing this bill to the floor with such expediency. I do hope this is the beginning of a year in which we can count on cooperation for strong pro-growth fiscal policy.

Now, there is not a person in here who likes everything in this bill, and I certainly would be one who is counted that there are provisions in here I would rather not see. But I want to focus on the provisions that I think work, and they work because they will point towards job creation. At the end of the day, if we are talking about stimulus, the best stimulus is a job.

There are two provisions in here, one which is the bonus depreciation and the other, 179 small business expensing, which mean incentives for our entrepreneurs and our small businesses and large businesses to have cash come to the bottom line to be able to create more jobs.

If we can imagine the entrepreneurs in our communities at home who are dealing with the question of whether they can deal with an economic downturn or not, whether they have to let off jobs or not, this is real relief to those entrepreneurs and those small businesses. That is why I am excited about these provisions that will create jobs.

In response to some of the discussion which has ensued on the floor here, I want to say that unemployment insurance and other things that may or may not be what one is for, if we are talking stimulus, let's call those what they are. Unemployment insurance extension of benefits are enhancing a safety net. I don't think any of us would say that is stimulative because, frankly, it allows individuals a safety net while they are looking for a job. That is not stimulus for our economy.

Long term I would like to see this House continue to focus on the uncertainty in the investment environment. My colleague from California was here saying it is about capital, it is about the lack of investment going on. We need to focus long term on lifting the cloud of uncertainty for the investors and families in this economy so they can count on the fact that their allocation of capital from a risk-based standpoint is going to be rewarded, and that means keeping cap gain dividend rates low, lowering corporate rates so that we can reward those who take risks in our economy to create jobs.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to yield to a distinguished member of the Ways and Means Committee, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT) for 2 minutes.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, while the Bush Administration's reaction to

the economic downturn was to continue whistling "Don't Worry, Be Happy," we were at work on a prompt response. But today's stimulus is far less effective than it could have been and should have been because those who doubted that we needed to do anything insisted on supporting only action that would give one of every \$3 to corporate America and would delay until this summer giving any assistance to ordinary working families.

And now there is even an effort to add tax cut rebates to this bill for multi-millionaires. That is hardly "stimulus" unless they decide to increase their tips to the butler or the limousine driver.

Although the risk of recession is very real and it requires a bipartisan response, let's be very clear: this danger did not result from any bipartisan cause.

Like the Republican mythology that tax cuts pay for themselves, this downturn had its genesis in the wrong-headed notion that markets can do no evil, whether the subject is environmental protection or economic stability. They think the only desirable action is for the government to get out of the way. Well, the Bush Administration got way out of the way, and as a result we had overzealous lending and sometimes fraud in the subprime market while the Bush Administration stood by.

We wouldn't need a \$150 billion stimulus today if they had done their job. Whatever we do here, it can still be a stimulus without letting go of the pay-as-you-go rule and adding to our soaring national debt.

Borrowing too much is what helped create this Bush economic mess. Borrowing even more can make it even worse. Political expedience should not trump sound fiscal policy.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Alabama has 1½ minutes. The gentleman from Louisiana has 27 minutes. The gentleman from Connecticut has 20 minutes. The gentleman from Massachusetts has 8½ minutes.

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, at this time I yield to the gentlewoman from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) the balance of my time.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the financial economic stimulus package we have before us. As we know, our economy has begun to slow after a robust growth period of 52 months. It is imperative that we act swiftly in a bipartisan manner. I congratulate the Speaker, the minority leader, and the President for their ability to work together and come forth with this package.

We have learned about tax rebates for filers. I think this is good for family budgets. Furthermore, they are targeted to the low- and moderate-income Americans who are most in need. I am also pleased that this package includes important tax incentives for small business growth. In a State like West

Virginia, business is small business, and they are the job creators. It is critical that we provide them with the assistance that they need to keep their businesses viable and growing.

This agreement includes much-needed incentives to encourage the investment that creates jobs and seeks to maintain our Nation's competitiveness.

Lastly, I would like to talk about the long-overdue step toward modernizing the Federal Housing Administration to provide support for Americans who are struggling in this current housing crunch. This bill will make it easier for many Americans to refinance their mortgages and receive the support to do so. Yet while I am encouraged by this step, we must continue to work towards more comprehensive FHA modernization to make sure that this program continues to be the resource for creditworthy borrowers that may not qualify for conventional market loans.

I look forward to continuing to work with the chairman and Ranking Member BACHUS on this important issue, and our colleagues in the other body, to proceed with negotiations and produce a final product we can all support.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to a member of the committee who has been a hard worker on this, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. SCOTT).

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, we have had a great debate in here this afternoon. What is on the American people's mind right now are two words: "quickly" and "now." They want this economy turned around quickly and now.

The best way to do that is in our plans, getting money to the people who will spend it quickly and now, extending the limits on our lending capacity in FHA quickly and now, and in Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac.

Mr. Speaker, about 143 years ago, Abraham Lincoln, as well as Robert E. Lee, came before this Congress at the end of the Civil War, and they said to this Congress: we need to move. It is not incumbent upon us to complete this task, but neither are we free to desist from doing all we possibly can quickly and now.

Those are the words that are tripping off the tongues of the American people. We need to stop them from being put out of their homes with foreclosures. That is why we have the limits for Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, as well as for the FHA loans.

Americans want to be able to have their jobs. You do that by stimulating the economy and putting the money in the hands of the people who will spend it quickly and now.

Mr. MCCRERY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER), a member of the Ways and Means Committee and ranking member on the Subcommittee on Trade.

Mr. HERGER. I thank the gentleman. I commend the House leaders for coming together in a bipartisan way on

today's tax relief bill. But I believe we must do much more to truly foster business certainty, economic expansion, and a prosperous America for workers and their families.

The doubled small business expensing and bonus depreciation tax relief in this bill will help employers invest in their businesses, retain the workers they already have, and hire new employees in 2008.

It would be even more beneficial if we were focused on permanent relief. Even today, U.S. industry is looking 2 and 3 years down the road and making investment plans based on the expectations of the massive Democrat tax increases. Absent predictable, low rates on capital formation, tax increases will take a toll on economic activity and growth, meaning fewer jobs, lower wages and tougher times for families in the future.

Such a hit to our economy would far outweigh any static revenue loss we would see from enacting big-picture tax relief.

Mr. Speaker, we should also focus on putting our employers on an even tax footing with countries around the globe. Currently, the United States has the second highest business tax rates among world market economies.

Mr. Speaker, if we are to encourage a sound and prosperous American economy tomorrow, we have to begin by planting the seeds of prosperity and growth today.

□ 1400

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, at this time, I am honored to recognize the preeminent authority on smart growth in the Congress, and I dare say this Nation, the gentleman from Oregon, a distinguished member of the Ways and Means Committee, Mr. BLUMENAUER, for 2 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I thank the gentleman for his kind words and for his leadership on this issue.

I rise in support of this legislation, but, frankly, we've waited too long to get to this point. We have watched as this administration has exploded the national debt. We have watched the growth in the gross domestic product slow 35 percent in this administration over the previous one. Median incomes declined. The savings rates have gone negative, and the trade deficit has doubled.

Most important, they ignored the symptoms of the subprime mortgage markets, a failure to exercise reasonable oversight. This legislation is an important first step towards rebalancing the equity.

I commend the Speaker for targeting aid for those who need it most. I appreciate what my friend from Massachusetts Mr. FRANK has focused on, to make it easier for hard-pressed families to refinance their loans. I hope before we get through this process that we'll be able to add to it unemployment and food stamp benefits, which will have even more stimulative effect.

After this bill, we need to deal with issues of infrastructure, making sure that we don't shut down our wind energy production tax credit, and deal with bankruptcy equity so that homeowners get the same protections as people who speculated in property.

Last but not least, I hope that this is the beginning of real progress in Congress that becomes a critical issue of accountability on the campaign trail so that next year we won't have to make compromises that compromise what we need to do for the American family.

Mr. MCCRERY. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY).

Mr. MCHENRY. Madam Speaker, the basic principle of this economic stimulus package I agree with, and that is allowing taxpayers to keep more of what they contribute to the government in order to keep more of what they earn so they can spend it for their families and the communities.

Yesterday, the Speaker said that she estimates that each dollar of broad tax cuts leads to \$1.26 in economic growth. Now, that's a wonderful thing, 26 percent return on your investment for allowing people to keep what they earn. That's wonderful and that's a very good thing. Tax relief spurs economic growth. That is true.

But we have to also go a step further in this economic stimulus package. At a time when people are concerned about high gas prices, rising costs of health care, as well as keeping their homes, we have to be acutely aware of helping them. And I think what we can do as a Congress is go a step further in this stimulus package, one step further, and that is to take the rising taxes, the tax increases that are on the table and take them off the table.

Look, we need to do a whole lot more to keep this economy strong, to keep it consistently strong. We need to make permanent the tax relief from 2001 and 2003. I think it would be immoral for Washington politicians to take more out of people's hard-earned incomes for wasteful spending programs. And I think we have to go further.

By taking that tax increase off the table, we will help every kitchen table in America, for every middle-class family in America.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, I yield now 1 minute to a member of the Financial Services Committee whose expertise in the world of business and finance has been very helpful to us, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MAHONEY).

Mr. MAHONEY of Florida. Madam Speaker, the good news is the debate is over. The President, Congress, and the American people all agree that the economy is in trouble and that the old cures that the Bush administration has used to grow our economy have failed to provide working and middle-class Americans a better life and a secure future.

I support this economic stimulus package because American families are hurting and small business needs help and they need it now.

Unlike the President, both Wall Street and Main Street know that we need a bold new vision to ensure America's economic leadership is a global economy.

Americans understand that we need to reward companies that create jobs here at home, and we must stop giving American businesses incentives to move our jobs overseas. We need to once again be the place where entrepreneurs from around the world come to live their dream.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to take the first step today by giving families and small businesses a helping hand. I also ask my colleagues to come together with the courage and resolve to give America an economic plan that ensures our children's American Dreams.

Mr. MCCRERY. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS).

Mr. SHAYS. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the bipartisan economic stimulus package. I believe we have talked ourselves into a recession, and confidence in our economy is waning. By passing this legislation, we are taking an important step to lessen the impact of an economic slowdown, but there is more work to be done.

I am pleased the legislation includes the bonus depreciation and section 179 expensing provisions, which will encourage companies and especially small businesses to immediately purchase new equipment and expand their businesses.

Allowing Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac and the FHA to purchase larger loans gives needed flexibility to support sound lending in the 21st century. The recent slump in the housing market has been a major factor in our current economic uncertainty, so it is appropriate we address home loans in the stimulus package. In doing this, we increase the need for a new regulator of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, which I am hopeful we will enact into law soon.

While this is a start, the bipartisan-ship displayed in crafting this legislation, which will have an impact in the short term, must continue to develop long-term solutions to address the increased cost of energy, uncertainty about future tax increases, and unsustainable growth in health insurance costs. Only by tackling the issues that impact the American people will we restore confidence in our economy.

In closing, I am disappointed the stimulus package being considered today does not have a cost-of-living differential for regions. There are many residents of the Fourth Congressional District who make over \$75,000 but are struggling to keep up with education, energy, and health expenses in our region.

It would have been better if the legislation before us today recognized it

costs more to live in a State like Connecticut than it does other parts of the country.

With that being said, this is a good bill and worthy of all Members' support.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, it is my honor and privilege to introduce the person in Congress who knows more about article I in the Constitution than anyone else, the distinguished gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. YARMUTH) for 1 minute.

Mr. YARMUTH. Madam Speaker, today we will pass a bipartisan economic stimulus package that will help American families and jump-start our growing economy.

Throughout our great country, hard-working citizens are making major sacrifices to make ends meet, cutting back on winter clothes to pay for heat, scaling back groceries to pay for kids' medical bills, or sacrificing college in attempt to prevent mortgage foreclosure.

For 117 million families, 1.6 million in Kentucky alone, rebate checks of \$600 per individual, \$1,200 per couple and an additional \$300 per child will be in their mailboxes by as early as May. This is dramatic departure from the old strategy in which leaders hoped tax breaks for billionaires would trickle down to the people who really needed help.

Hope is a wonderful thing. But as the last 7 years have taught us, it is not effective fiscal policy for most Americans. By targeting those who need help, who we know without doubt will spend and invest and put money back in the economy, we aren't depending on hope; we're providing it.

I urge my colleagues to join me in providing that hope and jump-starting the economy today.

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

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, I'm now going to yield to the Chair of the Financial Institution Subcommittee, who has been a very important part of our effort to try and deal with this crisis, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) for 1 minute.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, I would also like to yield 1 minute as well to the distinguished lady from New York.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. DEGETTE). The gentlewoman from New York is recognized for 2 minutes.

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. I thank the gentlemen for yielding the time, and I appreciate their leadership.

Madam Speaker, today we will vote on an important bipartisan achievement, an economic stimulus package that is truly timely, temporary and targeted. Under the plan, more than 100 million families squeezed by the high cost of basic living expenses will get a meaningful tax rebate, and it is targeted to those families most in need. Millions of families can get help to avoid losing their homes, and small

businesses can take advantage of tax cuts that will help spur investment and job creation.

This package will provide a boost to the economy by putting hundreds of dollars into the hands of middle and lower income families who will generate demand without the fear of igniting inflation.

Our plan also temporarily raises the mortgage lending limits for FHA, Fannie Mae, and Freddie Mac to increase affordable refinancing options for those facing foreclosure and to inject much needed liquidity into the housing markets.

I regret that many of the aspects of the FHA reform were cut out of the bill, and we hope to have them passed in the Senate. These efforts build on the hard work of Democrats in Congress to help families stay in their homes and to prevent other crises like this from happening in the future.

This package is an important first step, but there is much more to do. We will keep fighting to restore the American Dream and to help America's hardworking families.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, at this time I yield the distinguished lady from Texas, SHEILA JACKSON-LEE, 1 minute.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. I thank the distinguished manager of this legislation and vice chairman of our caucus.

Madam Speaker, the United States, the American people asked us to act, and I'm proud today to rise and to support the kind of stimulus that provides opportunity not only for those who you would expect or those who are argued for, but the working men and women, middle-income Americans in my congressional district in Houston making less than \$50,000, allowing them to get either \$600 as a single person, \$1,200 as a family, and \$300 as a married couple.

The most important aspect is that economists estimate that each dollar of broad tax cuts leads to \$1.26 in economic growth. But I hope that we will look to the addition of food stamps, summer job programs, and extension of the unemployment. And we must have the language, I hope, in the final bill, a sense of Congress that there should be a moratorium on foreclosures that are happening in America today; 2.4 million foreclosures expected in this coming year. It is imperative that we give a sense that these individuals can reconstruct their loans and survive.

This is a package that is needed for America. I ask my colleagues to support it.

Madam Speaker. I rise today in support of the Recovery Rebate and Economic Stimulus for the American People Act. I would like to thank Speaker PELOSI for her leadership on this issue, as well as my colleagues on both sides of the aisle who have worked together to overcome partisan divisions to work together to stimulate our national economy. This legislation will inject \$145.9 billion into the economy in 2008, over two-thirds of which will come in the form of tax rebate checks, given directly to individuals and families.

However, while I support this legislation, I would like to express my concern about some of this bill's omissions. I requested and had hoped that this legislation would include language declaring that it is the sense of Congress that a moratorium of up to 90 days should be declared on all home foreclosures, and that it is the sense of Congress that the financial industry should allow for the reconstruction and reconfiguration of the mortgage loan market.

Madam Speaker, I would like to see the following language included in the final legislation, agreed on by both Houses and signed into law by the President:

(i) It is the sense of Congress that a moratorium of up to 90 days should be declared on all home foreclosures.

(ii) It is the sense of Congress that the financial industry should allow for the reconstruction and reconfiguration of the mortgage loan market.

It was my sincere hope, shared by many economists, that a temporary economic adjustment period would provide relief for millions of Americans, and that this added time would give them time to look for other resources. By delaying foreclosure, Congress would have declared that millions of Americans deserve to make their payments, or to get their loans restructured before they lose their homes. Those who can keep paying would continue putting money back into our economy. Madam Speaker, we must act now to prevent what could be a disaster for millions of Americans.

There are a number of additional proposals that I would like to see included in the final economic stimulus package. I believe it should include a summer job program, aimed at helping our Nation's youth gain the crucial work experience and job skills that will allow them to be competitive in today's increasingly difficult employment market. By working to provide Americans with the skills they need to successfully secure and keep employment, we cannot only help both adults and youth to develop their careers and to support themselves and their families, but we can bolster the whole economy by combating poverty and unemployment.

I would also like to see the extension and expansion of several existent programs which are already doing important work toward helping Americans. Under the strain of current financial circumstances, I believe that we must bolster these important programs. Madam Speaker, I call for the expansion of food stamps and Medicaid programs, and for the extension of unemployment benefits. Given the current economic climate, I believe that is our responsibility, as the leaders of our Nation, to do all in our power to ensure that the most vulnerable populations are protected.

Madam Speaker, now is the time for innovative leadership and concerted action. Recent data shows economic growth is slowing, and many economic analysts predict a 50 percent chance of recession. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, unemployment rose from 4.7 to 5.0 percent in November 2007 alone. This data, coupled with a struggling housing market and overall slowing economic growth, has caused a "credit crunch" that has reduced available funding and has caused rising prices for housing and food.

Over the past year, we have seen a crisis in subprime mortgage lending, which has threatened the stability of the housing market

and the livelihoods of large numbers of Americans. During the third quarter of 2007, the Nation's home foreclosures doubled from the previous year. This Democratic Congress is committed to strengthening the housing market and stabilizing the economy, and we have passed important legislation to address this crisis.

Because of the lack of regulation by the Federal Government, many housing loans were accompanied by fraud, predatory lending, inadequate information and other failures of responsible marketing. With exceptionally high—and rising—foreclosure rates across the country, homeowners all over America are losing their homes. Homeowners are surprised to find out that their monthly payments are spiking and they are struggling to make these increasingly high payments.

The subprime mortgage crisis has impacted families and communities across the country. Home foreclosure filings rose to 1.2 million in 2006, a 42 percent jump, due to rising mortgage bills and a slowing housing market. Nationally, as many as 2.4 million subprime borrowers have either lost their homes or could lose them in the next few years.

In my home State of Texas, citizens are feeling the impact of the looming financial crisis. In November 2007 alone, there were 11,599 foreclosure filings in Texas. According to the Center for Responsible Lending, in Harris County alone 11,944 homes were lost from 2005 to 2006 through foreclosure on subprime loans. During the same time period, the average home decreased \$1,355 in total value.

Madam Speaker, I firmly believe that this agreement should include a moratorium on foreclosures of at least 90 days on owner-occupied homes with subprime mortgages. Any agreement should also include a rate freeze on adjustable mortgages of at least 5 years or until the loan is converted into a fixed-rate mortgage. The freeze on foreclosures would give the housing market time to stabilize and homeowners time to build equity. It is critical that we address this crisis. The Bush administration and the mortgage industry must reach an agreement that matches the scale of the problem. The U.S. Treasury Department has been pushing the mortgage industry to agree to temporarily freeze interest rates for some borrowers who took out loans with low teaser rates that will soon be resetting much higher.

Madam Speaker, it is imperative that we address the serious underlying housing issues faced by our Nation. Seventeen million households, or one in seven, spend more than 50 percent of their income on housing. On any given night, approximately 750,000 men, women, and children are homeless. Constructing more affordable housing is necessary to help families who have lost their homes in the subprime mortgage crisis or due to a family financial crisis, such as illness or job loss. In my home district in Houston, homelessness remains a significant problem. Houston's homeless population increased to approximately 14,000 in 2005, before Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and hurricane evacuees remaining in the Houston area could result in the homeless population increasing by some 23,000. Approximately 28 percent of homeless Americans are veterans.

In August, I, in coordination with the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs, hosted a workshop on the introductory concepts and considerations in applying for

Housing Tax Credits in Texas. This workshop was designed to create new incentives for developers to expand business opportunities in housing development, as well as to generate a significant increase in the availability of low-income and affordable housing for the residents of Houston and Harris County. I believe that an increase in affordable housing and job opportunities will help reduce the high rates of homelessness among Houston residents.

Madam Speaker, today's economic stimulus legislation will make important strides towards helping hardworking Americans who are struggling with the high costs of gas, health care, and groceries. By putting several hundred dollars directly into the hands of 117 million American families, this legislation will make important strides toward invigorating our economy, giving money to those who will quickly spend it, reinvesting this money in the American economy.

This bill provides broad-based relief for individuals and families, valued at approximately \$109 billion over 10 years. The packages includes tax cuts for 117 million families, providing up to \$600 per individual, \$1,200 per married couple, and an additional \$300 per child. On top of these recovery rebate checks, which could be sent as early as mid-May, this legislation will provide unprecedented tax relief for working families, with \$28 billion in tax relief for 35 million families who work but make too little to pay income taxes, who would therefore otherwise not be included in this recovery effort. It is targeted to reach those who need the relief the most: Of these 35 million working families, over 19 million are families with children. I support provisions in this legislation providing tax relief to middle-income Americans, as well as those aspiring to the middle class, leaving out the wealthiest taxpayers. Nearly \$50 billion of the rebate will go to those making less than \$50,000.

Madam Speaker, family incomes and home prices are down, even as the costs of health care, energy, food, and education are on the rise. Combined with the jump in mortgage foreclosures, the American economy is struggling, with American families falling behind on their bills and consumer confidence hitting a 5-year low.

This bill also contains some provisions to help families avoid foreclosure. It increases affordable refinancing opportunities and liquidity in the housing market, increasing the Federal Housing Administration loan limits to \$729,750 for 2008. This will expand affordable mortgage loan opportunities for families at risk of foreclosure. Further, it includes a 1-year increase in loan limits for single family homes from Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, enhancing credit availability in the mortgage market.

While this legislation includes provisions intended to provide a short-term "fix" to many of the economic difficulties our economy is currently facing, I do not believe that it addresses the long-term needs of our Nation. While short-term response is critical, we must not neglect infrastructure, energy independence, and innovation needs, without which we will not be able to establish a vibrant U.S. economy. I look forward to working with House leadership, and with my fellow Members on both sides of the aisle, to look to the future, and to build innovative and long-term solutions to the underlying problems our economy faces.

Madam Speaker, this legislation is not perfect, but I believe it is an important step. I con-

tinue to advocate for a 90-day moratorium on home foreclosures to give financially troubled borrowers time to work with lenders and avoid losing their homes. I also believe we, together, must address the underlying infrastructure problems plaguing our economy. However, I do believe today's legislation will provide important benefits to millions of Americans, to the entire economy, and to our Nation as a whole. I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this legislation.

[Discussion Draft]

AMENDMENT TO H.R. _____

OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON-LEE OF TEXAS

At the appropriate place in the bill, insert the following new section:

SEC. ____ SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING HOME MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE MORATORIUM AND MARKET.

It is the sense of the Congress that—

(1) a moratorium of up to 90 days should be declared on all foreclosures on home mortgage loans; and

(2) the financial industry should allow for the reconstruction and reconfiguration of the home mortgage loan market.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, it is now my high honor to call upon the chairman of the Select Revenue Committee for the Ways and Means Committee, the distinguished gentleman from Springfield, Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL) for 2 minutes.

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, I want to first congratulate the Speaker and Chairman RANGEL and Chairman FRANK for negotiating this economic stimulus bill which will provide relief to working families and businesses in these difficult times.

The bill provides \$100 billion in tax relief to working families, targeting this relief to families that really need it. A family earning between 10 and 20,000 will see their taxes cut by 50 percent. For New England families facing rising energy bills, this is well-timed relief and cash in the hands of those most likely to use it to spur on economic growth.

Like others, I believe we can and will do more. But I'm a strong supporter of the legislation that's in front of us and urge its adoption.

Some have quibbled with the impact of this stimulus, but I believe this is how the Congress should respond in a troubled economy. Abe Lincoln noted that "The legitimate object of government is to do for a community of people whatever they need to have done, but cannot do at all in their separate and individual capacities."

Working families, businesses, homeowners, and investors are hurting. This quick infusion of cash to low- and middle-income families, to small businesses and large businesses where necessary, making capital purchases, will jump-start our economy in a quick and efficient way.

Is it perfect? No.

Is it possible? Yes.

Is there more work to be done? Certainly. We will come to that as well in late winter and early spring.

□ 1415

This is good work and the leadership should be commended. Mr. RANGEL, Mr.

FRANK, and Speaker PELOSI all should be acknowledged for the work.

I thank our friend from Hartford, Connecticut (Mr. LARSON) for giving me time.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, at this time, I would like to recognize the gentlewoman from New Hampshire (Ms. SHEA-PORTER) for 1 minute.

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Madam Speaker, the administration's policies of the past 7 years have led us to this point. The American people know that prices have gone up for everything, from groceries to heating oil to gasoline, while at the same time jobs are moving overseas, the housing market is in a crisis and the economy is struggling. This is what happens when there is no oversight for 7 long years and mismanagement is allowed to run rampant.

I'm pleased that we did come together in a bipartisan manner to produce this bill. Over 117 million American families will receive rebates under this plan, including 600,000 in my own State of New Hampshire.

This bill also helps small businesses, which are at the heart of our Nation. It is a very good start, but we need to do more for senior citizens and for those who receive Social Security. We need to do more for families who need to stay warm this winter. They are the most vulnerable members of our society. They need help the most, and we know they will put the money directly into the economy.

We must continue to turn this Nation's attention towards restoring a vibrant, robust middle class.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, at this time it is an honor to call upon the distinguished gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN) for 1½ minutes.

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I thank my friend and vice-Chair of our caucus for yielding me the time.

If his chairman, Mr. RANGEL, and Mr. FRANK had had their druthers, not to mention the Speaker, this would have been a far better bill than it is today. It would have included the extension of unemployment insurance and food stamp benefits; it would have helped out States with their Medicaid funding crisis.

It would also have included home mortgage foreclosure mitigation which has had a tremendous impact upon thousands of families throughout the country. We know that a one-time payment of \$600 will do nothing to help a family facing foreclosure, as some 250,000 American families are expected to do every month this year.

The Bush White House insisted that this mortgage foreclosure counseling be taken out over the objections of Mr. FRANK, and it is a darn shame when this could have had such a positive impact.

The impact of home foreclosures isn't limited to the lender and borrower, as we so well know. They have a negative impact on the entire community.

The reality is that across this country over the ensuing year there will be nearly 45 million homes that will be foreclosed on. This will shrink the local property tax base by \$223 billion this year as a result of the foreclosure of home mortgages. And, yet, when we look around at what has worked, we find that one hotline, for example, is currently taking more than 1,000 calls a day preventing an estimated 200 foreclosures by empowering borrowers with the skills and education they need to work out terms with their lenders and to stay in their homes.

That's one of the things that this bill needs to be about. It needs to be about extending unemployment insurance and the kind of helping hand to America's working class that this party stands for. We are going to pass the bill, but we could and should have done better.

Mr. MCCRERY. Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to yield 3 minutes to the gentlelady from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT), the ranking member on the Financial Institutions Subcommittee of the Financial Services Committee.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this important bill and urge its swift passage.

I'm pleased that House leaders, both Republican and Democrat, and the administration have been able to come together quickly on a clean, targeted economic stimulus package. The bill promises to relieve the financial strain on hardworking Americans while providing a much-needed boost to the economy and the housing market.

Today, I want to highlight a few provisions in the bill produced by the Financial Services Committee. These provisions increase the conforming loan limits for both the Federal Housing Administration and the GSEs, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. And what will this do? It will keep property values from falling further by temporarily permitting Fannie, Freddie and the FHA to help homeowners and buyers finance and refinance mortgages in high-cost areas like the City of Chicago.

In short, it will help save the neighborhood.

These are important first steps; but as the President indicated last night, there are additional steps that require our full attention in the days to come if we are to reinvigorate the economy. We need to prevent a return of the marriage penalty, the death tax and the alternative minimum tax, along with higher taxes on income dividends and capital gains. We also need to send comprehensive FHA and GSE reform to the President.

During the last two Congresses, our committee in the full House has passed bills to modernize the FHA and reform Fannie and Freddie, but these efforts have yet to become law. The latest FHA proposal was even rumored to be part of the stimulus package, but it is not.

And that is why I urge my colleagues in the House and Senate to conference

these two bills and get a final product to the President immediately.

A modernized FHA program will provide insurance so that more struggling American homeowners can refinance their existing mortgages and keep their homes. It will give first-time homebuyers a viable alternative to bad subprime loans. By providing Fannie and Freddie with a world-class regulator, we can infuse the housing market with liquidity so that more financing is available for perspective homeowners.

In addition, we need to supply more funding for housing counseling. Counselors can help guide homeowners into a loan that best meets their budgets and needs, steering them away from a situation that could lead to foreclosure down the road.

Madam Speaker, it is critical to the housing market and our economy that we finalize GSE and FHA reform and increase housing counseling. Adding liquidity and consumer confidence to the flagging housing market can restore vigorous growth to our economy, and we must do it without delay.

And in the near term, I urge my colleagues to support this economic stimulus package as a critical first step.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, I now yield 1 minute to a member of our committee who has been very active in trying to deal with housing and especially with the area of manufactured housing, which is such an important part of our efforts to meet the housing needs, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY).

Mr. DONNELLY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your leadership.

I rise today in strong support of this bipartisan economic stimulus package. These are difficult times for working families. From rising energy prices and health care costs, to mortgage concerns and a volatile job market, families in my district are feeling the squeeze in almost every facet of their lives.

This stimulus package before us is carefully crafted to provide immediate tax relief to working families, while maximizing the benefit to the economy.

It is estimated that 2.6 million middle-class Hoosier families will receive \$2.4 billion in tax relief.

In addition, this stimulus package also recognizes the important role that small businesses play in creating jobs and strengthening our economy. The package doubles the amount small businesses can write off their taxes for new investments made in 2008, and it increases the number of small businesses that are eligible for this basic tax relief.

Madam Speaker, I'm proud to support this stimulus package.

Mr. MCCRERY. Madam Speaker, we only have one remaining speaker to close. So assuming that the gentleman from Connecticut has additional speakers, I would ask that he be allowed to yield time.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Louisiana.

At this time, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from New York City, Mr. SERRANO, who is loved dearly by her citizens. Only Roberto Clemente is respected more in his great City of New York.

(Mr. SERRANO asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SERRANO. I thank the gentleman. I have no voice, but I have a lot of joy. This is a great day.

This is the first time that a package of this kind has included so many poor people and so many folks in the middle class, but I especially want to thank the leadership on both sides for including the Territories. This is the first time in the history of this country that the people who live in the Territories are treated as equal, as Americans as they are, living under the American flag.

And where will they spend the money? At the same retail stores that we will be spending our money here in this country. It's the same economy; but for the first time, this Congress in a bipartisan way has accepted the fact that it is one economy and the Territories are as much a part of this Nation as any other part, and I thank you for that.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, it is my honor to now prevail upon the distinguished gentlelady from Nevada (Ms. BERKLEY) for 2 minutes.

Ms. BERKLEY. I thank the gentleman from Connecticut.

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this bipartisan stimulus package. This bill will provide tax relief for over 1 million Nevada families who will receive an average rebate of over \$800.

With the unemployment rate in my State climbing above the national average to a 5-year high of 5.8 percent, this timely support will help these families weather the financial storm while they search for and find new employment.

I'm also especially supportive of the provisions of the bill that address the housing crisis. Unfortunately, my State of Nevada has the highest rate of foreclosures in the country. The increased funding for mortgage counseling, along with new higher loan limits for loans from Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac and the FHA, will help thousands of Nevadans avoid foreclosure and keep their families in their homes.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill. I thank the gentleman for giving me so much time.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, at this time, I would like to prevail upon the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. PERLMUTTER) for 1 minute.

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I thank Mr. LARSON, and I want to thank the leadership on both sides of the aisle for working together, for the give and take that's gone into this bill.

I rise in support, but I do recognize the complaints that Mr. CAMPBELL raised in connection with this bill and this package. This is a short-term fix to some long-term fundamental economic problems that we have in the country, but it gives us a chance now to focus mid term and long term on strategies and investments that will strengthen our families and our Nation. These are strategies and investments that will call for sacrifice on the part of the Nation, as well as each one of us as individuals.

We will get a chance now, I hope, in future packages to look at the infrastructure of this Nation in energy and transportation, but this today will give the shot in the arm this country needs and give us a chance to really plan for the future.

Mr. MCCRERY. Madam Speaker, can I inquire from the gentleman from Connecticut how many speakers he has remaining.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Yes, we would be prepared to close at this time. I don't know whether the gentleman from Massachusetts is going to close as well. So, with that, we would reserve the balance of our time and be prepared to close.

Mr. MCCRERY. Madam Speaker, so am I to understand that the majority has two remaining speakers, one from Financial Services, one from Ways and Means?

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. That is correct.

Mr. MCCRERY. Very well. In that case, Madam Speaker, I would yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BACHUS), the ranking member of the Financial Services Committee, and then we will have one remaining speaker to close.

Mr. BACHUS. Madam Speaker, let me say this to the membership on both sides. I believe that we've come together in a bipartisan way to pass this legislation today because we have confidence in America. We have confidence in the American people. We believe the American people have a right to have confidence.

And I would say whether we're Members or Americans, I would say to all of us, you have every reason to have confidence in this country. You have every reason to have confidence in the workers of this country, their innovative ability and their ability to produce and compete in the world economy. You have every reason to be confident in the American economic system.

□ 1430

That's the message that I heard in New York City from many institutions that said they had money to loan. There are companies out there who are making money, that want to hire people, that want to build new plants, that want to expand, that want to buy equipment, that want to invest in new technology, but because of what they read in the paper, not because of their balance sheet, but because of what

they're hearing is that things may get worse, there is a lack of confidence out there. I don't believe that it is entirely justified.

This country has challenges. This economy has weaknesses, and we've talked about those. But our underlying fundamental economic system and our financial system is sound. And I hope by us today joining together in a bipartisan way to pass this legislation we'll be saying to the American people, your Congress has confidence in you and the economy.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair wishes to announce that the gentleman from Louisiana has 16½ minutes, the gentleman from Massachusetts has 4½ minutes, and the gentleman from Connecticut has 8 minutes.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, the argument has been made that this is just a short-term fix, and that is what we hope it will be. We have both a short-term and a long-term problem.

A recession is, by definition, a specific incident in the cycle, and what we are trying to do now is to respond to what we believe and hope to be a specific, more short-term weakness. That's why we are able to come together in a bipartisan way.

And partisanship is, I believe, a much unfairly maligned concept. Partisanship is essential to a healthy democracy. There has never been a self-governing polity in the history of the world, I believe, of any size where political parties did not emerge, because large numbers of people trying to govern themselves need an organizing principle other than the authority of the leadership.

In America today, a division between the two parties reflects serious, thoughtful differences on how the public and private sectors should interact. We're a capitalist Nation and we're all capitalists, but we differ. On the Republican side there is, I think, an unjustified belief in the essential self-sufficiency of the capitalist system.

We believe, following many who have done work on the technical "doctrine of market failure," market failure in the economic sense, that the free market is a great generator of wealth, but that to achieve the quality of life we want, there must also be a vigorous public sector that interacts with it. That's partly in expenditures, because there are public goods that all of us want that the private sector does not have the capacity to produce, public safety and transportation, and including some compassion for those among us who will not live minimally decent lives unless the rest of us show some of that compassion.

There is also the need for regulation. And the biggest single problem we face today, I believe, is the consequence of too little regulation. It is possible to overregulate, but it is possible to regulate inadequately.

Innovation is very important, and innovation does not survive and grow if

it doesn't meet a real need in the economy. One of the innovations of recent times was securitization made possible by large pools of money, by great liquidity that came from various places, not from depository funds, because funds that are in depository institutions are regulated. But a lot of money was generated now, not by bank deposits, but in other ways. And we've also got the ability, technically and in other ways, to sell off those loans.

The lender-borrower relationship that was at the core 30 years ago of many transactions has been essentially diluted. And it turns out that those who thought they had a way to substitute for that missing lender-borrower relationship were deluded. The relationship was diluted, but they were deluded in thinking that they had these techniques that would allow them to deal with it.

We are in a difficult situation today because the innovation and securitization, which has many advantages, was allowed to go forward without adequate regulation, without people knowing, literally, what they were doing and what they were buying and what they were selling, and keeping things off their balance sheets, and not being reserve requirements and not being careful about what loans they bought. We have differences between the parties as to how to deal with those, and we will continue to work on those.

We, however, have a short-term, we hope, shortfall that needs to be addressed. And let me talk for a minute for those who say, Well, what makes you think people are going to go out and spend more because of this? The purpose of a short-term stimulus like this is not to get people to spend more; it is to help them not to spend less. We're not talking about the need for a surge over the norm in consumer spending. We are talking about a fiscal crunch that faces many Americans, in response to which they will have to cut back spending. And people are saying, Oh, they're going to buy flat screen TVs, they're going to do this and that. We have, thanks to the leadership of Speaker PELOSI, a bill before us that will send most of the individual money to people who don't have the option of saying, Well, I think I'll buy another flat screen TV, but who need the money. Helping them avoid pain in their lives and damage to the economy is the justification for this very narrow, short-term stimulus.

Mr. MCCRERY. Madam Speaker, our closing speaker on the minority side is a gentleman who deserves much of the credit for the swiftness with which this stimulus package was brought to the floor. He deserves much of the credit for the balancing of the interests of the majority and the minority that is contained in this legislation. And he deserves much of the credit for the majority and the minority leadership being able to bring this bill forward to the floor today under suspension. So,

it's with a great deal of pleasure that I introduce our closing speaker, the respected minority leader, Mr. BOEHNER, and yield him as much time as he may consume.

Mr. BOEHNER. Let me thank my colleague from Louisiana for his generous words and thank all of my colleagues for the generous spirit that we find in the Chamber today.

I think that the bill that we have before us that embodies an agreement that Speaker PELOSI and I came to last week, along with the administration, is going to help middle-class families that are in a pinch. Their cost of living is rising, whether it be the cost of health insurance, the cost of gasoline, energy, and at a time when their salaries and their incomes aren't rising.

And I think that what the American people want is they want solutions, solutions to the problems that we face in our country. And I believe that the bipartisan measure that we have will, in fact, help give a short-term boost to our economy. It will put money in the pockets of American families. It will give businesses reasons to invest in new equipment, to maintain and hopefully to expand their employment.

Is the bill perfect? No, it's not perfect. Republicans gave a little, the Speaker gave a little, and at the end of the day, we came to an agreement that I think represents what the American people expect of us. They expect us to find ways to work together, not reasons to continue to fight with each other. And the bill that we have before us is the way good legislation occurs.

I've said this many times before, if I look back over my career in Congress: The bills that I remember most, the most significant legislation that I've worked on, has always been done in a bipartisan way, whether I was in the minority or in the majority. And I want to thank Speaker PELOSI for her willingness to sit down and work together in a bipartisan way, in a constructive way. I want to thank Secretary of the Treasury Paulson for their work in helping to facilitate this agreement. And I look forward to this bill passing today and hopefully quick action in the Senate.

The sooner this happens and the sooner we get this relief in the hands of the American people, the sooner they can begin to do their job of being good consumers and investing this money in our economy.

Some people say it won't work, that it's too little, it's too late, and we shouldn't be doing this. You know, I've thought about that. I've got concerns about whether this package will, in fact, work. But I've got bigger concerns that if we do nothing, if we do nothing, we're just asking for our economy to slow even further. And what that will do to Federal revenues, what that will do to inflict pain on middle-class American families, frankly, is unacceptable. So, I think it's worth the chance and worth the opportunity for us to do this economic growth package and to do it now.

Now, having said that, we've got a longer term issue in terms of economic growth in America. Our economy, frankly, has been very good over, really, if you go back, over the last 15 years we've had a very strong economy. We've had a couple of slowdowns along the way, but when you look down the road, there are some clouds on the horizon that we ought to be concerned about. The idea that the tax relief that we put in place earlier this decade to help those who invest in our economy, those who pay taxes on our economy, the fact that that tax relief was temporary, it might come back, I think causes a lot of investors to wonder whether they should invest more in America's economy. And so, making that tax relief permanent is a very important part of our long-term economic growth.

Secondly, corporations in America pay taxes. And a lot of Members think corporations pay taxes. The entity pays taxes to the Federal Government, but corporations don't pay taxes, their customers and their employees pay taxes. And having a tax structure on corporate America that gives them reason to wonder should they locate here or should they locate somewhere else, I think, is, again, sending the wrong signal. If we want people to invest in our economy, our corporate tax structure has to be competitive with those around the world. And today, it is not. And it needs to be done.

The tax extenders that we've talked about in the past, especially the research and development tax credit that gives companies a reason to invest in research and development here in the United States, is critical to our long-term success. And why that hasn't been reauthorized as of yet is beyond me, but I hope it will be reauthorized soon.

Madam Speaker, many Americans, in my view, correctly believe that Washington is broken. I hope that this agreement in this bipartisan bill that we will move today gives Americans some hope that we really can begin to fix the problems, that we can begin to make sure that Washington works for the American people.

And so, I'm glad to be here today. I'm glad to join with Speaker PELOSI and my colleagues on both sides of the aisle in hailing this agreement and moving it in a bipartisan way. And I am hopeful that the Senate can move very quickly.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, I rise to associate myself with the remarks of our distinguished Republican leader, Mr. BOEHNER, and thank him for the large role that he played in putting this package together.

As he said in his remarks, the comity that exists in this Chamber today is warming. President Roosevelt used to say that what we need in this Nation is the warm courage of national unity. And it's great to see, on a day like today, that we can all pull together.

I think, again, Mr. BACHUS and Mr. FRANK deserve an awful lot of credit as

well. And to my distinguished colleague from Massachusetts, whose eloquence is only superceded by his wit and understanding of the parliamentary process, he continues to amaze.

But in getting philosophical, my grandfather, Nolan, would say, in explaining the difference in the free market system, one thing has to apply, and that's Peter Finley Dunn's reminder to "trust everyone, but cut the cards." And I think in coming together today, that's what we've seen is a cutting of the cards.

But as we all know, this wouldn't have happened without the great work of the distinguished chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, CHARLIE RANGEL, and again, the distinguished gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. MCCREY). So, we're sad to see him leave, but the partnership that the two of them have had, as I've said earlier, exemplifies how the Chamber and how committees should conduct themselves.

Madam Speaker, Speaker PELOSI deserves so much credit for this, for first reaching out to the President, and then working hand in glove with Mr. BOEHNER to make sure that we were able to bring this important legislation to the floor today. As Mr. RANGEL has outlined and Mr. HOYER as well, we made sure that this was simplistic in its approach to get money out in a timely, targeted, and temporary manner. And I believe that we have been able to achieve those goals.

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We further recognize, however, that we have a rendezvous with reality, and the Ways and Means Committee and Mr. RANGEL are prepared, as we move forward in this session and into the next, to make sure that we're addressing the long-term concerns that we know this economy faces.

With that, again, I would like to thank the staffs of the respective committees who have worked tirelessly to make sure that this legislation was able to come to the floor in as speedy a manner as it possibly can and can only pray to God that the other body acts in as timely and targeted and temporary fashion as we have demonstrated here.

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support for this needed economic stimulus legislation. This bipartisan bill will provide timely, targeted and temporary relief to American families suffering from the national economic downturn and provide a shot in the arm to boost growth and avert a recession.

I commend Speaker NANCY PELOSI, Minority Leader JOHN BOEHNER, Treasury Secretary Harry Paulson for working together across party lines to find common ground. As North Carolina's only member of the Democratic Majority on the House Budget Committee, I have been working on a bipartisan basis to pass responsible legislation to respond to worsening economic conditions. High energy prices, mounting national debt, the crisis in the Nation's housing market and rising unemployment levels have prompted calls for emergency legislation to arrest the decline in the

economy and put us back on a path of sustainable growth.

First, this economic trouble serves as a reminder of the importance of putting our Nation's fiscal house in order to free America's future generations from the crushing debt burden they now face. Unfortunately, the record of this current Administration is the transformation of record budget surplus projections into record national debt and massive annual deficits without end. Although short-term deficits can be useful to correct hurtful economic downswings, the current structural budget problems featuring perpetual debt and deficits hamstringing our ability to invest in the future and build broad-based prosperity for hard-working Americans.

This economic stimulus package will be effective because it is targeted, timely and temporary. It will be targeted to families that need the money and can be expected to spend it quickly on necessities like food and clothing. It will be timely to yield the economic benefits within the timeframe of the anticipated problem. And it will be temporary to prevent exacerbation of the fiscal imbalance and make our economic problems worse.

Specifically, H.R. 5140 will provide tax rebate checks to working people of up to \$600 for individuals and up to \$1,200 for families, as well as a \$300 tax credit per dependent child. This immediate infusion of cash will provide real relief to North Carolinians struggling to pay their bills. Economic experts tell us this action will help stimulate consumer spending and spur economic growth across the board to mitigate the slowdown we are otherwise experiencing in the economy. Tax incentives to encourage business investment and help small business weather this economic storm should also be included in a responsible package. I understand Governor Easley and others have raised concerns about the impact of some of the business tax provisions in this bill. At today's Budget Committee hearing, former Treasury Secretary Lawrence Summers suggested slight revisions to these provisions to minimize any negative impact, and I support modifications that will achieve that goal as the process moves forward. I am hopeful the House will pass this bill today and Congress can get a final version to the President to sign into law within the next few weeks.

Over the longer term, Congress must invest in neglected priorities like school construction to put workers back on the job and improve our communities with better schools and healthier learning environments. We must take better care of our military families and veterans returning from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. We must expand quality health care so working families no longer face economic ruin when a loved one gets sick. And we must continue to support our first responders to keep our communities safe and secure.

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support for this bipartisan legislation, and I urge my colleagues to join me in voting to pass it.

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of the effort to prevent our economy from sliding into recession. But I have strong reservations about any strategy that does not take meaningful steps to help those in need.

Just last week, the House passed my resolution (H. Con. Res. 198) to cut poverty in half. While this stimulus bill is a step in the right direction, it's also important to act on our words by ensuring "the least among us" don't bear

the brunt of an economic downturn. For example, I'm concerned that the minimum earnings requirement of \$3,000 leaves out the neediest.

And we have a lot of reasons to be concerned about the plight of those in need. Since the Bush administration took office in 2001, the median income is nearly 2 percent below its high in 2000, more than 5 million have fallen into poverty for a total 37 million Americans living in poverty, and the unemployment rate has risen to 5 percent and is almost double for African American males.

Congress must ensure that any relief it provides to stem the downward slide reaches all Americans.

We must assist those who are going to lose their homes in the mortgage foreclosure crisis. We must provide increased funding for food stamps and FMAP Medicaid payments to States. Finally we must make sure that unemployment benefits are extended.

Madam Speaker, any economic relief we provide will be a hollow victory if those most in need are excluded. We must make certain that the gap between the haves and have nots isn't widened by our action here today. This is our solemn moral obligation.

Mr. PAUL. Madame Speaker, I find it odd that H.R. 5140, a bill allegedly designed to provide a stimulus for the anemic American economy, contains provisions that could damage the economy and hurt American taxpayers. Specifically, the provisions increasing the loan limitations of the Federal Housing Administration and the Government Sponsored Enterprises (e.g. Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac), will exacerbate the long-term problems in the housing market, and may even lead to a future taxpayer bailout of the housing industry. The recent bursting of the housing bubble should have taught my colleagues the dangers of government policies that distort the market by diverting resources to housing, when those resources would be more efficiently used in other sectors of the economy.

Ironically, many of the same members who insisted that upper income taxpayers be denied the tax rebates are enthusiastic champions of the provisions in H.R. 5140 increasing the FHA loan limit to \$633,500 and the GSE loan limit to \$729,750. This increase in the loan limits represents a generous taxpayer subsidy to high-income homeowners.

A one-time "rebate" check, while it may provide a temporary boost to many working American families struggling with the current downturn, is not going to provide the type of sustained income growth necessary to restore consumer confidence. In fact, history shows that when the Government forgoes serious tax cuts in favor of one-time "rebates" most people either save the money for a "rainy day" or use it to pay down some of their debt.

In addition, I am concerned that the 50 percent bonus depreciation and the increase in the amount of qualifying purchases that small businesses can expense in the year they bought their equipment will be of limited effectiveness because they are limited to 1 year. A more effective way to stimulate the economy would be to make the 2001 and 2003 tax cuts permanent. I also hope Congress considers the long-term tax cuts contained in H.R. 5109, the Economic Growth Act.

Congress should also pass my Tax Free Tips Act (H.R. 3664), which makes tips exempt from Federal income and payroll taxes. Making tips tax-free will strengthen American

families and the American economy by allowing millions of hard-working Americans to devote more resources to their children's, or their own, education, or to save for a home, retirement, or to start their own businesses.

Another disturbing feature of H.R. 5140 is that, instead of taking the fiscally responsible course and pairing the tax cuts with spending cuts, this bill simply adds to the national deficit. Madam Speaker, unless Congress acts soon to reign in its excessive spending the American people will face confiscatory tax rates or skyrocketing inflation.

Tax cuts by themselves will not restore long-term economic health unless and until this body finally addresses the fundamental cause of our economic instability, which is monetary policy. The inflationary policies of the Federal Reserve are the root of the boom-and-bust cycle that has plagued the American economy for almost 75 years. The Federal Reserve's inflationary policies are also at the root of the steady decline in the American people's standard of living. A good step toward monetary reform would be for Congress to pass my H.R. 2576, which repeals the Federal legal tender laws. This would allow people to use alternatives to Government-issued fiat money and thus protect themselves from Federal Reserve-created inflation.

One of the best things Congress could do for the American economy is to repeal, or at least reform, the misguided Sarbanes-Oxley law, particularly Section 404. Rushed through Congress in the wake of the Enron and WorldCom scandals in order to show that Congress was "getting tough" on corporate crime, Sarbanes-Oxley imposes unreasonable costs on small businesses and entrepreneurs.

A survey by Financial Executives International, an organization of chief financial officers, put the average cost of compliance with Sarbanes-Oxley at \$4.4 million, while the American Economics Association estimates Sarbanes-Oxley could cost American companies as much as \$35 billion. Because of these costs, many small businesses are delisting from United States stock exchanges. According to a study by the prestigious Wharton Business School, the number of American companies delisting from public stock exchanges nearly tripled the year after Sarbanes-Oxley became law, thus these companies are finding it more costly to attract the necessary capital to grow their business and create jobs.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, H.R. 5140 does not provide the kind of permanent, deep tax relief that will protect long-term economic growth, and will actually compound the damage Congress has already done to the housing market. Instead of pretending that we are addressing America's economic problems via temporary tax cuts, Congress should address the fundamental problems of the American economy by pursuing serious monetary reform, spending cuts, and regulatory reform. Congress should also provide real long-term tax relief to the American people by passing legislation such as H.R. 5109 and H.R. 3664.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to voice my strong support for the Recovery Rebates and Economic Stimulus for the American People Act, H.R. 5140. This important measure represents a bipartisan commitment to help hard-working Americans weather these turbulent economic times.

Millions of Americans have been faced with the rising costs of energy, housing and health

care, which have taken a toll on the state of our economy. In my home state of Rhode Island, the typical monthly housing payment is over \$2,200, making homeownership a dream out of reach for too many. The situation for renters is not much better, as the average two-bedroom apartment in Rhode Island rents for nearly \$1,200 a month. Compounding the cost of housing are the skyrocketing costs of energy, which rose 18.4 percent in 2007. Our employment outlook is also discouraging. Earlier this month, the Bureau of Labor Statistics announced that the national unemployment rate has risen to a 2-year high of 5 percent.

These harsh realities, combined with the snowballing effects of the recent subprime lending crisis, have made it increasingly clear that our economy will face an even sharper downturn if we do not act soon. With that in mind, today we are taking swift and bipartisan action to jump-start our Nation's economy with a measure that is timely, targeted and temporary.

This measure will quickly inject \$150 billion into our economy to revitalize our markets, increase consumer confidence, and protect against recession. Our package is targeted at low-income and middle-class Americans who need assistance the most, providing rebates that will put money directly into their pockets, which will, in turn, stimulate our economy. I am particularly pleased that this package will provide relief to 35 million Americans who work and contribute to payroll taxes, but make too little to pay income tax.

Our measure will also temporarily increase the size of individual mortgages that Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac can purchase, offering help to those in need of affordable housing, particularly in high-cost areas like Rhode Island. Also included is a provision to allow the Federal Housing Administration to insure a greater number of subprime loans so thousands of Americans facing foreclosure may refinance their mortgages with fairer terms.

Finally, I am pleased this package will help to stimulate our Nation's small businesses by allowing them to write off 50 percent of the cost of equipment the year it is purchased. This important incentive—which expires at the end of the year—will encourage growth and help keep our small businesses strong.

This measure solidifies our commitment to revitalize our economy in a way that is timely, targeted, and temporary. I commend Speaker PELOSI for her leadership in negotiating this significant bipartisan agreement, and I urge my colleagues to support this measure.

Mr. STARK. Madam Speaker, this stimulus package is a small dose of medicinal venom for an economy that has been bitten by the short-sighted, regressive policies pursued by the Bush Administration. While the administration pushed tax cuts for the rich and war without end through a rubber-stamp Congress, the President gutted and stifled the executive agencies that should have been reining in predatory lenders and regulating what became a financial house of cards.

I support this package because we must do something to help American families. I am disappointed, however, at the failure to adopt the common sense initiatives that all agree would have the most effect.

At this time of economic uncertainty, in which those at the bottom feel pinched the hardest, economists tell us that we must implement relief in the form of stimulus that is

timely, targeted, and temporary. For a moment, it appeared that Republicans and Democrats, progressives and conservatives, economists and activists, could actually join in agreement that the best way to help all of us is to help the least of us. We were told that the most “bang for the buck” could be accomplished by increasing food stamps, expanding unemployment insurance, and providing additional Medicaid funding for States squeezed by the economic downturn. Somehow though, here we are a week or so later, and none of that is in this package.

Never let it be said that the President, or his Republican allies, was derailed from what he wanted to do by common sense, economic sense, or a sense of compassion. The Republicans have a way of seeing every bill that comes before them as a vehicle for gifts to their industry friends, and this stimulus is no different. So instead of more unemployment assistance for those who lost their jobs as a result of this mismanaged economy, we get bonus depreciation for industrial equipment. Instead of more food stamps for families facing record high energy and food costs, we raise the Section 179 Expensing cap. If you don't know what that is, believe me, it's not going to help you.

The refundable tax rebate will help average families, and that is why I support this bill. I commend the Speaker for making sure that this rebate includes some of those who did not make enough to pay taxes last year. After all, these people will do what we are asking them to do with these rebates—spend the money to stimulate the economy.

Unfortunately, one important group was left out of this rebate. Millions of seniors receive their only income from Social Security. They do not have enough “earned income” to receive the refund check, yet they are among our most vulnerable. At a time when we are reaching out to accomplish the dual goals of stimulating the economy and providing relief for those most adversely affected, this omission is glaring.

I join my colleagues who call for a second package going forward that would address unemployment, food stamps, Medicaid relief to States, and would help our most vulnerable senior citizens.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 5140, the Economic Stimulus for the American People Act of 2008. I especially want to congratulate you for your strong leadership, in first reaching across the aisle here in the House, then working with the President to secure what I believe is a historic agreement that will bring much needed help to the American people as well as provide a badly needed shot in the arm to our slowing economy.

I also want to express my sincerest thanks to you on behalf of the five U.S. insular areas for insisting that our residents and economies also receive a stimulus. Because of your strong support, Americans in the territories will be treated no differently than Americans in the 50 States, under the bill. If you qualify for a rebate in Rhode Island then you qualify for one in the Virgin Islands.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 5140 is both timely and badly needed. As you know, the American economy is in serious peril and our constituents are feeling the impact. Whether it is the skyrocketing energy prices with gasoline costing more than \$3 a gallon or the continuing

impact of the subprime mortgage debacle, our national economy continues to face the very real possibility of imminent recession.

It is imperative that we act and act now and H.R. 5140 represents a bipartisan approach towards getting our economy moving. It would provide more than 100 million Americans with a recovery rebate; allow 300 million families to benefit from a \$300 increase in the child tax credit; help millions of Americans get the tools to avoid losing their homes and; provide small businesses with much needed tax cuts to spur investment and job creation.

Madam Speaker, you and the entire House leadership are to be congratulated for the work you have done in crafting this important bill. I urge my colleagues to support its adoption.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Madam Speaker, the economy needs our help right now. And it will need our help in the long-term as well.

The American people don't need expert economic forecasts to tell them that our country and our economy are seriously off track. They experience it every day—when their paychecks shrink, when foreclosure signs go up in their neighborhoods or even on their own home, and when friends and family members receive pink slips.

It's clear that the economy needs help. The bill before us today, the Recovery Rebates and Economic Stimulus for the American People Act, offers an urgently-needed first step to boost the economy and help save jobs.

The economy may be complicated, but the reasoning behind this bi-partisan bill is not. By putting money into the hands of low- and middle-income families who will spend it quickly, we will inject demand back into the economy. While we can't know for sure what the future holds for our economy, we know that we can make a difference if we pass this stimulus package quickly.

I am very pleased that this package includes unprecedented tax relief for 35 million American families who work hard every day but earn too little to pay income taxes. Past economic relief packages, including the one developed to respond to the 2001 recession, did not benefit these families. But these families must be included to really help boost the economy. This represents a very significant change in policy thanks to pressure from Speaker PELOSI and Democrats in Congress and I applaud the Speaker for working so hard to ensure that these families and workers were included in our package.

Under this bill, a married couple with two children and an annual income of \$33,000 will see a rebate of \$1,450. A single parent with an annual income of \$20,000 and two children will see a rebate of \$1,035. This financial assistance will provide substantial relief to families struggling with the rising costs of energy, food, transportation, and other basics.

Another important feature of our stimulus plan is the help it provides to homeowners seeking to avoid foreclosure. The bill increases loan limits for single-family houses from Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac from \$417,000 to \$729,750 for 2008.

This increased loan limit will enable qualified homeowners with larger mortgages to refinance their mortgages, lower their monthly payments, and avoid foreclosure.

In Contra Costa County, CA, where I live and which I am proud to represent in Congress, the median home price in 2006 was

more than \$640,000. In Solano County, which I also am proud to represent in Congress, the price was nearly \$490,000. Both prices are well above the current \$417,000 limit. So, the change our bill makes will provide critical help to untold numbers of families in my district and around the country who are struggling to hold onto their homes.

Indeed, foreclosures in California skyrocketed in the fourth quarter of 2007, up 421 percent compared with the fourth quarter of 2006. This is an economic crisis that we must address, and our bill takes a strong first step in that direction.

We have a responsibility to do everything we can to limit the economic trouble that our country is now facing. We have this responsibility to American workers who could lose their jobs and to families that could lose their financial security.

We also know that passing this legislation is only a first step. That's because our economy faced fundamental problems well before the housing bubble began to burst and the turmoil started in the credit markets.

Indeed, ever since the end of the last recession in November 2001, the economy has been growing. But the benefits of that growth went mostly to corporate profits—not to workers' paychecks.

Indeed, despite that economic growth, median family income last year was actually lower than it was before the 2001 recession. Since 2001, the number of Americans living in poverty has increased. So has the number of Americans without health insurance.

These are long-term challenges that we must continue to address after we pass this short-term stimulus package. We have an obligation not just to get the economy on the right track again, but also to create a stronger economy that truly benefits all Americans for years and years to come.

Mr. HARE. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5140, the Recovery Rebates and Economic Stimulus for the American People Act.

For the last 7 years, powerful interests—whether its oil and gas companies, PHARMA, or the wealthiest Americans—have had their day in Congress.

Today, as the economy is on the brink of recession, we are finally providing relief to those who need it most—working families.

These tax rebates will put money back into the pockets of Americans who are struggling to make ends meet. I recently asked a young mother in my district how she would spend her rebate check. "Buy new clothes for my kids," she said.

While today's package is a good start, checks in the mail are not enough. Just last week, Methode Electronics announced that it would close its Carthage plant—costing my district an additional 850 jobs. This is the latest example of how the Bush economy has failed average Americans and a stark reminder that we need to do more for working families.

I am extremely supportive of the Senate proposal to extend unemployment benefits to millions of Americans and strongly believe we must reauthorize the Trade Adjustment Assistance program to provide a safety net for workers who lose their jobs due to unfair trade. If we are sincerely dedicated to stimulating the economy, we need to invest in our greatest economic asset—our workers.

Today's legislation is just a start, but it shows that this Democratic Congress is committed to putting working families first—in good times and in bad.

I strongly urge the President to accept these common-sense measures expected in the Senate's proposal as we move forward on the stimulus package.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, I will vote for this bill because we must act to reduce the risk of a potentially deep recession, provide a measure of assistance to people most at risk from the economy's troubles, and encourage job-creating investments by the private sector. But we must recognize that the bill's scope is limited and it isn't a full response to the economy's problems.

Ironically, the bill's limited scope reflects its best feature—the fact that it was developed through a bipartisan process producing a broadly-supported compromise among the leadership on both sides of the aisle and the Administration.

Like most compromises, it has shortcomings. For example, I think Congress should recognize growing unemployment by providing extended unemployment-insurance coverage—and doing so now would reduce the chance that action later will be too late to be fully effective.

Still, as it comes before the House, this is a good bill that is undeniably timely, appropriately targeted, and—because it is temporary—will not add excessively to the budget deficit.

It provides for payments—technically treated as refundable tax credits—of up to \$600 for an individual and up to \$1,200 for a married couple, plus \$300 per child. It is estimated that some 117 million families will receive these payments, including 35 million working families—including more than 19 million with children—that would not have qualified under the original Administration proposal. Nearly \$40 billion in payments, which will phase out for people with incomes of \$75,000 for a single person and \$150,000 for a married couple, will go to families making less than \$50,000. The Treasury Department estimates a total of about \$1.7 billion will go to 1,900,000 Colorado households that will receive an average of \$895 each.

In addition, the bill will temporarily double the amount of new investments in plants and equipment that small businesses can write off their taxes and increase the number of businesses eligible for this tax treatment. This will provide an incentive with the potential to reduce job losses and spur additional employment.

As we all know, the housing market is one of the most troubled parts of the economy. The bill addresses that issue by providing a 1-year increase in Fannie Mae's and Freddie Mac's conforming loan limits—from \$417,000 to \$729,750—as well as a permanent increase in the Federal Housing Administration's loan limit, from \$367,000 up to a maximum of \$729,750. It also includes provisions intended to help people facing foreclosure to refinance their loans and get housing counseling that may help them avoid that outcome.

If the House was operating under a procedure that allowed amendments to be proposed, the bill might be improved. For example, I would have liked to address the problem of consumer credit card debt by changing some of the predatory practices of credit card

companies—even if only on a temporary basis—because as other interest rates are being cut, I wonder if credit card companies will extend a reduced interest rate to consumers who are feeling the effects of high interest rates those companies are imposing.

But the choice before us today is a simple one—whether the bill should be approved or rejected. On that, I think the choice is clear and the bill should be passed.

Mr. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today in cautious support of the stimulus measure before us. This is an important first step.

However, it is the first step; it cannot be the last. I am particularly concerned that increases in Medicaid funding, food stamps and an extension in unemployment benefits are not a part of the package to be considered by Congress today.

It is important to note that an extension of unemployment insurance is a tried and true mechanism for not only helping out families in need, but also for infusing much needed cash into the economy. The Department of Labor, which administers the program, has the administrative framework and the know-how to get benefits to people quickly and efficiently. The IRS, on the other hand, does not have the same know-how. Moreover, the IRS will be otherwise occupied; after all, it is tax season.

All of this said, I am hopeful that negotiations continue on next steps to strengthen our economy and to provide relief to working families and would like to see the following items considered and ultimately included in any further measures brought before the House.

Given the decrease in nationwide job creation and the growth of state unemployment rates an emergency extension of unemployment compensation is critically important.

We also need a uniform increase in the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage, similar to that approved by Congress in 2003. An increase of this nature is one of the simplest, fastest, and best ways to provide stimulus to states.

Making legislation similar to the National Affordable Housing Trust Fund part of the stimulus package would provide much needed assistance to communities, of which there are many in Michigan, that have been hardest hit by the housing crisis.

In addition, swift action is needed to assist the over 2 million homeowners who, as a result of the housing crisis, are predicted to face foreclosure over the next year.

We need increased investment in schools, roads, water and sewer projects, and other public infrastructure projects that are ready to go, which will put people to work and build or repair needed capital assets while pumping up the economy.

In addition to stimulating the economy, we must have a strategy to create good paying jobs and prepare a workforce in transition. As such, some of the top priorities for Congress should be:

To promote both health information technology and increased availability of generic pharmaceuticals, both of which have the potential to streamline the U.S. healthcare system, reducing overall healthcare costs.

In addition, the tax code should be amended to allow the Federal government to pay for a portion of catastrophic healthcare costs.

Congress should support the development and production of advanced technologies. Such technologies also would aid in weaning

our country from its dependence on foreign oil and are key to the American manufacturing industry's ability to compete globally.

The House approved a complete overhaul of the Trade Adjustment Assistance program last fall. We must expand the program to cover more workers.

We must create a more level playing field for U.S. businesses and workers by enforcing trade agreements, ending the unfair trading practices of other nations, including currency manipulation, and knocking down unfair trade barriers that discriminate against U.S. goods in foreign markets.

Again, I commend leadership for acting quickly and decisively in a bipartisan manner to bring this package to the floor. It is my hope we can continue to work together in an effort to stimulate the economy in a manner which will benefit middle-class families and create a 21st century workforce.

Mr. CASTLE. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the bill before us and consider it a good mix of fiscal policy solutions. Others before me today have already described this legislation in some detail, so I'll refrain from repeating what's already been said. However, I think the approach agreed to by the administration and House leaders from both parties is prudent and responsible. It is no simple matter to find an artful mix of fiscal policy solutions that will stimulate the economy yet mitigate inflationary risks.

As this legislation moves on to the Senate for further consideration, the House and administration should be open to other ideas. There is much at stake and the other body knows that we can always return to this issue if the results of this package need adjusting. We have to recognize that we alone cannot solve an economic slow down. The Federal Reserve will play a major role by setting interest rates and the costs of borrowing at levels commensurate with economic conditions. So some restraint and caution is needed at times like these.

This stimulus package uses a variety of fiscal policy tools—some that will have long term benefits like accelerated depreciation, and others that will have a more immediate impact like recovery rebates. While we can debate the particulars and merits of exactly who is eligible and for what amount of rebate, history shows us that programs like this do positively impact the economy as Americans pay down debt or make modest purchases.

Homebuilding is a major part of our economy, and that industry sector employs many, many Americans. Housing starts this year are forecast to be half of what they were in 2007, and the current stock of new and existing homes on the market is increasing markedly. Therefore, I am particularly pleased that the size of loans the Federal Housing Administration can insure is increasing, and the size of loans that Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac can purchase will be temporarily increased. This will benefit homeowners who are in a subprime mortgage and struggling to make payments now or when their loan resets.

Finally, the accelerated depreciation schedules included in this package are very important components. As businesses find it advantageous to replace existing equipment or purchase new goods for expansion purposes, the effects of these decisions will be vast and have a positive impact for those that manufacture the equipment or goods, on those that in-

stall and in turn use these new or upgraded resources.

All in all, Madam Speaker, I think we have taken some very sound steps here with this bill. Much is at stake here, and we need to move with care and consideration.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this stimulus package for the relief it provides over 117 million American families and the timely boost it delivers our slowing economy.

Let's be clear: As a product of genuine bipartisan compromise, this legislation does not contain everything one might have included in a stimulus package. For example, I support—and I hope the President will accept—the Senate's proposal to extend the relief in this package to low-income seniors and people with disabilities. That being said, this legislation proposes to put \$145 billion into the hands of those who will use it to strengthen our economy, and it deserves our support today.

The centerpiece of this package is tax relief in the form of rebates of up to \$600 for individuals and \$1200 for married couples—with an additional \$300 available for every dependent child. Importantly, it extends relief to 35 million hard-working families who make too little to pay federal income taxes but do pay payroll, sales, property and other taxes. These rebates will generate \$1.26 in economic activity for every dollar we put back into the economy.

The package before us also encourages business investment by doubling the amount small businesses can expense for capital investments made in 2008 and by allowing all businesses to immediately write off 50 percent of depreciable plants and equipment purchased in 2008. Finally, it assists those facing foreclosure by increasing Federal Housing Administration, FHA, loan limits to \$729,750 in 2008, and it provides greater liquidity to the mortgage market by temporarily increasing loan limits for single family homes at Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac from \$417,000 to a maximum of \$729,750.

For this initiative to be meaningful, it must be timely. Therefore, while I agree with many of the additional elements being discussed by the Senate—such as an appropriate extension of unemployment insurance for those who need it—we must not let prolonged arguments over these items delay swift enactment of the stimulus our economy so clearly needs.

If additional steps prove necessary, we will of course stand ready to act. But for today, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this bipartisan agreement.

Ms. MATSUI. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the economic stimulus package. I want to congratulate our Leadership for working in a bipartisan manner to bring much-needed economic relief to all sectors of our economy.

Madam Speaker, our economy is on a downturn. We are seeing gas prices, grocery prices, heating bills, and the price of consumer goods steadily increase.

The dollar has fallen to new alltime lows, prompting inflation fears and the standing of our currency in the world market.

Our housing foreclosure rates continue to threaten the quality of life for our constituents. In my hometown of Sacramento, the foreclosure rate is now the fourth highest in the Nation, with 1 out of every 48 homeowners burdened by this crisis last year.

Madam Speaker, as more and more Americans are feeling insecure about their future, I

believe it is the right time for economic intervention by this Congress.

This economic stimulus package put forth today is targeted, temporary, and timely.

It will put hundreds of dollars into consumer pockets and bring financial relief to millions of working families. It will significantly expand the child tax credit.

Madam Speaker, this package also seeks to help those in danger of losing their homes. Americans across our Nation are being challenged daily by the mortgage crisis.

By raising the FHA and GSE loan limits, this bill will inject much-needed liquidity into the California housing market, and more importantly into the Sacramento region.

It will allow struggling homeowners to get out of bad loans and refinance into more affordable loans.

This bill is an important first step. I am proud that we were able to work quickly in a bipartisan fashion to start the process of relieving the economic strain being felt by families across this great country.

Madam Speaker, I again want to thank our Leadership for their hard work on this bill. It is critical that we get our economy back on track. This stimulus package is a step in the right direction.

Mr. SPRATT. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the fiscal stimulus package.

We face mounting evidence that the economy is faltering and in sectors like housing, clearly losing ground, and many Americans are hurting as a result. Unemployment has spiked from 4.7 to 5.0 percent in one month; retail sales actually fell in December by 0.4 percent from the prior month, and last week the Federal Reserve made an emergency cut of 75 basis points in the Fed funds rate, the largest such reduction in 25 years. Across the country, Americans are feeling the effects of a slump in our economy, and if we want to avert or mitigate the effects of a recession, we need to act, and act now.

In hearings and discussions over the last 2 months, the consensus has emerged that fiscal stimulus is needed to complement monetary policy, and it needs to meet three criteria: it needs to be timely, targeted, and temporary. Timely means taking effect quickly to boost the economy; targeted means getting dollars into the hands of households more likely to spend it quickly; temporary means that it has only a short-term impact on the Federal budget so that it does not add to our long-term fiscal deficits. The package before us meets all these criteria.

There is general agreement that the fiscal stimulus needs to be roughly 1 percent of GDP. Two-thirds of this package goes to individuals and amounts to approximately \$100 billion; one-third goes to business and amounts to about \$50 billion to begin with, but since this stimulus comes in the form of accelerated depreciation, most of it will be recaptured over the life of the depreciable asset. If the two-thirds allocated to individual taxpayers is spent and helps avert or mitigate a recession, then it too may be recaptured to some extent, because a full-fledged recession could add \$150 to \$300 billion to the budget's bottom line, according to the Congressional Budget Office.

This package is a practical step to boost the economy, to bolster confidence, and to give a hand-up to millions of hard-working Americans. As with any compromise, no one got everything that he or she wanted in this package—but it is critical to get a bill enacted

quickly in order to help the economy and our people without undue delay. I could name several features I would like to add or modify, and there may be other aspects that we may need to address in later legislation, such as an extension of unemployment insurance. If the Senate adds that, and the administration concedes, I will gladly vote for it. But moving quickly to boost our economy and fend off a recession matters most.

I think the bill coming to the floor today is likely to be the best agreement we can strike with the Bush administration if we want stimulus to come quickly and be effective. The package clearly meets our criteria of being timely, targeted, and having only a temporary cost to the budget.

I urge its adoption.

Mr. FORTUNO. Madam Speaker, I want to commend President Bush, Speaker PELOSI, and Ranking Member BOEHNER for their bipartisan leadership in compromising on this economic stimulus package, and in their generosity and sense of fairness in making these economic relief measures extensive to the U.S. citizens of Puerto Rico. I also want to take this opportunity to thank my colleague and friend, Congressman JOSÉ SERRANO. His leadership and sense of fairness was key in our inclusion in the economic stimulus package.

Puerto Rico is in dire need of this economic stimulus package. Although this measure is intended to avert a potential recession in the U.S. economy after several years of strong growth, Puerto Rico's economy has been in a recession for the last 2 years. Our economy is in a "perfect storm" scenario with recurring fiscal imbalances caused by uncontrolled government expense, dramatic tax increases, and misguided economic development strategies of the local state administration, resulting in higher unemployment and reduced consumer confidence.

Residents of Puerto Rico pay the same Social Security and Medicare payroll taxes as our fellow citizens in the States. Payroll taxes are especially regressive in the case of Puerto Rico since the per capita income on the island is only one-third the national average.

My constituents are hurting badly, so it is imperative that the assistance that this economic stimulus package provides be channeled directly to those in need, the individual taxpayers, and not to the state government that has repeatedly mismanaged our resources. If at the end, this legislation provides for the Secretary of the Treasury to make a block payment to the territorial governments, including Puerto Rico, the Secretary must retain the capacity to guarantee our citizens that they will receive their payments in a timely fashion and for the correct amount. We are not asking for special treatment, I am only asking that our workers be treated on the same terms as their fellow citizens in the States.

Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California. Madam Speaker, I strongly support H.R. 5140, the much needed Economic Growth Package to address troubles in the mortgage marketplace.

In the past year, we have witnessed significant upheaval in the U.S. housing markets. Increased delinquencies and defaults among borrowers have contributed to turmoil in the mortgage finance sector, which has affected our entire economy. Many areas of the country have been heavily impacted by the mort-

gage crisis, with many families facing increased payments and foreclosures.

Over the years, many hard-working families have been faced with a situation where they are either unable to own homes, or they are forced to resort to risky loans that might impair their ability to keep their home. This is especially true in high cost areas of the country, like California, New York, Massachusetts, and Connecticut, where statutory loan limits have eliminated federal housing programs as an option to purchase entry-level homes.

Under the current loan limits, FHA products have become unavailable for homebuyers in high cost areas of the country because the maximum mortgage limit is lower than housing prices. Families who need and qualify for FHA have been unable to participate in the program due to these geographic barriers.

The median home prices in high cost areas, like my district in southern California, is well above the GSE conforming loan limit of \$417,000. A starter home for a family in Los Angeles, for example, usually puts a buyer into the so-called "jumbo" loan market. Jumbo loan premiums add hundreds of dollars onto a monthly payment for a fixed rate loan. Thus, many moderate income families have been priced out of a home loan by virtue of where they live and work.

Housing experts predict that the number of foreclosures that have occurred over the last year may double in the next 2 years as more adjustable rate mortgages with low introductory rates reset at significantly higher levels. By increasing the conforming loan limits, Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, and the FHA program will have the ability to put affordable home purchases and refinancing options within reach of more moderate-income families.

Chairman FRANK and I have been working for many years to create affordable housing opportunities for families across the country by increasing the conforming loan limits. Many communities in America are being underserved by the GSEs and FHA, because home prices in these areas surpass the national loan limit. I am pleased we are addressing this disparity in the legislation before us today and hope that the Senate also supports this critical change.

In addition to providing much needed liquidity to the struggling mortgage market, increasing the conforming loan limit will make safe, conforming mortgage loans available for homebuyers across the country and reduce aggressive lending practices that have contributed to the current credit and housing crisis.

Foreclosure rates are rising with harmful effects for borrowers, lenders, the neighborhood, and our overall economy. As we continue to experience instability in the housing market, this important change will be essential for successful homeownership. There is no more important priority for Congress than helping to keep families in their homes.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5140.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on suspending the rules and passing H.R. 5140 will be followed by a 5-minute vote on suspending the rules and adopting House Resolution 933.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 385, nays 35, answered "present" 1, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 25]

YEAS—385

Abercrombie	Crowley	Hobson
Ackerman	Cuellar	Hodes
Aderholt	Culberson	Hoekstra
Akin	Cummings	Holden
Alexander	Davis (AL)	Holt
Allen	Davis (CA)	Honda
Altmire	Davis (IL)	Hooley
Andrews	Davis (KY)	Hoyer
Arcuri	Davis, David	Hulshof
Baca	Davis, Lincoln	Inglis (SC)
Bachmann	DeFazio	Inslee
Bachus	DeGette	Israel
Baldwin	Delahunt	Issa
Barrett (SC)	DeLauro	Jackson (IL)
Barrow	Dent	Jackson-Lee
Bartlett (MD)	Diaz-Balart, L.	(TX)
Barton (TX)	Diaz-Balart, M.	Jefferson
Bean	Dicks	Johnson (GA)
Becerra	Dingell	Johnson, E. B.
Berkley	Doggett	Johnson, Sam
Berman	Donnelly	Jones (NC)
Biggert	Doolittle	Jordan
Bilbray	Doyle	Kagen
Bilirakis	Drake	Kanjorski
Bishop (GA)	Dreier	Keller
Bishop (NY)	Duncan	Kennedy
Bishop (UT)	Edwards	Kildee
Blackburn	Ehlers	Kilpatrick
Blumenauer	Ellison	Kind
Blunt	Ellsworth	King (IA)
Boehner	Emanuel	King (NY)
Bonner	Emerson	Kirk
Bono Mack	Engel	Klein (FL)
Boozman	English (PA)	Kline (MN)
Boren	Eshoo	Knollenberg
Boswell	Etheridge	Kucinich
Boucher	Everett	Kuhl (NY)
Boustany	Fallin	LaHood
Boyd (KS)	Farr	Lamborn
Brady (PA)	Fattah	Lampson
Brady (TX)	Ferguson	Langevin
Bralley (IA)	Fortenberry	Larsen (WA)
Brown (SC)	Fossella	Larson (CT)
Brown-Waite,	Fox	Latham
Ginny	Frank (MA)	LaTourette
Buchanan	Franks (AZ)	Latta
Burton (IN)	Frelinghuysen	Lee
Butterfield	Gallely	Levin
Buyer	Garrett (NJ)	Lewis (CA)
Calvert	Gerlach	Lewis (GA)
Camp (MI)	Giffords	Lipinski
Cannon	Gilchrest	LoBiondo
Cantor	Gillibrand	Loeb sack
Capito	Gonzalez	Lofgren, Zoe
Capps	Goodlatte	Lowey
Capuano	Gordon	Lucas
Cardoza	Granger	Lungren, Daniel
Carnahan	Graves	E.
Carney	Green, Al	Lynch
Carter	Green, Gene	Mack
Castle	Grijalva	Mahoney (FL)
Castor	Gutierrez	Maloney (NY)
Chabot	Hall (NY)	Manzullo
Chandler	Hall (TX)	Marchant
Clarke	Hare	Markey
Clay	Harman	Marshall
Cleaver	Hastings (WA)	Matheson
Clyburn	Hayes	Matsui
Cohen	Heller	McCarthy (CA)
Cole (OK)	Hensarling	McCarthy (NY)
Conaway	Herger	McCaul (TX)
Conyers	Hersteth Sandlin	McCollum (MN)
Costa	Higgins	McCotter
Costello	Hill	McCrary
Courtney	Hinchey	McDermott
Cramer	Hinojosa	McGovern
Crenshaw	Hirono	McHenry

McHugh Pryce (OH) Snyder
 McIntyre Putnam Solis
 McKeon Radanovich Souder
 McMorris Rahall Space
 Rodgers Ramstad Spratt
 McNerney Rangel Stark
 McNulty Regula Stearns
 Meek (FL) Rehberg Stupak
 Meeks (NY) Reichert Sullivan
 Melancon Renzi Sutton
 Mica Reyes Tanner
 Michaud Reynolds Tauscher
 Miller (FL) Richardson Terry
 Miller (MI) Rodriguez Thompson (CA)
 Miller (NC) Rogers (AL) Thompson (MS)
 Miller, George Rogers (KY) Thornberry
 Mitchell Rogers (MI) Tiahrt
 Mollohan Ros-Lehtinen Tiberi
 Moore (KS) Roskam Tierney
 Moore (WI) Ross Towns
 Moran (KS) Rothman Tsongas
 Moran (VA) Roybal-Allard Turner
 Murphy (CT) Ruppertsberger Udall (CO)
 Murphy, Patrick Rush Udall (NM)
 Murphy, Tim Ryan (OH) Upton
 Murtha Ryan (WI) Van Hollen
 Musgrave Salazar Velázquez
 Myrick Sali Vislosky
 Nadler Sánchez, Linda Walden (OR)
 Napolitano T. Walsh (NY)
 Neal (MA) Sarbanes Walz (MN)
 Neugebauer Saxton Wamp
 Nunes Schakowsky Waters
 Oberstar Schiff Watson
 Obey Schmidt Watt
 Olver Schwartz Waxman
 Ortiz Scott (GA) Weiner
 Pallone Scott (VA) Welch (VT)
 Pascrell Serrano Weldon (FL)
 Pastor Sessions Weller
 Payne Sestak Whitfield (KY)
 Pearce Shays Wilson (NM)
 Pelosi Shea-Porter Wilson (OH)
 Pence Sherman Wilson (SC)
 Perlmutter Shimkus Wittman (VA)
 Peterson (PA) Shuler Wolf
 Petri Shuster Woolsey
 Pickering Sires Wu
 Pitts Skelton Yack
 Platts Slaughtner Yarnall
 Pomeroy Smith (NE) Yarmuth
 Porter Smith (NJ) Young (AK)
 Price (NC) Smith (TX) Young (FL)

NAYS—35

Baird Forbes Price (GA)
 Berry Gingrey Rohrabacher
 Boyd (FL) Gohmert Royce
 Broun (GA) Goode Sanchez, Loretta
 Burgess Hunter Sensenbrenner
 Campbell (CA) Johnson (IL) Shadegg
 Coble Kaptur Smith (WA)
 Cooper Kingston Tancredo
 Cubin Linder Taylor
 Davis, Tom Paul Westmoreland
 Deal (GA) Peterson (MN) Wexler
 Flake Poe

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—1

Brown, Corrine

NOT VOTING—10

Baker Jones (OH) Simpson
 Feeney Lantos Wasserman
 Filner Lewis (KY) Schultz
 Hastings (FL) Miller, Gary

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised there are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1511

Mrs. CUBIN and Messrs. GINGREY and FORBES changed their vote from "yea" to "nay."

Messrs. PITTS, CARNAHAN, PEARCE and DELAHUNT changed their vote from "nay" to "yea."

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:
 Mr. FILNER. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 25, I was away due to a family emergency. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 25, had I been present I would have voted "yea."

COMMENDING LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY TIGERS FOOTBALL TEAM FOR WINNING 2007 BOWL CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 933, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ALTMIRE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 933, as amended.

This will be a 5-minute vote.
 The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 409, nays 1, answered "present" 4, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 26]
YEAS—409

Abercrombie Butterfield Dicks
 Ackerman Buyer Dingell
 Aderholt Calvert Doggett
 Akin Camp (MI) Donnelly
 Alexander Campbell (CA) Doolittle
 Allen Cannon Drake
 Altmire Cantor Dreier
 Andrews Capito Duncan
 Arcuri Capps Edwards
 Baca Capuano Ehlers
 Bachmann Cardoza Ellison
 Bachus Carney Ellsworth
 Baird Carter Emanuel
 Baker Castle Emerson
 Baldwin Castor Engel
 Barrett (SC) Chabot English (PA)
 Barrow Chandler Eshoo
 Bartlett (MD) Clarke Etheridge
 Barton (TX) Clay Everett
 Bean Cleaver Fallin
 Becerra Clyburn Farr
 Berkley Coble Fattah
 Berman Cohen Ferguson
 Biggert Cole (OK) Flake
 Bilbray Conaway Forbes
 Bilirakis Conyers Fortenberry
 Bishop (GA) Cooper Fossella
 Bishop (NY) Costa Foxx
 Bishop (UT) Costello Frank (MA)
 Blackburn Courtney Franks (AZ)
 Blumenauer Cramer Frelinghuysen
 Blunt Crenshaw Gallegly
 Boehner Crowley Garrett (NJ)
 Bonner Cubin Gerlach
 Bono Mack Cuellar Giffords
 Boozman Culberson Gilchrist
 Boren Cummings Gillibrand
 Boswell Davis (AL) Gohmert
 Boucher Davis (CA) Gonzalez
 Boustany Davis (IL) Goode
 Boyd (FL) Davis (KY) Goodlatte
 Boyda (KS) Davis, David Gordon
 Brady (PA) Davis, Lincoln Granger
 Brady (TX) Davis, Tom Graves
 Braley (IA) Deal (GA) Green, Al
 Brown (SC) DeFazio Green, Gene
 Brown, Corrine DeGette Grijalva
 Brown-Waite, Delahunt Gutierrez
 Ginny DeLauro Hall (NY)
 Buchanan Dent Hall (TX)
 Burgess Diaz-Balart, L. Hare
 Burton (IN) Diaz-Balart, M. Harman

Hayes McCotter Ryan (WI)
 Heller McCrery Salazar
 Hensarling McGovern Sali
 Herger McHenry Sánchez, Linda
 Herseth Sandlin McHugh T.
 Higgins Hill Sanchez, Loretta
 Hill McKeon Sarbanes
 Hinchey McMorris Saxton
 Hinojosa Rodgers Schakowsky
 Hirono McNeerney Schiff
 Hobson McNulty Schmidt
 Hodes Meek (FL) Schwartz
 Hoekstra Meeks (NY) Scott (GA)
 Holden Melancon Scott (VA)
 Holt Mica Sensenbrenner
 Honda Michaud Serrano
 Hooley Miller (FL) Sessions
 Hoyer Miller (MI) Sestak
 Hulshof Miller (NC) Shadegg
 Hunter Miller, George Sha's
 Inglis (SC) Mitchell Shea-Porter
 Insllee Mollohan Sherman
 Israel Moore (KS) Shimkus
 Issa Moore (WI) Shuler
 Jackson (IL) Moran (KS) Shuster
 Jackson-Lee Moran (VA) Skelton
 (TX) Murphy (CT) Slaughter
 Jefferson Murphy, Patrick Smith (NE)
 Johnson (GA) Murphy, Tim Smith (NJ)
 Johnson (IL) Murtha Smith (TX)
 Johnson, E. B. Musgrave Smith (WA)
 Johnson, Sam Myrick Snyder
 Jones (NC) Nadler Solis
 Jordan Napolitano Souder
 Kagen Neal (MA) Spratt
 Kanjorski Neugebauer Stark
 Kaptur Nunes Stearns
 Keller Oberstar Stupak
 Kennedy Obey Sullivan
 Kildee Olver Sutton
 Kilpatrick Ortiz Tancredo
 Kind Pallone Tanner
 King (IA) Pascrell Tauscher
 King (NY) Pastor Taylor
 Kingston Paul Terry
 Kirk Payne Thompson (CA)
 Klein (FL) Pearce Thompson (MS)
 Kline (MN) Pence Thornberry
 Knollenberg Perlmutter Tiahrt
 Kucinich Peterson (MN) Tiberi
 Kuhl (NY) Peterson (PA) Tierney
 LaHood Petri Towns
 Lamborn Pickering Tsongas
 Lampson Pitts Turner
 Langevin Platts Udall (CO)
 Larsen (WA) Poe Udall (NM)
 Larson (CT) Pomeroy Upton
 Latham Porter Van Hollen
 Latta Price (GA) Velázquez
 Lee Price (NC) Vislosky
 Levin Pryce (OH) Walberg
 Lewis (CA) Putnam Walden (OR)
 Lewis (GA) Radanovich Walz (MN)
 Linder Rahall Wamp
 Lipinski Ramstad Waters
 LoBiondo Regula Watson
 Everett Loeb sack Rehberg
 Lofgren, Zoe Reichert Waxman
 Lowey Lucas Weiner
 Lucas Reynolds Welch (VT)
 Lungren, Daniel E. Richardson Weldon (FL)
 E. Rodriguez Weller
 Lynch Mack Rogers (AL) Westmoreland
 Mahoney (FL) Rogers (KY) Wexler
 Maloney (NY) Rogers (MI) Whitfield (KY)
 Manzullo Rohrabacher Wilson (NM)
 Marchant Ros-Lehtinen Wilson (OH)
 Markey Roskam Wilson (SC)
 Marshall Roskam Wittman (VA)
 Matheson Ross Wolf
 Matsui Rothman Woolsey
 McCarthy (CA) Roybal-Allard Wu
 McCarthy (NY) Royce Wynn
 McCaul (TX) Ruppertsberger Yarmuth
 McCollum (MN) Rush Young (AK)
 Ryan (OH) Young (FL)

NAYS—1

Berry

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—4

Broun (GA) Space
 Gingrey Walsh (NY)

NOT VOTING—16

Carnahan Hastings (FL) LaTourette
 Doyle Hastings (WA) Lewis (KY)
 Feeney Jones (OH)
 Filner Lantos

McDermott Simpson Schultz
Miller, Gary Sires
Rangel Wasserman

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised 2 minutes remain in this vote.

□ 1520

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. FILNER. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 26, I was away due to a family emergency. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

PROTECT AMERICA ACT OF 2007 EXTENSION

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5104) to extend the Protect America Act of 2007 for 30 days, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5104

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

SECTION 1. 15-DAY EXTENSION OF THE PROTECT AMERICA ACT OF 2007.

Section 6(c) of the Protect America Act of 2007 (Public Law 110-55; 121 Stat. 557; 50 U.S.C. 1803 note) is amended by striking "180 days" and inserting "195 days".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, the temporary Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act law that we enacted in August as a stopgap measure expires on Friday. We passed the RESTORE Act in November to provide some FISA reform. The Senate is at this moment completing the action. This extension will give us time to consider responsible FISA reform in both Houses of the Congress while fully preserving current intelligence capabilities while we do so. I hope that everyone would agree that this is the most responsible approach for protecting our freedom, as well as our security.

I further hope that we would all agree that we need to consider FISA reform responsibly, with the care it deserves, and to preserve the prerogatives of the House to have our own voice heard.

This extension is not a vote on the temporary law that we have been living under since August of last year, nor is it a vote against the temporary bill or against what the Senate is working on. It is a vote for avoiding a headlong rush into possibly ill-conceived legislation. We should all be able to come together on that, and I am confident that we can.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I reluctantly support H.R. 5104, which extends the Protect America Act for 2 weeks.

Last year, the Director of National Intelligence, Admiral McConnell, notified Congress about a dangerous loophole in our ability to collect intelligence information overseas. Director McConnell estimated that the intelligence community was missing two-thirds of all overseas terrorist communications. Congress passed the Protect America Act last August to close this loophole. Unfortunately, the legislation contained an arbitrary 6-month sunset and is currently set to expire this Friday.

After 6 months of waiting, the Democratic majority is now coming perilously close to threatening the safety of every American. But rather than pass a long-term fix to the terrorist loophole, the Democratic majority wants another extension. The White House promised to veto the 30-day extension that the majority was going to bring to the floor yesterday. Today's bill represents a compromise for only a 2-week extension.

The truth is we do not need any temporary extension. In fact, there is a bipartisan bill that we can and should pass today. The Senate Intelligence Committee already has approved a bill to close the terrorist loophole and provide liability protection to the telecommunication companies. That is being blocked by the Democratic majority.

As the deadline draws near, the urgent needs of the intelligence community must be addressed. This is no time for partisanship. This is a time for responsible action.

Any bill must include two critical provisions. First, Congress has the responsibility to enact long-term legislation that allows intelligence officials to conduct surveillance on foreign targets without a court order. A U.S. Army intelligence officer in Iraq should not have to contact a Federal judge in Washington to conduct surveillance on Iraqi insurgents.

Second, Congress must provide liability protection to U.S. telecommunication companies that responded to

government requests for information following the terrorist attacks of September 11. Close to 40 frivolous lawsuits against the telephone companies already have been filed. These companies deserve our thanks, not a flurry of meritless lawsuits.

Terrorists have not placed an expiration date on their plots to destroy the American way of life. Congress should not put an expiration date on our intelligence community's ability to protect our Nation.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2½ minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. HARMAN), the chairperson of the Subcommittee of Intelligence on Homeland Security and a veteran Member of the House on intelligence matters.

□ 1530

Ms. HARMAN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and commend him for his leadership. I also commend many on the other side, including Mr. HOEKSTRA, for their devotion to getting intelligence right.

I hope we have bipartisan agreement on the subject before us. But, Madam Speaker, I feel compelled to correct the record. Last night in his State of the Union address, the President said: "If Congress does not act by Friday, our ability to track terrorist threats would be weakened and our citizens could be in greater danger."

As a Member who worries 24/7 about terrorist threats against our country, I strongly object to that statement. It is inaccurate and yet again a bald-faced attempt to play the fear card and to jam Congress into gutting a carefully crafted, three-decades old bipartisan law called FISA, the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act.

FISA, Madam Speaker, does not expire on Friday. Only the hastily cobble together Protect America Act amendments to FISA expire on Friday.

This country will not go dark on Friday. Our government has aggressively used surveillance tools, and in the past year or so secured warrants in compliance with FISA. Those warrants do not expire on Friday.

As for the claim that citizens will be in greater danger, in my view actions that fail to follow the laws Congress passes and ignore the requirements of the fourth amendment put our democracy in grave danger.

Madam Speaker, security and liberty are not a zero-sum game.

In October, the House passed thoughtful legislation, the RESTORE Act, to replace the flawed Protect America Act. Once the Senate acts later this week and the House has had adequate time to review documents concerning activities of telecommunications firms, we should conference our bill. Fifteen days is a good estimate of how long it will take to send a responsible bill to the President. Let's act responsibly. Vote "aye."

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HOEKSTRA), who is the ranking member of the Select Committee on Intelligence.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Madam Speaker, while I will not oppose this bill, even though it has not gone through regular order in the committee process, I continue to have serious reservations about further putting off the critical issue of FISA modernization. I also have significant concern with the failure of the majority to ensure a long-term and effective solution to the critical problem of ensuring that our intelligence community has the tools that it needs to detect and protect potential terrorists.

Last August, Congress acted on an overwhelming bipartisan basis after months of prodding to pass the Protect America Act and close significant intelligence gaps against foreign terrorists in foreign countries. The failure to clarify the authorities of our intelligence professionals on a long-term basis had clearly jeopardized America's ability to detect and prevent potential terrorist attacks and to effectively collect intelligence on foreign adversaries.

The Protect America Act expires on Friday, February 1. This temporary extension will now push that date to February 15. While elements of surveillance under the Protect America Act could have temporarily continued without an extension, the failure to act permanently on the lapsing authorities still ultimately threatens the capabilities of the intelligence community to react with speed and agility to new threats and changing circumstances.

We cannot continue to make excuses. We cannot continue to avoid our responsibility to deal with this vital issue. National security should not be on a week-to-week lease. I think both the President and Members on our side of the aisle have made clear that our patience with further delays to this vital legislation will be extremely limited.

Democrats have failed to do their job on this critical national security issue, even after Speaker PELOSI boasted last August that they would act as soon as possible. Their partisanship on this issue clearly has failed. A bipartisan Senate solution, acceptable to the President, has been available for weeks, but has been held up by liberal activists over the issue of retroactive liability for third parties who may have helped the government to detect potential terrorists.

Madam Speaker, columnist Stuart Taylor recently pointed out that holding the private sector hostage to ideological extremism is a "risky game." It is a risky game for our national security and may chill cooperation in future emergencies. He wrote: "Most Americans would want the telecoms to say yes without hesitation. But the telecoms would have reason to say no, or delay for a few dangerous days to consult their lawyers, if liberals get

their way in a battle currently raging in Congress."

[From the National Journal, Jan. 19, 2008]
HOLDING TELECOMS HOSTAGE: A RISKY GAME
(By Stuart Taylor, Jr.)

Suppose that the next big terrorist attack on our country comes two weeks after a new Democratic president has taken office. Simultaneous suicide bombings devastate 20 schools and shopping malls around the country, killing 1,500 people. The intelligence agencies believe that at least 20 more trained jihadists, including American citizens, are in the United States planning follow-up attacks.

The president is told that the best hope of stopping a second wave of attacks is to immediately wiretap as many calls and e-mails as possible from and to every private citizen who has been to Pakistan or Afghanistan since 1999. These hundreds of domestic wiretaps, with neither warrants nor probable cause to suspect any individual of terrorist ties might well violate the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act.

The president nonetheless asks the major telephone companies to place the taps for 30 days while the administration seeks congressional approval. He or she also assures the telecoms in writing that the new attorney general has advised that the Constitution empowers the president to temporarily override FISA during such an emergency—a controversial theory never tested in court.

Most Americans would want the telecoms to say yes without hesitation. But the telecoms would have reason to say no—or delay for a few dangerous days to consult their lawyers—if liberals and libertarians get their way in a battle currently raging in Congress.

The issue is whether to immunize these same telecoms retroactively, as President Bush and a bipartisan majority of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (including Chairman Jay Rockefeller IV) urge, from liability for having said yes to Bush's warrantless surveillance program during the unprecedented national crisis precipitated by the 9/11 attacks.

The telecoms face more than 40 class actions seeking hundreds of billions of dollars in damages for their roles in the Bush program, which they agreed to after being assured that the attorney general had deemed the program lawful.

Allowing this litigation to continue would, as a group of highly respected former Justice Department officials wrote in a joint letter to the Senate Judiciary Committee, "produce perverse incentives that risk damage to our national security," because "both telecommunications carriers and other corporations in the future will think twice before assisting any agency of the intelligence community seeking information."

This particular group includes Jack Goldsmith, James Comey, Patrick Philbin, and John Ashcroft. They (especially the first three) won bipartisan applause for leading a rebellion in 2004 against overreaching claims of power by Bush, who chose to secretly override FISA not just for a few weeks but for years.

"Given our experiences," the former officials wrote, "we can certainly understand that reasonable people may question and wish to probe the legal bases for such intelligence activities." But the proper forum is the congressional oversight process, they asserted, not "a public lawsuit against private companies that were asked to assist their nation."

Such leading Democrats as former Sen. Bob Kerrey, former Rep. (and 9/11 commission Co-Chair) Lee Hamilton, and former At-

torney General Benjamin Civiletti have also called for immunizing the telecoms.

On the other hand, People for the American Way, like other liberal groups, argues that immunity would "protect telecoms that knowingly violated law." But the telecoms did not violate the law—even if Bush did—according to an October 26, 2007, Senate Intelligence Committee report urging adoption of the immunity proposal as part of an important bill updating FISA.

The committee, after forcing the administration to show investigators the relevant presidential and Justice Department documents, found that the record showed that the telecoms "acted on a good-faith belief that the president's program, and their assistance, was lawful." Courts have for centuries seen such a good-faith belief as grounds for immunizing from lawsuits private parties that heed government officials' requests for help in protecting public safety, especially in emergencies.

And, in fact, hardly anyone in Congress thinks that the telecoms should (or will) be forced to pay huge damages to the plaintiffs, who after all have suffered no real harm. So why are some senators, including Patrick Leahy, the Senate Judiciary Committee's senior Democrat, fighting the immunity proposal?

The real reasons are election-year pressure from liberal groups and the hope that the lawsuits will force public disclosure of information embarrassing to the Bush Administration. Leahy said in a press release that he opposed giving retroactive immunity to the telecoms because that would reduce their incentives to protect privacy and "would eliminate the courts as a check on the illegality of the warrantless wiretapping of Americans that the administration secretly engaged in for almost six years."

Leahy may well be right that some aspects of the highly classified wiretapping program were illegal. Indeed, Goldsmith, who took over the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel in late 2003 and later touched off the above-mentioned rebellion, has publicly called the still-secret OLC surveillance memos that he inherited a "legal mess."

In my own view, Bush's decision to secretly override FISA for a time immediately after 9/11 was probably a lawful exercise of his war powers. But his legal rationale became weaker and weaker when he continued to override the law for months and years without seeking congressional approval.

It is one thing to say that the president has inherent power to disregard an outdated law during an emergency in which immediate action might save many lives. It is something else to say that the president can secretly continue to disregard that law for several years without ever seeking to amend it. (See my 1/28/06 column.)

But doubts about the legality of Bush's actions are no justification for holding hostage telecoms that relied on the administration's assurances of legality and were in no position to second-guess its assertions that the surveillance program was essential to national security.

Not, that is, unless we want to risk that the telecoms, credit card companies, banks, airlines, hospitals, and other private companies—whose cooperation is essential to finding terrorists before they strike—will balk or delay when the next president seeks their help in an emergency.

And to keep things in perspective, let's remember that even if Bush did violate the law, the terrorist groups targeted by his surveillance program have taken thousands of American lives; that the program itself has apparently caused no serious harm to anyone (except terrorists); and that no evidence exists that Bush or anyone else has ever made

any improper use of any intercepted communications.

Opponents of immunity say that the telecoms have nothing to fear in court if they can show that they acted lawfully. And it does seem most unlikely that the telecoms would ultimately lose; the lawsuits face huge obstacles, including the state secrets privilege and doubts about the plaintiffs' standing to sue, as well as the strong evidence that the telecoms acted lawfully.

But even a remote risk of massive liability for doing the right thing in the past might deter some from doing the right thing in the future. And in the vast, interminable, unpredictable, often perverse meat grinder that high-stakes litigation has become in this country, victory in court would come only after many years of expensive legal battles, uncertainty, downward pressure on stock prices, and publicity damaging to the telecoms' international business interests. This prospect might drive them to accept a nuisance settlement that would yield millions of dollars for the plaintiffs' lawyers and very little for anyone else. Indeed, that's what many plaintiffs' lawyers are hoping for.

Some senators and others have proposed ways to relieve the telecoms of monetary liability while keeping the litigation alive to force a healthy public airing of information about what Bush and his aides did. One such proposal would have the government cover any damage awards; another would place a very low cap on any damages; a third would ask the FISA court to decide whether the telecoms broke the law. Such expedients would be better than no protection at all. But they would not give the telecoms the finality and the relief from litigation costs that they want and deserve.

In any event, it seems unlikely that any kind of litigation against the telecoms will yield much new information about what Bush and his aides did. The main reason is that any such evidence is probably inextricably intertwined with operational details of the surveillance, which are highly (and properly) classified. And lawsuits against the government, which would be unaffected by immunizing the telecoms, would be a more logical vehicle for exposing whatever can properly be exposed.

But the bottom line is that a remote chance of exposing any Bush misconduct is simply not a good enough reason to run even a small risk of losing potentially lifesaving intelligence. And it's simply unfair to hold hostage private companies that thought they were helping to save lives and did nothing wrong.

Partisan political points and the non-existent rights of radical jihadists shouldn't be more important than giving the most effective tools to the intelligence community to detect and prevent attacks. As soon as the Senate passes this comprehensive bipartisan bill, the House should consider it immediately in order to send a responsible bill to the President as quickly as possible.

There is bipartisan agreement that Congress must act immediately to ensure a long-term effective solution that empowers intelligence community professionals to act with speed and agility against foreign targets, provides retroactive liability protection for third parties who may have assisted the government after 9/11, and ensures that court orders will continue to be required for any surveillance targeting Americans.

We should stop the bipartisan obstructionism and move forward with

permanent legislation to fully ensure the protection of the American people and their civil rights.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I am pleased now to yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Ohio, Mr. DENNIS KUCINICH.

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 5104, a 30-day extension of the Protect America Act.

When the Protect America Act was passed by this body on August 4, 2007, I voted against the legislation because it gave legitimacy to the administration's surveillance of Americans without warrants. It is in the best interest of our Nation to allow this temporary law to expire and return to the permanent FISA law until this body can agree on legislation that protects our Constitution and upholds the civil liberties of U.S. citizens.

The FISA Court has ruled to prohibit warrantless spying on Americans when communications between foreign targets overseas are routed through the U.S. The permanent FISA law leaves in place mechanisms to monitor potential terrorist activity with the approval of the FISA Court.

We cannot allow baseless claims of being soft on terror to drive this debate. Those who use fear to gain power for themselves are in effect subverting our Constitution.

We are at a moment in the history of this country where it is absolutely important that Congress must not accept a false choice. We must defend Americans and our Constitution from the politics of fear. We must demand that the President cease his attacks on our civil liberties.

I oppose this legislation, and I will oppose all future attempts by this body to pass fear-provoking legislation that sanctions oppression against the American people.

When our Constitution was written and amended, the fourth amendment said: "The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized."

This fourth amendment has been the bedrock of the freedoms that Americans enjoy from a government that would use its power to go deeply into people's private affairs.

We must stand for our Constitution. We must stand for the Bill of Rights. That is the purpose of my presence at this very moment before this House.

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

Last August, a number of Members with whom I agree lamented the fact that we got jammed by the other body and the clock and ended up with a bad law. Here I am again today trying to stop that same thing from happening

again. And yet, in what I can call only in kindness misguided perfectionism, there are those here who would come to the floor to criticize this bill, a 15-day extension. Now it is easy to do that; it is harder to get a good law from both of these bodies at the same time, and that's only what this committee is trying to do this afternoon.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA), who is a member of both the Judiciary and Intelligence Committees.

Mr. ISSA. Madam Speaker, 1 minute is just the right amount of time to deal with an issue that is as simple as this: we cannot allow our enemies abroad to have secrets, and we must maintain the secret of how we discover, uncover, reveal, and react to their attempts to hide their activities, including the attempt to kill Americans. That's what this is all about. That's what we are looking for within the next 15 days. I am supportive of this bill because I want to make sure that we cover these two points.

It is not enough to simply attack your enemy when he attacks you. We clearly have to know what he intends to do, including when he communicates with his operatives in America from overseas; and we very clearly need to not let our enemies, through discovery in more than 40 lawsuits leveled against all of our communications companies, uncover what they may or may not have done.

I want to make sure that we understand: it is not just what communications companies may have done. We do not want our enemies to know what they may not have done.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield to the distinguished majority leader of the House of Representatives, STENY HOYER, 1 minute.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the distinguished chairman for yielding.

I rise in support of this particular extension. I do not rise and did not rise in support of the underlying bill that we are extending. And I think the gentleman from Ohio raised some valid points, as the chairman thinks he raised valid points as well.

But the issue here is really one of allowing this body an opportunity to pass a bill that speaks to the constitutional issues that have been raised, as well as the substantive issues raised by Mr. ISSA in what we all want to do: protect America and Americans.

Today the House is voting on a 15-day extension, nothing more, nothing less. Before we do that, I want to remind my colleagues that this body has already passed legislation to reauthorize FISA.

On November 15, 2½ months ago, this body passed the RESTORE Act, a bill that modernizes the technologically outdated Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978, gives the intelligence community the authority to intercept critical foreign communications, and

protects our fundamental constitutional rights.

The bill was skillfully assembled by two of our best chairmen, JOHN CONYERS and SILVESTRE REYES. Those chairmen join me today in support of this short-term extension for several reasons. First, despite the body's efforts over 2½ months ago, the Senate has yet to complete its work on its own FISA legislation. This week they failed to get cloture on either alternative. We are going to await its bill and look forward to an undoubtedly challenging, but productive, conference. This will take some time.

Second, on the question of immunity, which the President has so highly touted, our committees have been asking for 8 months to see the legal documents pertaining to the President's terrorist surveillance program. And we have received 8 straight months of denials. The White House only offered this access last Friday. It is reasonable to conclude that for the committees to carry out its own responsibilities and constitutional duties, it needs some time to do that.

This afternoon, our Judiciary members will be read-in to the program, and only next week will they begin to digest the hefty stack of documents that, in turn, will help them make a judgment on what, if any, immunity is merited. My position has been that in order to give immunity, we need to know what we are giving immunity for and what the justification for the actions were. Again, we need time for this important review. This extension gives us that time.

Finally, let me say to my colleagues that even if we were unable to do this extension, and this is very important, even if we were unable to do this extension, February 1 were to come and go without any new legislation, no one should fall victim to those fear-mongers who suggest that our intelligence community could "go dark." It would not. That is simply not the case.

The authorizations issued under the Protect America Act are in effect for up to one full year. So any requests that have been made and authorized up to this point in time from August on would be in effect at least through next July even if they had been authorized in August. The authorization issued under the Protect America Act will help protect us to that extent.

This means that all of the surveillance in effect today will remain in effect for least 6 more months. Even the administration's own Assistant Attorney General for National Security, Kenneth Wainstein, acknowledged this, saying that if the PAA were allowed to expire, intelligence officials would still be able to continue eavesdropping on already approved targets for another year.

□ 1545

In fact, out of an abundance of caution, last Thursday, when I announced the schedule for this week, I urged the

administration, if it had any authorizations, it needed to proceed on that for fear that we might not extend this act. I think we'll do that today, so that fear will not be realized.

For those new threats that develop after February 1, let us not forget that the underlying statute still gives the administration 3 days' worth of emergency authority to immediately begin surveillance without going to the Court, no lesser court. The Court, by the way, now has no backlog.

I encourage my colleagues to support this legislation. It is simply much like a CR, which is not a judgment on the merits of a particular appropriation bill one way or the other. It is simply a judgment that the congressional will ought to be done, that we ought to make our judgment based upon a conference report, with the Senate having passed a bill, which it has been unable yet to do.

So I urge my colleagues to support this bill, not because you support the underlying bill, but because you share with me and with Mr. CONYERS and Mr. KUCINICH and Mr. ISSA and all the others who have dealt with this bill a concern about protecting our country and protecting our Constitution.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. LUNGREN), who is a member of the Judiciary Committee and the Homeland Security Committee.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Madam Speaker, first of all, let me say I rise in support of this bill. Unfortunately, we are at this occasion where we have to have this short-term extension.

But let me just say a couple of things in response to what the majority leader said. In the first instance he said that if we don't have the Protect America Act, but we have the underlying bill, it will work well enough to deal with the problems in an emergency situation. Unfortunately, that's contradicted by the head of our intelligence services. The reason we are here is because it doesn't work.

Secondly, the majority leader said the RESTORE Act, the so-called RESTORE Act that we passed in November is a bill that we passed that should take care of these problems. It is a bill that does not work, and I will give you just one example of its difficulty.

In section 2(a)(2), treatment of inadvertent interceptions, it grants greater protections to Osama bin Laden than it would to an American citizen heard inadvertently in the United States. That happens to be a fact. We've debated it on this floor. Not a single person on that side of the aisle has been able to contradict that. And even the chairman of the Constitutional Law Subcommittee has come to me and said we are right; a huge mistake was made. And yet that was the bill that was passed here and that we are told and the American people are being told needs to go forward.

Frankly, the bill we passed in August, the Protect America Act, is nothing short of a legislative LASIK surgery. We had the head of the intelligence services of the United States come to us and say we were blinded so that we could not see over 60 percent of the legitimate terrorist targets in the world because of an interpretation of the law impacted by the new technology; that is, the way communications are transmitted. It was at his request that we looked at this. We did that in August. We've opened our eyes. We've been able to look at those targets, those legitimate targets around the world. And if we do not act today we will close our eyes once again.

The fact of the matter is, the strangeness of this institution, of only allowing the Protect America Act for 6 months, then coming and saying, Well, the new bill ought to be limited to 30 days, or 15 days, is really something we ought to examine.

Does anyone suggest that the threat out there is a 6-month threat, a 15-day threat, a 30-day threat? It is an almost permanent threat that we see out there. We need legislation that will give us certainty, that will allow us to keep our eyes open, to gather the intelligence necessary to protect our homeland.

You can argue about the Iraq war all you want. This goes to the essence of protecting us against the terrorists who would bring the war to our shores, who have already brought the war to our shores. This goes to the effectiveness of the techniques that are used in today's new technology.

We were asked by Admiral McConnell to do the job. We did the job in August, with the exception of not giving the protection to those communications companies who actually responded to a patriotic request to help in this fight.

For some reason, my friends on the other side believe in the reverse Good Samaritan act: Don't help us; be worried. But bring your attorneys when asked.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure I recognize a distinguished member of the Judiciary Committee, ADAM SCHIFF of California, for 2 minutes.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, last year the President and the Director of National Intelligence pushed for legislation that would make it easier for the NSA to collect intelligence on Americans and groups abroad. Among other things, the administration's legislation would allow warrantless eavesdropping of virtually all communications of Americans with anyone outside the U.S., so long as the government declared that the surveillance was directed at people reasonably believed to be located outside the U.S.

I opposed the bill when it was considered by the House and instead joined with Chairman CONYERS and Chairman REYES in support of a responsible alternative that would have met the needs of the Director of National Intelligence

without compromising the privacy of law-abiding Americans in ways that don't improve our security. The proposal included robust oversight and audit provisions designed to determine the impact of these changes on Americans. Unfortunately, Congress was forced hastily to pass the administration's version before adjourning in August. Nonetheless, Congress provided the law would sunset in 6 months to ensure that modifications were quickly made.

Over 2 months ago the House returned to this debate by passing the RESTORE Act, legislation that updated FISA, provided these effective surveillance tools while ensuring robust oversight. Importantly, the RESTORE Act also provided protections to ensure that communications of U.S. persons were not acquired without some court involvement or supervision, provisions that were left out of the proposal passed in August.

The other body has also drafted legislation aimed at modifying the bill that passed out of the House in August to provide oversight and additional protections. Unfortunately, they haven't completed their work. Some very thoughtful proposals like that by Senator DIANNE FEINSTEIN offer fresh ways to break the impasse over some very difficult issues. The proposals that they are debating and attempting to finalize have a number of notable departures from the House-passed version. With the August bill set to expire in 3 days, it's necessary for us to seek a temporary extension in order to ensure this House has a role in crafting its revision. The impending deadlines necessitate an extension, and I'm proud to support that very modest extension.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING), who is a distinguished member of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this 15-day extension to the FISA law, but I ask the question, why are we here? And the reason we are here is because of a court decision that I think appropriately defined the letter of the language in the 1978 FISA law. But because the technology changes, that court decision was made. And that opened up this can of worms, this Pandora's box of who's concerned about whose civil liberties versus how we provide this balance in our intelligence. And I would point out that this is a two-front war that we're fighting: One is in the Middle East, successfully I will add, and the other one is the surveillance that protects us domestically here at home and provides for our military to have the tools to work with overseas. That is the highest constitutional responsibility that we have. We have congressional oversight. We can look into this and see what's going on with the FISA law anyway, but the effort to protect our retroactive liability of those companies that cooperate with our intelligence com-

munity is essential. We will lose our ability to do surveillance if we lose the ability of the companies to cooperate with us. And this is not a trial lawyer's issue; it's a national security issue.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, we reserve our time at this point.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, may I ask how much time remains on each side.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 8 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Michigan has 9½ minutes remaining.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to my colleague from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) who is the ranking member of the Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security Subcommittee of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, it seems what we're experiencing here and have been for the last 6 months is just the eternal optimism. I love that in the Democratic majority. But it's like the fellow that fell off the tall building and at each floor was heard to say, "I'm doing okay so far." The trouble is, you're going to have the day of reckoning. And here we had the 6-month extension back August 4. Now, we've heard the majority leader come in and say, Well, it was basically, in so many words, it was the White House's fault because they could have given us this information about the immunity of the companies, and that's what's held this up. But if you go back to August 4 and the vote that did not have the immunity in it, there were 41 Democrats that voted for it and 181 Democrats that voted against it and 9 didn't vote. It was the Republicans that passed this. It didn't have anything to do with immunity. It had to do with one group wanted to make sure our intelligence protected us and had the tools they need, and the other was more concerned about the rights of terrorists.

Now, I would submit to you that this isn't about 6 months. It's not about 15 days. We could put it off 30 days, another 6 months, but the day of reckoning is coming. And our enemies that want to destroy our way of life, they don't think in terms of 15 days, 30 days. They think in terms of generations, and they've got to be defeated.

So I understand and I appreciate my dear friend, Mr. KUCINICH, and the concerns about civil liberties. I'm concerned about them, too. But when it involves, as this act does, a foreign terrorist on foreign soil, and I know the concern is, Well, what if they call an American citizen? And I'll leave you with this: I would submit to you, if your friends are getting calls from foreign terrorists on foreign soil, again, tell them to tell the terrorists not to call them at home and they'll be okay.

We need to pass this. We need to give our intelligence the tools they need.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS). He is a

former chairman, now ranking member of the National Security Subcommittee of the Government Oversight and Reform Committee. He is also a senior Republican member of the Homeland Security Committee as well.

Mr. SHAYS. Madam Speaker, the Cold War is over and the world is a more dangerous place. Our strategy is no longer containment reaction and mutually assured destruction. That went out the window on September 11. It is detection, prevention, preemption, and, when necessary, even unilateral action.

As the 9/11 Commission points out, we are not combating terrorism as if it's some ethereal being. We are confronting Islamists terrorists, real people who would do us harm. If you want to deal with the consequence of a terrorist attack, write a weak FISA law. But if you want to detect and prevent a terrorist act, write a law that works and help insure the communication industry works with us.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan advises that he is ready to close.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FRANKS). He is the ranking member of the Constitution, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties Subcommittee of the Judiciary Committee.

□ 1600

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Madam Speaker, jihadist terrorism is an existential threat to human peace. Our Terrorist Surveillance Program is the most powerful tactical weapon we have against terrorists. If we knew where every terrorist in the world was tonight, we could end the war on terror within weeks. Director of National Intelligence, Mike McConnell, has repeatedly asked this body to update this critical tool, and he has been met only with stalling from Democrats.

This tool only allows us to target America's enemies on foreign soil with electronic surveillance, and it continues to protect those that are on foreign soil including, Madam Speaker, if Osama bin Laden was in a hotel on Capitol Hill, we could not target his phone or e-mail with electronic surveillance without a FISA warrant.

This continues to protect Americans. And if we cannot pass this critical legislation in the day in which we live, we not only fail our primary purpose as a Congress; we fail the American people in future generations.

Madam Speaker, we need to pass this.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of the time.

The Senate Intelligence Committee has already approved a bipartisan bill to replace the Protect America Act. It contains important provisions to help the intelligence committee gather foreign surveillance and provides liability protection to telecommunications

companies that assisted the government after the terrorist attacks on 9/11.

The Democratic majority has a duty to end political gamesmanship with America's national security and immediately pass legislation that gives our intelligence community the tools they need to protect us.

Madam Speaker, given the rapidly approaching Friday deadline, today I ask that my colleagues support a temporary extension; but, of course, that's with the understanding that we come back immediately and pass a good bill that is long term, that gives liability protection to the telephone companies, and that doesn't force us to get a court order to listen to Osama bin Laden when he makes a cell phone call from a cave in Pakistan to initiate attacks on the United States.

I hope that any bill that we consider in the coming days will have those provisions in them.

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

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I rise, first, to thank the Members of the House for this very reasonable debate, and I want to thank particularly my colleagues on the other side. Ranking Member SMITH has been excellent in helping us work out, as closely as we can with reservations, nothing is perfect, but I appreciate the spirit with which he has come to the floor today.

The extension is not a vote for the temporary law that we have been living under since August. It is not a vote against the temporary bill or against what the Senate is working on. It is a vote only to avoid a head-long rush into possibly ill-conceived legislation. And I think we have all been able to come together on that.

I'm grateful to our leadership and to the Members on the other side of the aisle for the discussion that brings us here this afternoon.

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to the extension of the Protect America Act of 2007 because the underlying legislation violates the U.S. Constitution.

The mis-named Protect America Act allows the U.S. government to monitor telephone calls and other electronic communications of American citizens without a warrant. This clearly violates the Fourth Amendment, which states:

"The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized."

The Protect America Act sidelines the FISA Court system and places authority over foreign surveillance in the director of national intelligence and the attorney general with little if any oversight. While proponents of this legislation have argued that the monitoring of American citizens would still require a court-issued warrant, the bill only requires that subjects be "reasonably believed to be outside the United

States." Further, it does not provide for the Fourth Amendment protection of American citizens if they happen to be on the other end of the electronic communication where the subject of surveillance is a non-citizen overseas.

We must remember that the original Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act was passed in 1978 as a result of the U.S. Senate investigations into the Federal government's illegal spying on American citizens. Its purpose was to prevent the abuse of power from occurring in the future by establishing guidelines and prescribing oversight to the process. It was designed to protect citizens, not the government. The effect seems to have been opposite of what was intended. These recent attempts to "upgrade" FISA do not appear to be designed to enhance protection of our civil liberties, but to make it easier for the government to spy on us!

The only legitimate "upgrade" to the original FISA legislation would be to allow surveillance of conversations that begin and end outside the United States between non-U.S. citizens where the telephone call is routed through the United States. Technology and the global communications market have led to more foreign to foreign calls being routed through the United States. This adjustment would solve the problems outlined by the administration without violating the rights of U.S. citizens.

While I would not oppose technical changes in FISA that the intelligence community has indicated are necessary, Congress should not use this opportunity to chip away at even more of our constitutional protections and civil liberties. I urge my colleagues to oppose this and any legislation that violates the Fourth Amendment of the Constitution.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to H.R. 5104. I do so because there is no reason to extend the Protect America Act. Should the Protect America Act expire, our intelligence community will not be left in the "dark," as some suggest. Rather the FISA courts will simply return to operating under the original FISA law, a law which protected the civil liberties of all Americans while also granting the President the tools he needs to conduct an aggressive campaign against terror.

As many of my colleagues have argued today, the original FISA law, which passed in 1978 needs to be updated. It was passed to address surveillance concerns at a different time in our Nation's history, when some of the technological strides we have made since, were simply unimaginable. As a member of the Intelligence Committee, I strongly support efforts by the Speaker and leaders of both parties to work together to update FISA. However, I cannot in good conscience vote in favor of a one-month extension of the Protect America Act. I cannot do so because the reality is that the Protect America Act does not make Americans any safer—rather it allows the Government to pursue an enormous and untargeted collection of international communications without court order or meaningful oversight by either Congress or the courts. Furthermore, it is one of the most damaging pieces of legislation against civil liberties I have seen in my eight years in the U.S. Congress.

I feel so strongly that the Protect America Act is an affront to our values, that in my opinion it is in the best interest of all Americans that this misguided bill be allowed to expire rather than extended for even one more day.

In order to understand why I feel so strongly, let me take a moment to outline some of the most abhorrent provisions in the bill we are considering extending:

First, it allows the Attorney General to issue program warrants for international calls without court review. This provision removes the FISA court, which has overseen the process for 30 years and instead places the Attorney General in charge of determining the legitimacy of surveillance. Needless to say, this is an enormous responsibility and we must all question the wisdom of placing so much authority on the shoulders of one Administration official.

Secondly, it includes no provisions to prevent "reverse targeting," the practice whereby surveillance is conducted on a foreign person in order to hear their conversations with a person in the United States who is the actual target. Under the Protect America Act, these conversations can be heard, recorded and stored without a warrant.

Lastly, the Protect America Act reduces the oversight capabilities of Congress by requiring the Attorney General to provide to Congress only the information the Justice Department sees fit to report. This provision removes an important check upon America's secret surveillance program.

Taken together, the Protect America Act represents a significant infringement on each American's civil liberties and allows for a potentially dangerous abuse of power by our government. I urge each of my colleagues to vote against its extension and allow the original FISA law to be reinstated. Doing so will allow the Congress time to work on a bipartisan update of the FISA and in the meantime give the intelligence community the tools they require while also protecting the rights and liberties of all Americans.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, I will reluctantly support this short extension of current law dealing with electronic surveillance related to efforts to counter the threat of terrorism.

My support is reluctant because I did not vote for the current law, which I think does not properly balance the need to counteract that threat with protection of Americans' rights and liberties. But today I will support a brief extension of that law—scheduled to expire in two days' time—for several reasons.

First, I do think the basic law in this area—the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, or FISA—needs to be updated to respond to changes in technology, which was the purpose of the current, temporary law.

Last August, I voted for a bill (H.R. 3356) to provide such an update. Unfortunately, while that bill was supported by a majority of the House, it did not receive the two-thirds vote required by the procedure under which it was considered, and so was not adopted. Its defeat resulted from the opposition of the Bush Administration—supported by all but 3 of our Republican colleagues—which was demanding instead that the House approve a different version. Regrettably, that tactic succeeded and the result was passage of the current law, which I did not support.

Then, last November, I again voted for a bill to update FISA, H.R. 3773, the "Responsible Electronic Surveillance That is Overseen, Reviewed, and Effective" (or RESTORE) Act.

That bill is not perfect, but as I said then I did not insist on perfection because I thought the House should act to correct the shortcomings of the temporary law enacted last

year and because in my opinion the RESTORE Act would give the Administration the authority it says it needs to conduct surveillance on terrorist targets while restoring many of the protections that the temporary law has reduced.

The House passed the RESTORE Act on November 15th, and we have been waiting for the Senate to act. President Bush has criticized the House-passed bill because it does not grant retroactive immunity from lawsuits for telecommunications companies that assisted in the Administration's secret surveillance program without being compelled to do so by a warrant. As I said in November, I think it might be appropriate to consider that, but not until the Bush Administration has responded to bipartisan requests for information about the past activities of these companies under the program. I have not been ready to grant immunity for the companies' past activities while we don't know what those activities were.

Recently, the Administration has finally relented and is allowing appropriate review of documents on this subject. But that review is not yet complete—and so the second reason I support this legislation is to allow the review to continue before Congress is required again to act on this subject. This would not be necessary if the Administration had not been so resistant to the idea of properly informing Congress and providing the relevant information, but now it is needed.

Finally, because the Senate has been slow to act, I think the current law should be extended briefly to provide a reasonable opportunity for any differences between the House-passed bill and whatever the Senate may approve to be resolved through careful and thorough discussion rather than in the kind of exaggerated haste that too often leads to unsatisfactory results.

Therefore, despite what I think are the very real flaws of the current, temporary law, I will support this measure to extend it for an additional 30 days.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today with great concern to H.R. 5104, to extend the Protect America Act of 2007 for 30 days. I thank the distinguished chairman of the Judiciary Committee and I applaud him for his consistent and impeccable commitment to civil liberties and civil rights.

Madam Speaker, this administration has the legal responsibility to protect the American people. Let no one come to this floor and suggest that what we are doing today is going to save lives, because last year we passed legislation that indicated that foreign-to-foreign communication had no barriers, no barriers for those who are seeking intelligence.

Yet when an American was involved, the Bill of Rights, the fourth amendment, civil liberties with the underpinnings, and therefore a court intervened. Extending the Protect America Act for 30 days in the hopes that the Senate will produce a version that we are satisfied with is not a sufficient reason for violating the civil rights and liberties of the American people.

Homeland security is not a Republican or a Democratic issue. It is an issue for all Americans—all of us. Not one of us who sang "God Bless America" on the steps of this House will allow anyone to undermine the security of America.

The original legislation offered by the House Majority gave the Administration everything

that they needed. However, the legislation that ultimately triumphed, and which this bill today would extend, is a disgrace to the United States constitution. By passing this bill today, we are compromising the Bill of Rights. We are telling Americans that no matter what your business is, you are subject to the unscrupulous, undisciplined, irresponsible scrutiny of the Attorney General and others without court intervention.

This is not the day to play politics. It is too important to balance civil liberties along with the homeland security and the protection needs of America. I feel confident that the House FISA Bill does do that. I am disheartened by the other body for their failure to recognize that we can secure America by securing the American people with fair security laws and by giving them their civil liberties. I find the Senate language extremely troublesome, and I am extremely disappointed that we could not reach common ground based on the original language passed by this House.

I would ask my colleagues to defeat this so that we can go back to the bill that protects the civil liberties of Americans and provides homeland security. I ask my colleagues to support the Bill of Rights and National Security.

Had the Bush Administration and the Republican-dominated 109th Congress acted more responsibly in the 2 preceding years, we would not be in the position of debating legislation that has such a profound impact on the national security and on American values and civil liberties in the crush of exigent circumstances. More often than not, it is true as the saying goes that haste makes waste.

Madam Speaker, the legislation before us is intended to fill a gap in the Nation's intelligence gathering capabilities identified by Director of National Intelligence Mike McConnell, by amending the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, FISA. But in reality it eviscerates the Fourth Amendment to the Constitution and represents an unwarranted transfer of power from the courts to the Executive Branch and a Justice Department led by an Attorney General whose reputation for candor and integrity is, to put it charitably, subject to considerable doubt.

Madam Speaker, FISA has served the Nation well for nearly 30 years, placing electronic surveillance inside the United States for foreign intelligence and counter-intelligence purposes on a sound legal footing and I am far from persuaded that it needs to be jettisoned or substantially amended. But given the claimed exigent circumstances by the Administration, let me briefly discuss some of the changes to FISA I am prepared to support on a temporary basis, not to exceed 120 days.

To give a detailed illustration of just how superior the RESTORE Act, which the House passed October, is to the ill-considered and hastily enacted Protect America Act, I wish to take a few moments to discuss an important improvement in the bill that was adopted in the full Judiciary Committee markup.

The Jackson-Lee Amendment added during the markup made a constructive contribution to the RESTORE Act by laying down a clear, objective criterion for the Administration to follow and the FISA court to enforce in preventing reverse targeting.

"Reverse targeting," a concept well known to members of this Committee but not so well understood by those less steeped in the

arcana of electronic surveillance, is the practice where the government targets foreigners without a warrant while its actual purpose is to collect information on certain U.S. persons.

One of the major concerns that libertarians and classical conservatives, as well as progressives and civil liberties organizations, have with the PAA is that the understandable temptation of national security agencies to engage in reverse targeting may be difficult to resist in the absence of strong safeguards in the PAA to prevent it.

My amendment reduces even further any such temptation to resort to reverse targeting by requiring the Administration to obtain a regular, individualized FISA warrant whenever the "real" target of the surveillance is a person in the United States.

The amendment achieves this objective by requiring the Administration to obtain a regular FISA warrant whenever a "significant purpose of an acquisition is to acquire the communications of a specific person reasonably believed to be located in the United States." The current language in the bill provides that a warrant be obtained only when the Government "seeks to conduct electronic surveillance" of a person reasonably believed to be located in the United States.

It was far from clear how the operative language "seeks to" is to be interpreted. In contrast, the language used in my amendment, "significant purpose," is a term of art that has long been a staple of FISA jurisprudence and thus is well known and readily applied by the agencies, legal practitioners, and the FISA Court. Thus, the Jackson-Lee Amendment provides a clearer, more objective, criterion for the Administration to follow and the FISA court to enforce to prevent the practice of reverse targeting without a warrant, which all of us can agree should not be permitted.

First, I am prepared to accept temporarily obviating the need to obtain a court order for foreign-to-foreign communications that pass through the United States. But I do insist upon individual warrants, based on probable cause, when surveillance is directed at people in the United States.

The Attorney General must still be required to submit procedures for international surveillance to the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court for approval, but the FISA Court should not be allowed to issue a "basket warrant" without making individual determinations about foreign surveillance.

There should be an initial 15-day emergency authority so that international surveillance can begin while the warrants are being considered by the Court. And there must also be congressional oversight, requiring the Department of Justice Inspector General to conduct an audit every 60 days of U.S. person communications intercepted under these warrants, to be submitted to the Intelligence and Judiciary Committees. Finally, as I have stated, this authority must be of short duration and must expire by its terms in 120 days.

In all candor, Madam Speaker, I must restate my firm conviction that when it comes to the track record of this President's warrantless surveillance programs, there is still nothing on the public record about the nature and effectiveness of those programs, or the trustworthiness of this Administration, to indicate that they require any legislative response, other than to reaffirm the exclusivity of FISA and insist that it be followed. This could have

been accomplished in the 109th Congress by passing H.R. 5371, the "Lawful Intelligence and Surveillance of Terrorists in an Emergency by NSA Act," "LISTEN Act," which I have co-sponsored with the then Ranking Members of the Judiciary and Intelligence Committees, Mr. Conyers and Ms. HARMAN.

The Bush administration has not complied with its legal obligation under the National Security Act of 1947 to keep the Intelligence Committees "fully and currently informed" of U.S. intelligence activities. Congress cannot continue to rely on incomplete information from the Bush administration or revelations in the media. It must conduct a full and complete inquiry into electronic surveillance in the United States and related domestic activities of the NSA, both those that occur within FISA and those that occur outside FISA.

The inquiry must not be limited to the legal questions. It must include the operational details of each program of intelligence surveillance within the United States, including: (1) Who the NSA is targeting; (2) how it identifies its targets; (3) the information the program collects and disseminates; and most important; (4) whether the program advances national security interests without unduly compromising the privacy rights of the American people.

Given the unprecedented amount of information Americans now transmit electronically and the post-9/11 loosening of regulations governing information sharing, the risk of intercepting and disseminating the communications of ordinary Americans is vastly increased, requiring more precise—not looser—standards, closer oversight, new mechanisms for minimization, and limits on retention of inadvertently intercepted communications.

Madam Speaker, the legislation before us is not necessary. The bill which a majority of the House voted to pass last year is more than sufficient to address the intelligence gathering deficiency identified by Director McConnell. That bill, H.R. 3356, provided ample amount of congressional authorization needed to ensure that our intelligence professionals have the tools that they need to protect our Nation, while also safeguarding the rights of law-abiding Americans. That is why I supported H.R. 3356, but cannot support H.R. 5104.

I encourage my colleagues to join me in voting against the unwise and ill-considered reauthorization of the Protect America Act of 2007.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5104, as amended.

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

The title was amended so as to read: "A Bill to extend the Protect America Act of 2007 for 15 days."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1528, NEW ENGLAND NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL DESIGNATION ACT

Mr. CARDOZA. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I

call up House Resolution 940 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 940

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1528) to amend the National Trails System Act to designate the New England National Scenic Trail, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived except those arising under clause 9 or 10 of rule XXI. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Natural Resources now printed in the bill. The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived except those arising under clause 10 of rule XXI. Notwithstanding clause 11 of rule XVIII, no amendment to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived except those arising under clause 9 or 10 of rule XXI. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. During consideration in the House of H.R. 1528 pursuant to this resolution, notwithstanding the operation of the previous question, the Chair may postpone further consideration of the bill to such time as may be designated by the Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California (Mr. CARDOZA) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. CARDOZA. Madam Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER). All time yielded during consideration of the rule is for debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CARDOZA. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within

which to revise and extend their remarks on House Resolution 940.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. CARDOZA. Madam Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, House Resolution 940 provides for consideration of H.R. 1528, the New England National Scenic Trail Designation Act, under a structured rule. The rule provides 1 hour of general debate, equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking member of the Committee on Natural Resources. The rule makes in order two Republican amendments submitted to the Rules Committee by the ranking member of the Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands, Mr. BISHOP of Utah. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill except for clauses 9 and 10 of rule XXI. Finally, the rule provides one motion to recommit, with or without instructions.

Madam Speaker, the bill before us today, H.R. 1528, amends the National Trails System Act to designate most of the MMM Trail System as the New England National Scenic Trail.

The MMM Trail System extends from the Massachusetts border with New Hampshire through western Massachusetts and Connecticut toward the Long Island Sound. The highly popular trail system has existed for over 50 years and is predominantly managed and maintained by volunteers.

The trail system travels through important historical landmarks and harbors a range of diverse ecosystems and natural resources, including mountain summits, waterfalls, and critical habitats for endangered species.

In a recent feasibility study, the National Park Service recommended that the trail system be designated as a national scenic trail, with some adjustments and rerouting for a total of 220 miles. However, this study has been out since the spring of 2006; and while no changes are expected, it has been trapped in a giant morass of bureaucratic red tape that has not been finalized.

H.R. 1528 is simply about cutting through this red tape and getting Federal recognition and administrative support for a trail that is already extremely popular and well managed.

H.R. 1528 includes specific language protecting private property rights, and landowner cooperation in the national scenic trail designation is entirely voluntary. All landowners affected by the trail have the opportunity to have the trail rerouted around their property.

Furthermore, since no Federal land is involved, Federal designation of the land has no impact on State or local laws currently in place, including those governing hunting, fishing, or trapping or local zoning or other land use issues.

Madam Speaker, this designation is widely supported. It is supported by

the administration and the local communities across New England, and it has bipartisan congressional support, including the Representatives of all affected districts in Connecticut and Massachusetts.

In closing, I'd like to thank Chairman RAHALL, Chairman GRIJALVA, and Mr. OLVER for their hard work in bringing this legislation to the floor today so we can ensure that America's most treasured resources are protected for future generations.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

(Mr. DREIER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, I'd like to express my great appreciation to my very good friend and Rules Committee colleague, the gentleman from Atwater, California, who so ably represents his constituents here, is beginning his second session as a member of the Rules Committee, and I will say that it is great to welcome a fellow Californian to the Rules Committee.

But, Madam Speaker, at first blush one looks at this bill and it is, as I think was really reflected in the gentleman's remarks, sort of innocuous and noncontroversial. I mean, it's a pretty simple measure. New England National Scenic Trail Designation Act, who can be opposed to that? I mean, who could be concerned about that?

It certainly wouldn't be the first time in the 110th Congress that we have had a measure brought up with a rule that could have very easily been considered under suspension of the rules. After all, today so far we have under suspension of the rules passed a bill that provided a \$150 billion economic stimulus to our Nation's economy, an issue which I'm very proud to say, as we all are, that saw the two parties come together, working with the White House in a bipartisan way to make sure that we could have this economic stimulus package. And I hope and pray that it mitigates the economic challenges that our constituents are facing in the future.

And then, Madam Speaker, we move from there to consider the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, an extension of that, as we worked on the issue of reform. And so here we've dealt with the economic stimulus and the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, both measures considered under suspension of the rules, and now we have a rule for consideration of the New England National Scenic Trail Designation Act.

I think my point is that this is a measure that very easily could have been considered under suspension of the rules, and we understand that there is an attempt to fill the schedule and there were people who quipped about that last night up in the Rules Committee. It is unfortunate. I know a number of other Members have already

left. We didn't work today until noon; and we are in a position now, having begun working so late, that we're going into the night on this measure, which is a bill that initially, as I said, could have been completely noncontroversial and considered under suspension of the rules.

But I will say, having looked now at the measure, there are concerns that have been raised. They are concerns about private property rights and the threat of eminent domain. In fact, Madam Speaker, the State of New Hampshire opted out of the national designation because of these concerns. The people of New Hampshire believe that the trail running through their State is well managed and is in no need whatsoever of Federal intervention.

□ 1615

But the other States involved would like to move forward on the Federal designation, so we are here late this afternoon to consider this.

Now, as we proceed, we've simply asked that the concerns that have been raised see the light of day on the House floor; as I said, these concerns as they relate, first and foremost, with the issue of private property rights and eminent domain.

Unfortunately, while seven amendments were submitted to us in the Rules Committee, only two were made in order, two out of seven amendments submitted. And unfortunately, contrary to the promise that was made at the beginning of the 110th Congress by Speaker PELOSI that we would have a substitute made in order for legislation that's considered, a substitute that was proposed by Mr. BISHOP was, in fact, denied by the Rules Committee. And why? I mean, I ask about the time constraints again. As I said, we didn't begin work today until noon. The House convened at noon. Our most critical business of the day, as I said, the stimulus bill and the FISA law, were considered under suspension of the rules. So, why the rush for us to proceed with this New England Scenic Trails bill?

There is really no practical reason why, Madam Speaker, now that we've decided to not take this up under suspension of the rules and have a debate, that we can't engage in a little extra debate to allow for the concerns to be vetted. And if we can't have an open debate on the issue of scenic trails, then one's got to ask, what issue will we have an open debate on? I mean, what hope is there for an open process for the most significant and the most controversial issues if we can't have it on the New England National Scenic Trail Designation Act?

Now, six amendments were submitted by our friend, former Rules Committee colleague, Mr. BISHOP, addressing the private property rights issue. Four were rejected by the Rules Committee. A seventh amendment was offered by Mr. FLAKE that would explicitly prevent the use of earmarks in this bill.

Now, Mr. FLAKE's amendment would have provided an opportunity to examine this bill's provision to direct unspecified Federal dollars to two private entities. Now, did any Members have a personal stake in these private groups, in these private entities? Did any Member make a specific request on behalf of these private entities? Mr. FLAKE's amendment would have helped to shed a little sunlight on this provision before we direct Federal taxpayer dollars towards two private groups. But this amendment was also rejected, Madam Speaker, unfortunately, by the Rules Committee.

Shutting out this amendment is, to me, probably the most troubling of all. Obviously, the issue of private property rights and eminent domain that Mr. BISHOP has wanted to address and his four amendments that were denied is very, very troubling. But this issue of completely preventing Members from the opportunity for sunshine and disclosure on what could have been a request by a Member for support for two private organizations is very troubling.

Now, Madam Speaker, I've got to say that this issue itself gets right to the heart of one of the biggest challenges that we faced under the Democratic leadership in this place, and it is the inability or unwillingness to rein in wasteful earmarks.

Now, last week, we Republicans were meeting in West Virginia, and we spent a great deal of time talking about the issue of earmarks when our Republican conference came together. And I'm happy to say that, with a united front, Republicans came together on this issue and we decided that we would call for a moratorium on earmarks, a moratorium until a bipartisan committee can formulate a proposal that eradicates waste, fraud, and abuse in the earmark process. It's the so-called Kingston-Wolf-Wamp legislation that has been put forward.

Now, we offered to have a complete ban on earmarks, and we challenged our Democratic colleagues to join in with a bipartisan agreement to have a moratorium on earmarks until such time as this bipartisan committee can come forward. Now, Madam Speaker, as I see you in the chair, as I see my friend from Atwater, I suspect that either or both of you, and certainly a lot of your Members, are going to be going on to your retreat. The Democratic Caucus is, I know, going for a meeting that will be taking place over the next few days. And it's fun, but challenging, and great to have an opportunity for the two parties to work within their caucuses, your caucus, our conference, to deal with these issues.

Well, I would just like to say that, just as we did at our meeting last week, while far be it for me to be so presumptuous as to say I should set the agenda for the Democratic Caucus retreat, I would like to say that in light of the offer that we made coming forward as Republicans on this issue of earmarks, I would recommend that in

light of the discussion that came here on the floor today on this issue, the speech that was delivered last night from the President of the United States in which he called for cutting in half the number of earmarks saying that he would veto legislation if he didn't see it cut in half, the request that we have made on behalf of our constituents to say we should have this moratorium done in a bipartisan way, and we as Republicans are challenging our Democratic colleagues to do that, I would like to say that I hope very much that Members at your retreat would, rather than spending a lot of time on a number of other issues, I would hope that you would put partisanship aside and try to work, just as we did on this economic stimulus issue, in a bipartisan way to recognize the very, very pressing need for earmark reform and our proposal, which should, in fact, provide strong bipartisan support.

I will say, Madam Speaker, that the integrity and the effectiveness of this body depends on our agreement to proceed with very, very important bipartisan reform on this issue. It's my hope that my Democratic colleagues will use their upcoming retreat over the next few days as an opportunity to urge their leadership to accept our proposal to make a bipartisan effort to tackle this very, very critical issue.

Today's bill was perhaps a small but yet a significant opportunity to signal a newfound commitment to open process and meaningful earmark reform. Unfortunately, today's bill is a missed opportunity. I suspect that this measure will proceed. I don't think that we'll have the votes to defeat the previous question, which I should say I'm going to attempt to do, to defeat the previous question so that we can make in order what I would describe as the Marshall proposal, the proposal that has been put forward by one of our Democratic colleagues, Mr. MARSHALL, which is basically identical to the Boehner proposal that we have on earmark reform, which will provide a greater degree of transparency, accountability, disclosure, and enforcement on this issue, which unfortunately is not there.

So, when it comes to our attempt to defeat the previous question on this, what I will be offering is tantamount to a bipartisan proposal for our colleagues as we seek to address this issue.

So, again, I would say, Madam Speaker, if my colleagues had proceeded with this bill under a suspension of the rules, you would not have had to listen to the speech I just delivered because we would have done the exact same things as we did on the \$150 billion economic stimulus bill, and we would have done the exact same thing as we did on the very important Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act reform measure, and albeit simply an extension, the steps towards bringing about reform.

But in light of the fact that we are here, denying the opportunity for us to address the issue of private property rights and eminent domain, and the opportunity for the kind of transparency and disclosure that everyone around here talks about on the issue of earmarks that would have come forward in the amendment offered by our colleague, Mr. FLAKE, I'm going to encourage my colleagues to vote "no" on the previous question so that we can make that earmark reform proposal in order. And if that is defeated, I will urge a "no" vote on the rule as we proceed with this.

With that, Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CARDOZA. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California for his kind words that he opened his statement with.

He mentioned throughout the statement that we might not be here if we were under suspension. I feel that under suspension of the rules, we would not be able to hear any of the debate that Mr. BISHOP is going to offer on his two amendments. So, we are actually, in fact, allowing Mr. BISHOP to make his amendments before the House of Representatives.

Mr. DREIER. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. CARDOZA. I will yield to the gentleman.

Mr. DREIER. I thank the gentleman for yielding, Madam Speaker.

I would simply say that I very much appreciate his willingness to have greater openness on this debate. And unfortunately, when the Rules Committee met late yesterday afternoon, I offered an amendment to have this considered under an open amendment process, and that was defeated. And I then made an attempt to offer this under a modified open amendment process.

Mr. CARDOZA. Reclaiming my time, Madam Speaker, the gentleman did make that offer in Rules. However, it should be noted that Mr. BISHOP is the ranking member of his subcommittee. He had an opportunity to amend this bill in committee. He did not choose to offer but one amendment in committee, is my understanding, and then he came to the Rules Committee at the last minute with seven amendments.

The Rules Committee is allowing two amendments to be offered on the floor today. I think that's a fair hearing for the gentleman.

Mr. DREIER. Would the gentleman further yield?

Mr. CARDOZA. The gentleman has his own time.

Mr. DREIER. Well, I look forward to yielding to you if you would ever like to ask.

Mr. CARDOZA. I would like to just get through a few of my points, if I may.

The gentleman also brought up the issue of whether or not this bill has any effect on eminent domain. And I can tell you that there is absolutely no

authority in H.R. 1528 for the National Park Service to take land by eminent domain, nor does the Service have any authority in local zoning issues that might affect national scenic trails.

Further, H.R. 1528 explicitly states that "the United States does not acquire for trail any land or interest in land without the consent of the owner." In fact, this bill is an opt-in bill; you have to agree to have your land put into this act and used in this way.

The second part of the gentleman's statement with regard to earmarks, I'd like to just refer the gentleman to the committee report, page 7, the earmark statement. And in the committee report it states that "H.R. 1528 does not contain any congressional earmarks." This is an authorization bill, not an appropriation bill. Further, the report states that it does not contain any limited tax benefits or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9(d), 9(e), or 9(f) of rule XXI." It states that very clearly in the committee report.

Finally, the bill does allow two private groups that manage the trail currently, and this is the entire point of the bill, to receive Federal technical assistance. And that is in the way of educational experience or technical assistance to manage the trail, not resources to manage the trail.

So, I would say that there is no earmark whatsoever in this legislation.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I would like to respond to my very dear friend from Atwater by saying a few things.

First, on this notion of Mr. BISHOP's very able leadership position on the committee, my friend, who served with great distinction in the California State Legislature, knows very well that the legislative process is an ongoing process, and people work on amendments, people work on legislation in committee. And the fact that Mr. BISHOP may have been working on some of the amendments that he is dealing with right now and did not offer them in the committee should in no way deny him the right to represent his constituents and the American people with one of his brilliant, new, and creative ideas that quite possibly developed from the markup to the Rules Committee and now to the floor.

So, I would argue that it is very important for us to do everything that we can to ensure the most open amendment process, which is what we were promised at the beginning of this Congress.

Second, Madam Speaker, I would say to my friend on this notion of the designation of earmarks, I will say that I am particularly proud of the fact that in the 109th Congress we dealt with stronger enforcement, we dealt with the issue of earmark authorization, tax bills, and appropriations bills. Now, I will recognize that the definition that

exists for earmarks in the 110th Congress is not nearly as strong as the definition that was put into place in the 109th Congress. Why? Because the gentleman is trying to argue right now that there are no earmarks in this bill. Well, I would argue that in the 109th Congress, based on the definition that we passed in this House and was implemented, that this would have been considered an earmark.

□ 1630

Now, I know that there is a lot of vagueness on this, but we do know the following: this is an authorization bill, and there are two private entities that are the beneficiaries of this. The gentleman may be absolutely right. It may be critically important to the New England National Scenic Trail Designation Act to have these items in there. It may be. Far be it from me to say that they shouldn't be there because I don't know at this point. All we're arguing is that we should, in fact, have the opportunity for our colleague, Mr. FLAKE, who spent a great deal of time dealing with the earmark issue, to come forward with his amendment so that we could debate it. That's what we are hoping for.

So I will say, Madam Speaker, that I believe that if we, as an institution, are serious about the issue of earmark reform, reining in wasteful Federal spending, we should, in fact, in a bipartisan way, in a bipartisan way, proceed with this moratorium until such time as the bipartisan committee can come back with a group of recommendations as to how we can again, in a bipartisan way, deal with this issue of earmark reform.

With that, Madam Speaker, I would like to yield such time as he may consume to my very good friend from Utah, my former Rules Committee colleague (Mr. BISHOP).

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity in being here and talking on this particular bill. This is a day when we have dealt with some emergency measures in a very bipartisan way. I don't know if this is classified as an emergency measure, but it can be a bipartisan approach, too, depending on how we go from here on out.

I am grateful to the Rules Committee for taking my six amendments and approving two for the floor. This is a .333 batting average. It's enough to get me in the Hall of Fame. I'm at least above the Mendoza line, and I appreciate your doing that for me.

However, there are some amendments that really are bad amendments aimed at trying to scuttle a bill, aimed at putting shackles on the runner to prohibit him or her from getting to the finish line. The amendments that were proposed by Representative FLAKE and myself are not aimed to do that. They are aimed to take a bill and to improve a bill so they can be approved in a bipartisan way and take a bill and make it even better.

Let me assume that I can just talk for a moment on a couple of amendments that were not made in order. This trail covers the States of Massachusetts and Connecticut, but in reality the trail goes to New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut. Only two of those States are proposed in this particular bill and then a process allowed for New Hampshire to join later on. One of the amendments simply said, why don't you make the same process for all three States? It's not an effort to slow anything down. It's an effort to try to be rational in the approach to take place. I thought it was a significant and simple and straightforward amendment.

One of the things we always talk about is how important it is to have informed citizens and an informed citizenry. We had, for this particular bill, one specific property owner who did not wish her property to be included in the bill. At great expense to her, with a great deal of study and effort coming to Washington to lobby us, she was allowed by the committee to be exempt from this trail boundary line. I appreciate the committee's doing it. It was appropriate to do so. It's very positive on the part of the Natural Resources Committee to do so.

But the question that should be brought to mind is, was she an isolated situation, or was she indicative of a greater problem? Indeed, if you look at the record of the testimony, there are at least 40 other people that have the same question, the same concerns, the same approach. And so what we wanted to do is to make sure in one of our amendments that citizens were allowed to be notified that they would be now included in what before had been a voluntary trail system now into a federally mandated and regulated trail system.

And this is not an onerous task. We were told in committee that both the organizations that are currently managing this, as well as States, had a database of all the property owners in both Massachusetts and Connecticut, and they are already being mailed yearly. What would be the problem in including another paragraph in the yearly mailing saying, this is about to happen to you and if you don't like it, this is the process you can use to exempt yourself, or, even better, if you do want to be part of it, this is the process you could use to include yourself and your property?

Once again, that's not to stop the bill. It's simply a matter of making sure that everyone is clearly informed of what is about to take place, because in the history of trails, in the history of land issues in these United States, that has not always been the case, that every individual is informed of what is happening to him before it takes place.

I don't think, once again, that was an onerous request. It was unfortunate. I think it simply indicates that we should value the individual in our legislation, that we should say if even one

person is going to be adversely affected and does not wish to be adversely affected, his home, his farm, his property should be held inviolate, and we should respect that. And that was the purpose of one amendment that was ruled out of order by the Rules Committee. Once again, I don't think it would have negatively harmed the bill. In fact, I think it would have moved the bill forward in a bipartisan manner.

We will talk a great deal about the concept of takings. No one who has talked about this bill wants takings to take place, wants property taken from an individual. We have heard that before. And yet in the attempt on the committee staff's part to protect individuals, there is a loophole. There is a huge loophole that will result in contradictions coming into the future. Those are some of the things we tried to put in order. And simply if you had taken that loophole out of the system and done what everyone says they want to do, we would have had a bill that all of us on this side of the aisle could have stood up and said, yes, this is a bill that we all had our input on and we are all prepared to move forward on the bill.

It could have moved forward in the same bipartisan manner, hopefully even a bigger bipartisan manner, than the other two emergency pieces of legislation we handled today, as well as the LSU resolution, which we also did in a bipartisan way, except for the people from Ohio.

Let me, at last, very briefly, re-echo what Mr. DREIER said about the Flake amendment, the so-called earmark amendment. By definition this bill does not have earmarks. That's because the committee said it didn't. By definition this bill doesn't have a PAYGO question, because the committee said it didn't. But, indeed, right after we had the State of the Union and the President talked about earmarks and the Speaker talked about earmarks, the minority talked about earmarks, we have the first authorization bill coming before us with two organizations, the Appalachian Mountain Club, the Connecticut Forest and Park Association, specifically mentioned as being eligible for grants given to them by the Federal Government, and then the language goes on and says "or other groups," I think "groups" or "associations." Had you simply taken out the specific names of the two organizations and simply allowed it to be the other groups, any group could apply for these grants and the leadership in this particular one, it would have solved all of the problem. And that's what Mr. FLAKE was trying to say. It wouldn't have prohibited them from being in the management position on this trail, but it would have simply made it a clear and open process without giving an earmark to these two organizations. That's all that needs to be taken.

Once again, these amendments that we presented were not in an effort to kill the bill, to slow it down, to make

sure it does not pass. They were in an effort to try to make sure that we took some of the areas which we think are a little rough, smoothed them over, and gave us some protections for the future that we could feel comfortable, as the Republican side, in joining with our Democratic colleagues to move this bill forward and understand that many of the things we are concerned about, protecting the individual, protecting the process that we go through, to ensure that those things are included in the bill before it leaves this body. It would have been a chance to show real bipartisan support for this concept going forward.

Hopefully, we will still have some debate on the amendments that were made in order, maybe some other issues that we can once again show the ability of this body to come together and make sure that a bill that everyone can support goes forward as opposed to one that seems to be skewed in one direction or the other.

With that, I appreciate the time being yielded to me.

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

I agree totally with one statement that Mr. DREIER, my colleague and friend from California, said, and that is that Mr. BISHOP often comes up with brilliant ideas. Today we are allowing two of those brilliant ideas to be debated on the floor.

With regard to some of the other issues that were raised, I already read into the RECORD the fact that the committee has certified that there are no earmarks in this bill. Mr. BISHOP says, well, there's a potential to have grants later on down the road. My understanding of grants is that they come from the administration, not from Congress. And if we start talking about every grant that is given by the Federal Government or the U.S. Government to the myriad of people who receive them throughout this country, that is a process that Congress has set up for a number of years. That has never before been the definition of an earmark, to my knowledge. So if that's the new definition of earmarks, that's news to me.

But I don't believe, based on the committee's certification, what I have heard, the testimony I have heard, there are any earmarks in this bill. That is what has been reported in the report, and I believe that to be the case.

Secondly, as I have previously stated as well, this bill is a voluntary measure where landowners have the absolute right to opt in or out. And so I can't see where there is coercion. There is agreement among the delegations in the affected regions, our House colleagues.

I believe that this is a good measure and it should go forward, and I would encourage my colleagues to support the rule.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume as we proceed with this debate on this authorization and earmark process.

I will acknowledge that based on this new and, I believe, rather unfortunate definition that is provided for earmarks, you have, in fact, seized a little loophole in trying to determine that these are not earmarks.

And I will tell you, Madam Speaker, what that loophole consists of. Not a specific dollar amount. Now, Madam Speaker, potentially this is even more egregious. Why? Because without a specific dollar amount, we don't know exactly how much is going to be expended. And Mr. BISHOP has just given me a copy of the proposed blueprint budget; and, Madam Speaker, what that consists of is specific designation to these private entities. And in many ways, this is, as I said, more egregious than had a specific amount been put into place, which would have required this to have been considered as an earmark.

Madam Speaker, our quest is simply for more transparency, accountability, and disclosure of our constituents' hard-earned taxpayer dollars; and we believe very strongly that that should, in fact, be the case. Now, everyone says what I just said. Everyone says we want more transparency, accountability, and disclosure. Everyone says that we want to be great stewards of the taxpayer dollars, those dollars of our hardworking constituents. The fact is what we have got here is something that is potentially even worse than under the definition that you all have as an earmark.

So I will say that looking at this proposed blueprint budget makes it even more imperative that we do everything within our power to proceed with making sure that we defeat the previous question and make in order the earmark amendment that we are going to be offering, and I hope very much that my colleagues will join in doing that.

Madam Speaker, I will be asking Members to oppose the previous question, as I have said, so that I can amend the rule to allow for consideration of H. Res. 479, the Boehner earmark enforcement rule changes. And don't fear, the amendment would not prevent the House from considering the New England National Scenic Trail Designation Act. It would merely allow the House to also consider the Boehner earmark reform proposal.

Over the first year of Democratic control, we have learned that the earmark rule does not apply when considering amendments between the Houses as well as a myriad of other legislative scenarios which were not contemplated when the new Democratic majority put through the so-called earmark reform rules. These loopholes, as I was saying earlier, have prevented numerous earmarks from being challenged in the energy bill, the State Children's Health Insurance Program expansion legislation, and the omnibus bill, which, as

we all know, contained nearly 9,000 earmarks, including at least 150 earmarks that were air-dropped in the bill at the last minute.

Now, Madam Speaker, it's not just Republicans as I was saying in my opening remarks who have taken note of these earmark loopholes. Our colleague from Georgia (Mr. MARSHALL) recently introduced a virtually identical rules change geared at closing the air-drop loophole as well as the amendments between the Houses loophole.

□ 1645

Obviously, I believe it's about time for the Democratic majority to start listening not only to concerns that are emerging from those of us who serve in the minority, but from members of their own caucus on this issue as well.

Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the amendment and extraneous material be inserted into the RECORD just prior to the vote on the previous question.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on the previous question so that I can amend the rule in order to restore accountability and enforceability to House earmark rules.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CARDOZA. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his debate today. I disagree vehemently that his rendition of the earmark process is an accurate one. I don't believe that last Congress's rules on earmarks were stricter and more transparent than this Congress's. In fact, I believe that the country knows that the earmark process has gotten more transparent under the Democrats and that we have far fewer earmarks in the current process than we had previously. I think voters spoke about that in the last election.

I would just go on to say, Madam Speaker, that 40 years ago, the National Trails System Act was established to provide a system of trails for outdoor recreation and the enjoyment of scenic, historic, and naturally significant areas. H.R. 1528 adheres to these very long-established values. It ensures that the sweeping, natural landscapes across New England remain protected and untouched so they may be enjoyed by our children and grandchildren for years to come. It deserves strong support by all Members on the floor today, and I urge a "yes" vote on the rule and a "yes" vote on the previous question.

The material previously referred to by Mr. DREIER of California is as follows:

AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 940

OFFERED BY MR. DREIER OF CALIFORNIA

At the end of the resolution, add the following:

SEC. 3. That immediately upon the adoption of this resolution the House shall, without intervention of any point of order, consider the resolution (H. Res. 479) to amend the Rules of the House of Representatives to provide for enforcement of clause 9 of rule XXI of the Rules of the House of Representatives. The resolution shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the resolution and any amendment thereto to final adoption without intervening motion or demand for division of the question except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Rules; (2) the amendment printed in section 4, if offered by Representative Boehner of Ohio or his designee, which shall be in order without intervention of any point of order or demand for division of the question, shall be considered as read and shall be separately debatable for forty minutes equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent; and (3) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 4. The amendment referred to in section 3 is as follows:

Strike all after "That" and insert the following:

(1) Clause 9(a) of rule XXI is amended by striking "or" at the end of subparagraph (3), striking the period at the end of subparagraph (4) and inserting "; or", and adding the following at the end:

"(5) a Senate bill held at the desk, an amendment between the Houses, or an amendment considered as adopted pursuant to an order of the House, unless the Majority Leader or his designee has caused a list of congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, and limited tariff benefits in the bill and amendments (and the name of any Member, Delegate, or Resident Commissioner who submitted the request for each respective item in such list) or a statement that the proposition contains no congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits to be printed in the Congressional Record prior to its consideration."

(2) Clause 9(c) of rule XXI is amended to read as follows:

"(c) As disposition of a point of order under paragraph (a), the Chair shall put the question of consideration with respect to the proposition. The question of consideration shall be debatable for 10 minutes by the Member initiation the point of order and for 10 minutes by an opponent, but shall otherwise be decided without intervening motion except one that the House adjourn."

(The information contained herein was provided by Democratic Minority on multiple occasions throughout the 109th Congress.)

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Democratic majority agenda and a vote to allow the opposition, at least for the moment, to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's *Precedents of the House of Representatives*, (VI, 308-311) describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as "a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge." To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that

"the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition" in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: "The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition."

Because the vote today may look bad for the Democratic majority they will say "the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever." But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the definition of the previous question used in the Floor Procedures Manual published by the Rules Committee in the 109th Congress, (page 56). Here's how the Rules Committee described the rule using information from Congressional Quarterly's "American Congressional Dictionary": "If the previous question is defeated, control of debate shifts to the leading opposition member (usually the minority Floor Manager) who then manages an hour of debate and may offer a germane amendment to the pending business."

Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled "Amending Special Rules" states: "a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate." (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon."

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Democratic majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

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

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.R. 1528.

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

There was no objection.

NEW ENGLAND NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL DESIGNATION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 940 and rule

XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 1528.

□ 1649

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 consideration of the bill (H.R. 1528) to amend the National Trails System Act to designate the New England National Scenic Trail, and for other purposes, with Mr. LYNCH in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) and the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona.

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

H.R. 1528 amends the National Trails System Act to designate most of an existing trail system in Massachusetts and Connecticut as the New England National Scenic Trail. In 2002, Congress directed the National Park Service to study this trail for potential addition to the National Trails System. The draft study, completed in 2006, supports designation of the trail, with some changes to the route to address landowner concerns. The administration has testified that no major changes in the study are expected, and expressed support for the measure in testimony before the Natural Resources Committee.

The trail runs 220 miles through the heart of Connecticut and Massachusetts, past some of the most spectacular vistas and landscapes in New England. The trail offers some of the world's best opportunities to view volcanic and glacial geology, including fossil and dinosaur footprints. The proposed trail also fulfills another requirement of the National Trails System Act by being close to population centers. This trail has over 2 million people that live within 10 miles of the route, and this accessibility makes the trail a wonderful recreational opportunity.

The route of the trail crosses land owned by State and local governments and by private landowners. No Federal land is involved. Local trails associations have obtained permission from landowners allowing existing trails to cross their lands. If a landowner requests that the association close the trail on his or her property, the association honors that request. The NPS study identified no need for direct Federal trail ownership or direct Federal trail management.

If H.R. 1528 is enacted, the role of the National Park Service in implementing the designation would be to provide technical and financial assistance to

the existing trail partners, including State, tribal, regional and local agencies, the Appalachian Mountain Club, and the Connecticut Forest and Park Association. H.R. 1528 is cosponsored by Members representing all the affected districts in Connecticut and Massachusetts, and enjoys energetic support from the affected local communities.

Mr. Chairman, this is a good bill, and I want to commend my colleague from Massachusetts (Mr. OLVER) for his commitment and leadership on this matter. We support the passage of H.R. 1528, and urge its adoption by the House today.

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

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I appreciate the opportunity to be here. I appreciate Mr. GRIJALVA as well for joining me here on this particular bill.

There are three types of trail bills that the National Park Service has: historic, recreational, and scenic. This happens to be the last of those; a scenic trail. We have not done one of those since 1983. It would seem that after 25 years, one of the things we ought to be able to do is at least do it the right way.

In the 107th Congress, a study was mandated on this particular trail and was not to go forward until the study was completed, the environmental review was completed. The study has not yet been completed. It is close to it, but not, which is, once again, one of the reasons we will be talking in a few minutes about an amendment to say this should go into place once regular order has taken place, the study has been completed, and then, appropriate to our rules to move forward at that particular time.

This particular trail has been, since 1931, done on a volunteer, local operation. People there have automatically authorized the use of their land, private property, for trails. It has been that way for over 70 years, has functioned well, and it should be one of those things of which we are extremely proud in this country, that people can actually come together and work together on a local area to do something that is good, without the heavy hand of the Federal Government helping them along the way. We have had 70 years of experience with that.

Now, one of the things I'd like to talk about, because I am an old history teacher, is simply one of the things we need to do as a Congress and as a people is to learn the lessons of history. We obviously know the hackneyed cliché that if we don't learn those lessons, we will repeat them. Or, as P.J. O'Rourke did a much better corollary, he who did not learn the lessons of history probably didn't do well in English or remedial math as well.

This Congress ought to do well in all of those, and one of those is the poten-

tial of those lessons of history. It is from those of us in the West who have had a sad experience dealing with Federal issues on Federal land issues. So our good friends in the East have not had that experience yet.

The State of Massachusetts has a grand total of 1.8 percent of its State owned by the Federal Government. The State of Connecticut has a whopping .4 percent of its State owned by the Federal Government. Very little interface with the Federal Government, which may be one of the reasons why Mr. YOUNG of Alaska or Mr. HELLER of Nevada, who stand up with concerns, should be taken into consideration, because 90 percent of their State is owned by the Federal Government, or Mr. FLAKE of Arizona, with half of his State, over half controlled by the Federal Government, or 70 percent of my State is controlled by the Federal Government. And we have had, by sad experience, seen where well-meaning and well-intentioned efforts on behalf of the Federal Government have led to some negative and unfortunate situations.

I want to tell you one story in an issue that is different than a trail setting. I want to talk about Gene, an old farmer, third-generation farmer, growing sugar beets, which, by definition, is a root crop and cannot grow in wetlands. Gene decided he would rent part of his sugar beet land for alfalfa, and to make sure that the water, which was going from an irrigation pipe from the creek to his land, would get to the high point, he allowed it to pool in the lower point.

One day, one of the Federal regulators, given authority under a very vague Federal law, came there and said that land is obviously a wetland. Actually, what he simply said is that the Great Salt Lake is part of our interstate commerce system, Logan Creek is part of it going into the Great Salt Lake. Therefore, the irrigation pipe is part of the navigable waterways of the United States, and the water is a wetland.

It didn't matter that Gene was able to get the Soil and Conservation Corps in there to prove the land was not conducive to wetlands; didn't matter that once he stopped the irrigation pipe, the water went away. In fact, that same regulator from the Federal Government threatened to throw him in jail if he actually stopped that water from going into the navigable rivers, i.e., irrigation pipes of the United States.

The end result is that this old gentleman, who in his entire experience in working with the Federal Government I never heard him utter one swear word, although I did on many occasions, had his entire heritage regulated and controlled by, not taken, because that means the Federal Government would have had to pay him for it, instead, they regulated and controlled it. They told him what he could or could not do. They took away not only his heritage, but took away his pension.

They also took away his pension and legacy for his children, and, yes, I am mad about that.

When this Congress passed the Clean Water Act, which has to be a wonderful act; no one would be opposed to the Clean Water Act, we did not intend to take Gene and ruin his life. But because the language was vague, we allowed government entities to interpret it their own way, and, in fact, we harmed that old gentleman. It's not what we intended to do. No one wanted to do it, but, nonetheless, that citizen was harmed.

We have already talked in the rule debate over one citizen who wanted out of this trail system, and by the fact she had enough money and time and determination, she was allowed to be exempt from that. Whether that is isolated or indicative of a greater situation is what we must be very careful of; otherwise, our good intentions will actually harm and hurt individuals, which is not what we should be doing.

We did have testimony coming in of other people who were in this same situation in this same area. The government should not be in the business of harming people. We should be in the business of protecting the little guy so that his home, his farm, his legacy is neither harmed by anything that we will do. Too many irregularities with government land have happened in the past to say that we can do anything less than making sure that our language in these types of bills is specific and direct as to what we intend to be the net product. If we say we want to save somebody's property, we don't want to take it, it must be specific and direct and say that; otherwise, like we had with the Clean Water Act, people can interpret it in a different way, and American citizens get harmed.

Mr. Chairman, under the pronouncement, the point that was made by Mr. GRIJALVA at the very beginning of his motion, I would like to submit letters into the RECORD indicative of individuals who have those same problems dealing with the Federal Government. It wasn't intended for them to be harmed, but they have been harmed and they have been harassed in like situations.

□ 1700

We have proposed several amendments which in all sincerity if adopted would make us happy with this bill, and we could support it in every sense of the word.

One of the issues deals with the concept of hunting and gun rights. Long in the 75-year-plus history of this trail, there has been a cooperative effort to make sure that those rights were not infringed and that local ordinance and local concerns would be the dominant factor. We want to make sure that that is very clear in this bill. It is the intent of the sponsor, but we insist that the verbiage has to be specific to make sure that that is never put into any

question or doubt by some future Congress, some future regulator, some future judge.

We will have an amendment also to be presented to do exactly that, to make sure that it is very clear that is our intent, that local law will take precedence.

We have said before that we are concerned about a potential eminent domain loophole within this bill. We are concerned about that, and at some time we will want to address that as we go through with this particular debate.

APRIL 14, 2007.

Re H.R. 1528.

Chairman NICK RAHALL,
Ranking Member DON YOUNG,
House Committee on Natural Resources.

CHAIRMEN RAHALL AND RANKING MEMBER YOUNG: My name is Katherine (Kitty) Breen and I am writing to testify in opposition to H.R. 1528, the New England Trail Bill.

My family owned Saddleback Mountain and Ski Area in Rangeley Maine. The Appalachian Trail traversed over Saddleback Mountain and bisected the mountain's ski terrain. The negotiation between my family and the NPS over what could have been a simple land donation exceeded 20 years and had a serious, long-term detrimental affect on my family, the ski area and the surrounding community. Eventually, after millions of dollars lost, countless hours of time from our highest ranking state and federal public officials, strained professional careers of an entire "at risk" community, and negative health and financial repercussions for my family members, the Saddleback Issue was resolved. For now.

I speak to you as someone who has been NPS classified as a "willing" seller. In reality, we were bullied, pressured, intimidated, threatened, ignored, played with and forced. In the end, we escaped, we are still alive, financially solvent, and able to be grateful to those who helped us. Most land owners who deal with the NPS administrators are not as fortunate. For this reason, I feel a moral responsibility to speak out.

I have previously submitted testimony on July 26, 2005 describing many of the legal details and strategies devised by the NPS to take more land than was legally allowed or intended by Congress. Let me just say here, that during the entire 23-year conflict, which began in 1978 and ended in 2001, my family was acting honorably and in good faith, trying to donate the required land to secure a permanent passageway for the Appalachian Trail. Many offers were put in writing, countless face to face negotiations were held (many which were observed or even facilitated by Senators Snowe and Collins and their staff), thousands of citizens wrote letters and a unanimous resolution passed by the state Senate urged acceptance of our donation offers. And yet, inexplicably, the NPS not only refused to accept or seriously consider our offers but in an increasingly intimidating manner, proceeded to bully and emotionally threaten us for more.

I am opposed to this Bill because in our experience, the authority you think you are granting the NPS, will not be what they will implement. They will find ways to interpret that authority in ways unforeseen by Congress, to achieve goals Congress may even be explicitly forbidding. In our specific case, even when we were able to point out inconsistent and incorrect interpretations of power, even when a sitting U.S. Senator commanded them to behave, it became clear that no one had the oversight or authority to stop them. Based on our experience and those of others with whom we have spoken

along the Trail, they can and will interpret this bill and its authority inappropriately to bully landowners.

I am writing this letter because we are not typical landowners. On reflection, we were fortunate to have a constellation of resources, political capital, expertise, moral determination and luck that others would not be likely to have. My family had another business which financed us. Our long-standing relationship with a community which supported us and wanted us to succeed enabled us to undertake a grass roots campaign involving thousands of supporters. We were lucky that all of the Maine Congressional Delegation were honest, hardworking, reputable public servants who would listen to us, provide neutral environments conducive to resolution, observe injustices, and ultimately take action that achieved resolution. Ultimately, our problem was resolved by Secretary Babbitt himself, who worked with ex-Senator Mitchell and Senators Snowe and Collins and Congressmen Baldacci and Allen. Our case was resolved on the day Clinton left office.

In sum, we had not only luck, but tremendous resources and political pressure on our side. We cannot imagine any other single land owner having the financial resources, determination, intellectual capacity, political capital or emotional/physical health to fight the NPS administrators who use unjust tactics to achieve unintended program goals.

Following are a few examples of what we consider unjust tactics: we experienced repeated attacks on our integrity, often by radio in our home town. My family has a deep and broad commitment to public service, so these attacks hurt. While our long-standing reputation protected us from these attacks, it was nonetheless hurtful and continues to be so. Nothing has been unaffected: my career, my husband's career, my family's reputation.

They also conducted biased "scientific" studies and publicly vilified us regarding financial viability in order to justify our existence. With limited resources, we were placed in a position where we had to defend ourselves and refute their studies instead of being able to spend what time and resources we did have growing the business. We were shut out from public opportunities to set the record straight despite requests from a sitting U.S. Senator to allow us to do so.

The negative campaign conducted trashing Saddleback's business viability continued to have repercussions long after the settlement. When my father retired, it was very hard for us to convince future owners of the mountain's viability. There were stacks of inaccurate NPS studies showing otherwise and we had to disprove everything. Additionally, despite verbal agreements that the NPS would not come back for more land once we had left, the NPS refused to put such a statement in writing.

In our experience, the NPS uses the Appalachian Trail Conference (ATC) to do the work they are legally prevented from doing. The two work in inappropriate partnership in this regard. In all negotiation sessions, the ATC presented scenarios on behalf of the NPS, and were presented to us as representing the NPS. But agreements forged with the ATC were then retracted by the NPS. In this way they were able to squeeze more concessions out of us.

Showing up to negotiation sessions with no decision making authority was another common tactic and any level playing field requirements we requested were turned against us. For example, they refused to negotiate at all if we required transcripts of the negotiations and agreed upon outcomes. And after refusing multiple invitations for negotiation during the nine months of my pregnancy,

they sent a letter to my office a week after my son was born threatening eminent domain if I didn't meet to negotiate immediately. Only a few weeks later a Maine newspaper headline screamed that negotiations were off due to my baby's "colic". You can imagine how a first time mother who had left her chosen career and worked tirelessly in good faith throughout her pregnancy would feel.

Today, six years after resolution, we are still recovering from the personal toll the conflict took on us. I am just now starting to feel like the anger I developed as a result of the Saddleback/NPS experience is starting to leave me, and that I can begin to talk about it without negative repercussions. Even so, I try not to talk about it or think about it and I work to shield my 76 year old father from it. My husband and I are grateful the sense of betrayal and anger has finally left our house.

The general public does not want to believe that NPS administrators are the bullies they have shown themselves to be. But they are and as our elected officials you need to know that. Based on conversations with other land owners, I believe that a majority of land owners who have had to negotiate with the NPS have similarly devastating experiences to share.

It is hard to come forward. We still have land at Saddleback, and fear that they will retaliate. Other people will feel the same way. It is not in my family's best interest to write this letter, I did not want to write this letter, but I feel a moral responsibility to my country to do so.

My family and the Western Region of Maine had the benefit of an amazing constellation of resources and good luck. I can not imagine such luck striking twice or that most land owners would be able to withstand the indecent tactics employed by the current NPS administration. Nor can I envision a way that you can regulate against them once you have empowered them. While I can support the creation of a multistate trail system, I cannot in any way support NPS or ATC involvement in such a cause. Please create the Trails under the State regulators and under the guidance of state citizens with access to State Government. Please join me in opposing NE trail Bill H.R. 1528.

Thank you,

KITTY BREEN,
*Former Executive Vice
President and Chief
Negotiator
for
Saddleback Mountain.*

CHRIST THE REDEEMER
CATHOLIC CHURCH,
Sterling, VA, May 18, 2007.

Hon. DON YOUNG,
Hon. RON BISHOP,
*Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and
Public Lands, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.*

DEAR SIRs: Thank you for the opportunity to express my concerns regarding H.R. 1528, which permits the Secretary of the Interior to administer the New England National Scenic Trail consistent with the plan developed by the National Park Service.

My concerns grow from my experience with the National Park Service's administration of the Appalachian Trail while I was Minister General of the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement when the National Park Service attempted to seize 118 acres of the Friar's property through eminent domain.

BACKGROUND

Graymoor, Garrison, New York has been the headquarters of the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement since 1899. The 420 acres provides housing for friars, a homeless shelter—

St. Christopher's Inn (operating since 1909), worship, a retreat ministry and a variety of other ministries and programs including providing hospitality to Appalachian Trail hikers. In the course of a year several thousand persons come to Graymoor for shelter, spiritual renewal, to enjoy the natural beauty, to worship or for pastoral counseling. On a typical weekend there may be 300 to 400 visitors or several thousand. From the beginning the Friars have always welcomed visitors and those seeking assistance.

FIRST THREAT OF EMINENT DOMAIN

The Friars permitted the Trail to cross the eastern portion of the property at Graymoor in 1923 on a handshake agreement. Beginning in 1980 the National Park Service requested the trail be moved to the western portion of Graymoor, which directly borders the area in which most of the previously mentioned ministries and activities take place. For that reason, the friars resisted and preferred the Trail remain in its original location, The National Park Service threatened eminent domain. In 1984 the Friars reluctantly agreed to grant an easement for 58 acres and the trail was moved from the open and natural eastern side of Graymoor to the more built-up and busy western side.

SECOND THREAT OF EMINENT DOMAIN

During 1980's the Friars began to undertake needed and necessary upgrading and repairs of infrastructure. This was needed to continue St. Christopher's Inn, to accommodate pilgrims and retreatants, and for St. Paul's Friary in which the friars lived. The first project was the installation of a sewage treatment plant and sewer system. Due to the fact that Graymoor is located on a mountain, it was necessary to install a sewage treatment pump. To house that pump, a shed was built, about the size of a shed you would purchase for your lawnmower and garden tools. One corner of that shed (maybe 15 square feet at most) infringed upon the easement.

It was in this time period that the National Park Service informed the friars that it wanted to expand the easement from 58 acres to 118 acres in order to protect the environment on both sides of the Appalachian Trail. The reasoning was its mission had expanded from maintaining the Trail to protecting its immediate environment and to protect any further infringement by the friars as happened with the pump shed.

As Minister General of the Friars I was opposed to this expanded easement because our land on the western portion of Graymoor is the area in which friars live, employees' work, and ministries and programs take place. We considered the land to be holy and to be used for the service of God, the Roman Catholic Church, and the thousands who came for whatever reason. It was my responsibility to make every effort to ensure that we would have the needed resources for future growth and use. To expand the easement could all too easily hamper our ministries or future development. One example is that the proposed new easement would have bordered our sewage treatment plant, thus making any future upgrades almost impossible. As an aside, since that time the new St. Christopher's Inn and the new infirmary for the Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement have been hooked up to the sewage treatment plant—my concerns weren't just theoretical. Part of the area, if confiscated by the National Park Service, was also used for parking. We offered the National Park Service the opportunity to switch back the Trail to the original setting, still undeveloped, so that not only the Trail could be maintained but that there would a natural environment for it. The National Park Service refused this option and threatened to proceed with eminent domain.

It was only with the active intervention of Sen. Charles Schumer and the assistance of Representative Sue Kelly was this issue resolved to the satisfaction of the Friars and the National Park Service.

One of the surprising things I learned during our negotiations with the National Park Service was the fact the agreement for an easement could not contain any provision in which the U.S. government would agree not to further use eminent domain. This certainly leaves open the possibility of more disagreement in the future if the National Park Service expands its mission regarding the Trail or switches its location once again.

Even though H.R. 1528 states, "The United States shall not acquire for the trail any land or interest in land without the consent of the owner", the plan mandated by this bill does permit that. Also, efforts are being made to the states to claim the land by eminent domain before it would come under management of the Secretary of the Interior.

I urge the Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Land not to endorse this bill.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Rev. ARTHUR M. JOHNSON, S.A.

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

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the comments that the gentleman from Utah, the ranking member of the subcommittee, made. There is a point of consistency, too. As we talked about the effects, I thought we were talking about a trail bill, not a farm bill, but the effects of the Federal Government on private land.

I would suggest that part of the consistency would be to quit incentivizing extraction of mining claims and mining rights on private property, that that would be consistent. It would be consistent also to not have eminent domain and condemnation with regard to road construction of Federal roads and energy corridors. I think that kind of points out the fact that we are talking two different things here. We are talking about a trail that has already been through the process and the study and that merits our support today.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY).

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Mr. Chairman, I thank Chairman GRIJALVA, and thank you also to Chairman RAHALL and my good friend Mr. OLVER from Massachusetts for their hard work and diligence in bringing this bill to the House floor. The process by which it comes to us started long before I arrived here.

Mr. Chairman, in this digital age, our computers, our cell phones, our BlackBerrys, our PDAs, they have all collapsed vast distances that for so long have defined our lives. Continents can now be bridged in seconds with just the touch of a button, and the miles of fiber optic cable running beneath our feet and the satellites orbiting miles above our heads have helped make our modern world seem much smaller and much more compact. The idea of sending a physical letter through the mail now seems charmingly outdated in an age where communication is measured at the speed of light.

But in our wholesale embrace of this breathtaking new age of technology, we sometimes have lost sight of the enduring power of the natural world. Back in the outdoors, one is once again reminded of the sheer immensity and the beauty of the world around us. Getting away from our cars, getting away from our desks and laptops, thousands of New England residents every day take to the parks, to the trails, and to our reserves to reconnect with the natural world that thrives quietly all around us.

I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1528, the New England Scenic Trail Designation Act, because it will give thousands of more Americans, many of whom reside in the Fifth District of Connecticut, access to one of the most beautiful natural resources throughout the Northeast.

The Metacomet-Monadnock-Mattabesett Trail, or the MMM Trail, runs some 220 miles from the southern border of New Hampshire all the way down to the Long Island Sound, from Royalston, Massachusetts, to Guilford, Connecticut, cutting across the Farmington Valley towns and the towns of New Britain and Meriden in the Fifth Congressional District of Connecticut.

Now, this isn't some secluded, inaccessible trail. This gem runs right through the heart of some of this district's most populous areas. More than 2 million people live within 10 miles of the MMM Trail, making it uniquely accessible as a recreational opportunity for hikers, for joggers, for picnickers, and for everyone who loves the outdoors.

With this bill's passage, the MMM Trail will become only the ninth scenic trail designated in the 40-year history of the national trail system, joining the likes of the Appalachian Trail and the Continental Divide Trail throughout the country as these national scenic recognized trails.

Until now, the MMM Trail has been maintained through the generosity of private donors, through natural preservation groups and landowners who have allowed people to pass through the trail of their own accord. With Federal recognition, the trail will have access to grants and to resources that will help with its maintenance, with its preservation, and with public awareness.

The hundreds of thousands of Connecticut and Massachusetts residents who have enjoyed the MMM Trail over the past half century will be joined by scores of new visitors coming to enjoy its breathtaking vistas, its distinctive flora and fauna, and its rich history. And those who have enjoyed the MMM Trail in the past will now be assured that the trail will be protected for future generations, while ensuring that the trail is actively maintained and cared for for all.

Perhaps the most important backers of this trail are the thousands of nature lovers who have hiked and enjoyed the MMM Trail for decades. Just today,

Adam Moore, the director of the Connecticut Forest and Park Association, wrote me. He said: "It's thrilling to me to think that this beautiful trail that I once hiked with my father could now become a scenic trail. I recall dangling my legs off the rocks of Mt. Pisgah in Durham while my father pointed out the gold building in Hartford some miles away gleaming in the distance. It is so inspiring to think that this trail in my home community could merit national status and recognition and that people will be able to enjoy it for years to come."

Mr. Chairman, I would like to submit at the conclusion of my remarks several such testimonials for the RECORD.

Mr. Chairman, as chairman of the Congressional Land Conservation Caucus and a representative of the thousands of Connecticut residents who lie along the MMM Trail, who have enjoyed it for years and will enjoy it for years to come, I hope that the House will join me in recognizing and protecting this beloved trail for future generations. I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of H.R. 1528 and join me in the near future for a hike through the beautiful hills of New England.

SIMSBURY LAND TRUST,
Simsbury, CT, January 21, 2008.

Representative CHRISTOPHER MURPHY,
Cannon House Office Building,
Washington, DC

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE MURPHY: We want to thank you for your time and comments January 12 at the Avon Community Center. It is easy to start thinking of our local challenges in a vacuum and it is useful to have an opportunity like your visit provided to sit down with others and to look at the bigger picture. We also appreciate your offer to help should we think your office could be of assistance in working with federal programs. I actually plan to send some ideas and a request this winter.

In the meantime, we wanted to get this thanks to you and also to respond to your comments regarding the New England Scenic Trail Designation Act and recognition of the MMM Trail. We could not agree more with you that this is vitally important. As you know, the MMM Trail runs through Simsbury as well as other Farmington Valley towns. It is the most heavily used trail in this town as well as in neighboring towns. It is easily accessible to the Greater Hartford area, it has spectacular views of both the Farmington River Valley to the west and the Connecticut Valley to the east and it is rugged enough to be both physically and intellectually challenging.

Over many years the State of Connecticut, towns and land trusts along the trail have acquired large sections of the ridge over which the trail runs. However, there are still important sections that all of us continue to work on. We know well from experience along this trail as well as others that trails are under continual pressure as development along the hillsides crowds out this historical use. This trail is a regional and national treasure that gets heavy public use by local residents and visitors alike. National scenic designation will be a valuable tool and will be a great help in assisting regional efforts to maintain this resource for years to come.

Thanks again for your recent visit.

Sincerely,

RICHARD A. DAVIS,
President.

January 28, 2008.

Congressman CHRISTOPHER S. MURPHY,
Cannon House Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN MURPHY: On behalf of the Connecticut Forest & Park Association, I am writing to express our strong support for H.R. 1528, the New England National Scenic Trail Designation Act. This bill would designate the Metacomet and Mattabesett Trails in Connecticut, and the Metacomet-Monadnock Trail in Massachusetts, as the New England National Scenic Trail. We strongly support this legislation as it would greatly enhance the opportunities for the stewardship of these trails while leaving the fundamental, voluntary nature of this trail system intact.

The Connecticut Forest & Park Association established the Metacomet and Mattabesett Trails in Connecticut in 1931, and our volunteers have maintained them as open-to-the-public hiking trails ever since. The Association would still maintain these trails in Connecticut if designation occurs. With funding and assistance that could come from National Scenic Trail designation, we would be better able to work closely with landowners and towns, post signs, construct trailhead kiosks and parking areas and improve the condition of the trail for owners and for the walking public. Furthermore, we believe that National Scenic Trail designation would enhance the prospects for willing seller land conservation along the trails.

I further note that the primary goal of the National Trails System Act states that "trails be established primarily . . . near the urban areas of the nation." With two million people living within ten miles of this trail, the proposed New England National Scenic Trail certainly meets this goal, perhaps better than any other National Scenic Trail.

Thank you very much for your support of the New England National Scenic Trail Designation Act.

Sincerely,

ADAM R. MOORE,
Executive Director.

STATE OF CONNECTICUT,
EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS,
Hartford, CT, January 29, 2008.

Congressman CHRISTOPHER MURPHY,
Cannon House Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN MURPHY: I am writing to express my support for the New England National Scenic Trail Designation Act. Amending the National Trail System Act to designate the Monadnock, Metacomet and Mattabesett (MMM) Trail System as the New England National Scenic Trail, will generate the necessary increased levels of attention and resources to ensure the long-term viability of the MMM Trail System. I believe that this designation is an important step in preserving the unique character and quality of life that we enjoy in our states.

The 825 mile MMM trail system forms a backbone supporting our state's ecological, historic, scenic and economic resources. More than two million people live within ten miles of the trail system. As development continues to change our landscape, unprotected portions of the MMM Trail System continually experience increasing pressures. The Connecticut Forest & Park Association established the Metacomet and Mattabesett Trails in Connecticut in 1931, and through the hard work of volunteers and the good will of private landowners, these trails have remained open to the public but are greatly at risk. The legislation will help to protect this regional treasure for generations to come.

I am confident that the MMM Feasibility Study's goals we identified in collaboration

with the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation can be brought to fruition. Thank you for your continued leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,

M. JODI RELL,
Governor.

DEAR SIR: The Avon Land Trust strongly supports H.R. 1528, the New England Scenic Trail Designation Act, because open space preservation is an increasingly important issue in Connecticut and scenic trail designation conserves open space and promotes the use of that space. Hiking is a low cost, low key recreation that gets the public, especially families, outside to see nature firsthand.

As more land is developed in Connecticut, habitat is reduced but trail systems protect wildlife corridors crucial to many species. This particular trail system is located on ridge line, which helps preserve the appearance of these highly visible geological features in the Farmington Valley.

Regards,

ROBERT BRECKINRIDGE,
President, Avon Land Trust.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the ranking member of the Natural Resources Committee, the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG).

(Mr. YOUNG of Alaska asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, first let me thank the ranking member of the subcommittee for his excellent presentation on this legislation, and, yes, the chairman, too. There is just a matter of a difference of opinion.

Again, the majority on that side is more interested in creating recreation and amusement opportunities than creating jobs and affordable energy. It is ironic to me that one of the States, in fact both of the States, named in this bill, none of their Representatives or their Senators have ever voted for any energy development, not one time. And consequently, they are paying, their constituents, a tremendous price for energy they are consuming.

Just last week, the Boston Globe published a story that said: "Massachusetts manufacturers pay the highest electricity prices in the Continental United States," thus discouraging industry coming into the State. In fact, it is leaving.

A 200-year-old paper mill in Lee, Massachusetts, was shut down because of high energy costs, a loss of 160 jobs. Now, some of these workers may get an opportunity to be retrained to cut brush on the trail we are trying to set aside today. Of course, that pays the minimum wage.

It is ironic to me that this was all caused by a lack of action in this Congress. New England needs energy; and if I can remind this body, and good morning, Mr. and Mrs. America, that is our number one problem in this country today, is energy. That side of the aisle, not only the side of the aisle in the House but also in that other body, now because of you, we are importing—

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman will please direct his remarks to the Chair.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. In what line? What did I say wrong?

The CHAIRMAN. While speaking in the second person. The gentleman pointed to the other side.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. I will point to you next time.

We are importing 12 million barrels a day from our enemies, thanks to you; 12 million barrels a day, at \$100 a barrel. Mr. and Mrs. America, remember, \$1.2 billion a day we are sending overseas because of the majority not supporting energy development. That is \$438 billion a year that we are sending overseas, to not our friends, but to our enemies, the Chavezes, and to the Iraqis, the Kuwaitis, Saudi Arabia, and, yes, a little bit to Russia, because we don't have the courage to develop our oil and our fossil fuels in this country, thanks to the majority.

And we just voted on a stimulus bill today. Big deal. If you are taking that up, \$438 billion a year, we are imposing a \$1,460 tax on every man, woman, and child in America every year because the majority will not support energy legislation. Oh, you are going to support a trail today, taking taxpayer dollars again for recreation, but you will not support energy in this country. And this Congress, especially the majority side, has never, ever supported energy production in this country of any type, nuclear, even wind power, and certainly not fossil fuels.

That is what is wrong with this Nation today. We are bleeding the economy from our bodies to support overseas countries for fossil fuels which we have on our shores, on our shores and off our shores. We are disallowed from developing the Rocky Mountains. We are disallowed from drilling off the coast of California. We are disallowed from even drilling off the coast of Alaska. And, of course, the majority will never support opening ANWR, which has 39 billion barrels available for America.

And for those out there, my colleagues, every time you fill your gas tanks, it doesn't hurt you too bad. But Mr. and Mrs. America as they go to work are being taxed by you. The stimulus package, everybody might get \$1,000. But remember, everybody is going to be taxed this year \$1,460, every man, woman, and child in America, because this Congress on the majority side doesn't have the courage, the courage nor the wisdom, to develop necessary energy in this country which we have.

I ask you, when are you going to wake up? When is this body, and even the Presidential election that is going forth today, I don't hear anybody talking about developing energy sources. I hear about conservation and light bulbs made in China and filled with mercury. Wait until you try to dispose of those, Mr. and Mrs. America, and see what happens. I say shame on us.

This bill today is a trail that people say they need and they want. But I suggest, respectfully, if you don't address the energy bill, you will never be able to have anybody walk on it. You might as well make your highways into trails, because you won't be able to run your trains, your planes, your automobiles, or your ships.

And that is the economy of this country. That is the economy of this country. If you can't move product to and from, if you don't have the energy within your factories to produce those products and hire the people, you don't have an economy. You don't have an America. You don't have freedom. You don't have the Nation of the United States of America.

We were made great because we had a source of energy. We were made great because we had hydro and we had fossil fuels, the coal that drove our steel mills and produced the greatest war machine to stop World War II in history. We used our coal because we needed it. We had it and we did it. Not today. You can't do it.

So, as I say, Mr. Chairman, this Congress has a tremendous responsibility and you are not living up to it. You passed an energy bill that produced nothing but hot air. Nothing. Conservation, yes, we are all for that. But it had no production in that bill of any source of energy. And yet we say we passed an energy bill.

It will come back. It will haunt you. And some day down the line your grandchildren and all those around you and their grandchildren will say, what was Congress thinking about? The greatest Nation in the world, the greatest Nation in the world became a third-class country. The greatest Nation in the world, because we didn't produce our energy. We didn't provide for the future generations.

And for those that don't agree with me, thank God these words are going down. And some day along those lines they will say, you know, the gentleman from Alaska had a point that they should have listened to, but they did not. It is too bad they didn't, because we are where we are today, not the democracy that they were then and not the greatest Nation in the world, in fact a third-class country.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY), a cosponsor of this legislation.

□ 1715

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Chairman, I want to start by first of all thanking Chairman GRIJALVA who during this 110th Congress has shown that he is a true friend of the State of Connecticut with his advocacy on the 8-Mile River bill and now for the MMM Scenic Trail bill.

I also want to recognize Congressman OLVER for his hard work on this issue, and Congressman MURPHY and the other cosponsors of this legislation.

People are extremely excited who live in the area that will be affected by this trail. Again, I think it will be a wonderful step forward for New England. And as CHRIS said, reconnecting with its terrific natural beauty and natural heritage.

Four of the towns which this trail goes through touch Connecticut's Second District. Suffield, Durham, Haddam and Madison, at various points on the map that Congressman MURPHY presented, are part of the national scenic trail.

This is a system, to sort of get back to the bill before us today and maybe away from some of the global issues which were just discussed, it was a system created in 1968. Twenty-three trails have been given designation by Congress during the last 40 years in a very nonintrusive way with no damage done to people's property rights, but in a way that is a partnership relationship between the Federal Government and local landowners and communities.

It is my understanding that the Governor of the State of Connecticut, Governor Rell, a Republican, is supporting a letter in support of the legislation. I think that is indicative of the feeling of the communities that are touched by it, certainly in the State of Connecticut, and particularly by the private, nonprofit Connecticut Forest and Park Association, which Mr. BISHOP gave great praise to, and they deserve it for the work that they have done over the many years.

But I think it is important that when we talk about the work that they did, they are vigorous advocates and supporters of this legislation because they see it as consistent with the mission that they have carried out for 75 years, to keep the trail accessible to families, to individuals from all over the world. They deserve, I think, the biggest credit for their support for this legislation over the last few years.

Finally, I want to say in response to the prior speaker, the Members of the U.S. Senate from the State of Connecticut did support production of new sources of energy in the energy bill which was sent to the Senate. Production tax credits for geothermal wind and solar were paid for by taking away tax breaks for oil companies. Unfortunately, the opposition party in the Senate stripped those critical, important, necessary changes that our country is yearning for. We in the Northeast are as committed as any part of the country in terms of the need to transform our energy system so we will have a thriving economy that will be there for our children and our grandchildren.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Chairman, I would like to talk about one other potential problem with this particular bill. It is not really a problem, but it is a concern that needs to be addressed in some particular way.

We have talked a great deal over the past year about the concept of PAYGO.

This bill does not have a PAYGO concern; the committee said it did not because it does not specifically appropriate money. However, it does authorize the use of money, and in the bottom line from what people would be saying at the kitchen table, it costs money.

This bill will actually cost \$2 million. Not a huge sum, kind of a rounding error in our government, but it is still \$2 million. The money is not having to be offset under PAYGO earmarking accounting rules. However, it is still money that has to be spent, and it has to come from somewhere else.

Where it will come from is the Parks Department budget which will then take it from other projects. It is one of the spinoff effects every time we add a new measure that the Parks Department has to administer, has to pay for and has to run. That is one of the concepts that we have.

I mention that simply because we have crying needs in the Parks Department today. I would like to mention specifically this building. It is not in my district; it is Mr. MATHESON's district in my State. But it is a brilliant building at Dinosaur National Monument. I went there with my kids. I have been there before several times with other kids. It is a wonderful opportunity for people to see bones exposed in the mountainside itself. It is a great learning experience with one problem: it is condemned. And we don't have the money in the parks system to fund it, to fix it.

This is one of those issues here. It is only \$2 million for this trail. It is only a little more administrative responsibility and a little bit more land. But the problem we have is it comes from somewhere. It comes from these types of problems, these types of issues and determinations that need to be made.

Even though it doesn't have to be offset by PAYGO rules, it has to be funded somewhere and that is going to come out from other needs that are in the Park Service that will continue to be minimized as we expand the assets that this government has and we expand the programs that the Parks Department actually has to run.

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

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Chairman, I am delighted to rise in support of H.R. 1528, the New England Scenic Trail Designation Act, which would designate portions of the Metacomet-Monadnock-Mattabesett, or the MMM Trail System, as a national scenic trail.

I commend Representative OLVER for his leadership on this issue, and I thank him for bringing the entire region together to make this happen.

This is a simple commitment to act as responsible stewards of our natural resources. We have an obligation to our communities and to generations that follow to preserve our Nation's scenic

beauty, wildlife, and outdoor recreation.

Now we have the opportunity to make good on that great promise, every step of the way along the 190-mile MMM trail system as it winds through 39 communities in central Connecticut and Massachusetts.

The trail route, which has been in existence for over half a century, hosts numerous scenic features and historic sites. But more than that, this unique trail passes through some of the most densely populated parts of the country, 2 million people live within 10 miles of the trail, and offers users exceptional recreational opportunity near urban areas.

That is why this legislation is so critical. By protecting against increasing pressures from residential subdivision growth, national scenic trail designation will provide an opportunity for long-term viability.

It will offer residents safe, healthy recreation options free of smog, congestion, and stress. In an age when we are constantly trying to combat sprawl in our communities, we need to recognize that these kinds of projects are a real investment in our communities and in community spirit alike. I urge a "yes" vote.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, at this time I would like to yield to the sponsor of this legislation, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. OLVER) such time as he may consume.

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Chairman, I am not quite sure how long my voice will hold out, so I will probably be fairly short.

I just want to commend the chairman of the full committee, Chairman RAHALL, and the chairman of the subcommittee, Chairman GRIJALVA, and thank them for all of their great work in bringing this bill to the floor.

The New England Scenic Trail Designation Act is a product of almost a decade of cooperation between the Massachusetts delegation and the Connecticut delegation, and both delegations have changed over that period of time, the National Park Service, the Appalachian Mountain Club, the Connecticut Forest and Park Association and a lot of local communities and individuals.

The bill designates major portions of an older, voluntary Metacomet-Monadnock-Mattabesett trail system as a national scenic trail. Now, I have hiked every mile of the old voluntary system through Massachusetts; and while some segments are very well protected, other sections have suffered serious encroachment. National scenic trail designation will provide an opportunity for long-term preservation for future generations.

Currently, the MMM trail system is administered by local nonprofit organizations: the Connecticut Forest and Park Association in Connecticut and the Appalachian Mountain Club through its Berkshire Chapter in Mas-

sachusetts. The Connecticut Forest and Park Association in fact is a private nonprofit organization which contracts with the State of Connecticut to run the trail systems in all of their public parks, so it is a very reputable organization which has been there for a long time and has a huge number of volunteers who work on it, and it works closely with the State of Connecticut. I want to recognize and thank the many volunteers and staff of these organizations who have worked diligently to help develop this initiative. Because of their effort, every Member through whose district this trail system passes supports this legislation.

In the case of Massachusetts, the Appalachian Mountain Club has over time been sort of a sponsor for the trail within Massachusetts, the old voluntary trail, not only this trail but other trails within Massachusetts. In Massachusetts, the land passes through at least four substantial State parks or State forests so that much of the land is already publicly owned by the State of Massachusetts, but there are connections between those publicly owned pieces of land and there are visitor centers and park facilities and so on at a rather convenient distance for hiking purposes, for day hikes or overnight camp-type hikes along the way.

Now, I understand that some Members have expressed concerns that this bill will infringe upon landowner rights and allow the National Park Service to seize lands through eminent domain. Well, the Federal Government does not own any land anywhere in the area that the trail is intended to go, following the old voluntary trail, and then some additional territory that has to be worked out by the Connecticut Forest and Parks Association in order to reach the Long Island Sound. There is no expectation of there being any Federal land there. It was never intended there would be federally owned land. Whatever protection of the land would be held by the Park Association or on behalf of the State of Connecticut. And in Massachusetts, the same thing is basically true.

No one wants to establish Federal ownership of a corridor. In recognition of that, in the legislation we added the language: "The United States shall not acquire for the trail any land or interest in land without the consent of the owner."

Yet the argument keeps coming back that that doesn't protect people. Well, maybe the language of the motion to recommit will satisfy that. I think it is completely redundant with what is already there and certainly in total keeping with the intent not to have any Federal ownership of land in that area.

The blueprint for the management of the trail specifically states that all existing landowner uses and rights, including hunting, fishing, timber management and other recreational activities, will continue to be at the discretion of the landowners.

Throughout the process, protection of private property has been of the utmost concern, and I believe we can accommodate the concerns of all landowners and continue to provide a scenic, protected path for public use as the New England National Scenic Trail. There is wide support for this designation. I would submit for the RECORD a March 25, 2007, Boston Globe editorial and a letter of support from the Massachusetts Secretary of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, Ian Bowles.

[From the Boston Globe, March 25, 2007]

FROM MONADNOCK TO THE SOUND

Home to some of the most spectacular sections of the Appalachian Trail, New England could gain a new interstate hiking trail that is closer to the region's population centers. U.S. Representative John Olver of Amherst filed a bill this month to create a New England National Scenic Trail that could one day stretch from Mount Monadnock in New Hampshire to the Long Island Sound at Guilford, CT.

For 190 miles of the 220-mile distance, the trail would roughly follow the route through the Connecticut River Valley of the existing Monadnock, Metacomet, and Mattabesett trail system in Massachusetts and Connecticut. The principal addition would be a 14-mile spur from the southern end of the Mattabesett in Connecticut to the shoreline in Guilford.

The state of New Hampshire chose not to join Connecticut, Massachusetts, and the U.S. Department of the Interior in the feasibility study for the new trail, but Olver's bill would encourage Interior to work with New Hampshire and private and public organizations in that state to include the stretch from Royalton, Mass., to Monadnock's 3,165-foot summit in the national scenic trail. Nationwide, there are already eight such trails, including the Appalachian and the Pacific Crest.

Within 10 miles of the new trail live 2 million people. Many already use—and do maintenance work on—the existing stretches. At a time when young people, in particular, need more recreational opportunities to ward off the health problems of obesity, the national scenic trail designation should increase the path's popularity. It should also help protect it from development pressures. Much of the trail is on state forest or park lands near the river valley's farms, forests, tobacco barns, and towns.

Monadnock itself has 40 miles of maintained foot trails and is considered to be the second-most-frequently hiked summit in the world, after Japan's Mount Fuji. Three of the Massachusetts peaks on the new trail include Mount Grace, Mount Holyoke, and Mount Tom. The new trail includes a wide range of natural habitats and is close to more than 50 registered village historic districts. Hikers could pass over volcanic, sedimentary, and glacial rock and observe fossils and dinosaur footprints.

The goal of planners is that the scenic trail will have a single trail blazing system, but with few through hikers, since overnight camping would be permitted in only a limited number of locations. Of course, decades ago planners of the Appalachian Trail did not envision through hikers for its 2,175-mile length, either. Congress should designate the path as a new national scenic trail and let the walking public decide how best to use it.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS, EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS,

Boston, MA, January 28, 2008.

Hon. RAUL GRIJALVA,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Natural Parks, Forests, and Public Lands, Committee on Natural Resources, Washington, DC.

Hon. ROB BISHOP
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Natural Parks, Forests, and Public Lands, Committee on Natural Resources, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GRIJALVA AND RANKING MEMBER BISHOP: On behalf of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, I write to ask for your support of H.R. 1528, the New England Scenic Trail Designation Act, which would designate the Metacomet Monadnock Mattabesett (MMM) Trail System as a National Scenic Trail.

Under H.R. 1528, the newly established New England National Scenic Trail would extend approximately 220 miles, from northern Massachusetts through Connecticut, incorporating most of the MMM Trail System and hosting an array of classic New England scenic landscapes and historic sites. In Massachusetts, the MMM Trail is one of our most significant and threatened long-distance trails and greenways, linking and connecting vital state parks and other public lands and landscapes."

By designating the MMM Trail System a National Scenic Trail, the National Park Service would provide important leadership and support to the public and private landowners who host the trail and the dedicated volunteers who sustain it. Importantly, the bill represents the culmination of years of outreach and discussion with local landowners and other interested parties, with all owners afforded the opportunity to have the trail rerouted at their request.

In designating the MMM Trail a National Scenic Trail, Congress would be providing a significant boost to local efforts to further the trail's long-term viability, and a great service to the hundreds taking advantage of this wonderful resource. I urge your support for this important effort.

Sincerely,

IAN BOWLES.

□ 1730

It's my hope that H.R. 1528 will establish permanent protection for this unique and majestic land and ensure that future generations will be able to enjoy a great national treasure.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS), one of the cosponsors of the bill. Hopefully by the end of this day we can accept some amendments that would make all of us happy with this particular bill.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Chairman, I rise candidly as the only Republican in all of New England to support H.R. 1528, the New England Scenic Trail Designation Act, and thank Congressman OLVER for bringing this legislation to the floor.

H.R. 1528 would designate portions of the existing Metacomet-Monadnock-Mattabesett Trail System for a national and scenic trail. For over 50 years the States of Massachusetts and my home State of Connecticut have partnered with the Appalachian Mountain Club and the Connecticut Forest and Park Association to manage these

beautiful trails and footpaths. Volunteers and private landowners have enjoyed these lands and maintained them. This legislation would not change that relationship.

This bill also protects private landowners by prohibiting the National Park Service from taking any land by eminent domain. The park service has no authority on local zoning issues that might affect national scenic trails.

H.R. 1528 provides the resources and knowledge of the National Park Service and the National Scenic Trail System for the long-term upkeep of this important trail and extends Federal recognition to trails that have existed for over half a century.

My colleagues in the West often criticize those of us from the East for wanting to increase public lands at the expense of private ownership. This does not do that.

In Connecticut, more than 2 million people live within 10 miles of the trail system. Among the pressures of industrialization that we see in the East, H.R. 1528 is an opportunity to protect this precious resource for future generations and protect it for all of those in this country, not just those nearby.

I ask my colleagues to support protection of this regional treasure, and I urge a "yes" vote on H.R. 1528.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, at this time I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON).

(Mr. LARSON of Connecticut asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Arizona for his leadership, and I rise in strong support of this legislation.

But I especially want to commend Congressman OLVER for his dedication and hard work. I think most people in this Chamber recognize JOHN OLVER as somewhat of an academician and someone who certainly knows the workings of the Appropriations Committee, but few probably know that he's an avid hiker. And next to Henry David Thoreau, from Massachusetts, probably is as close and akin to nature as anyone in the United States Congress. And so this is something that he has worked on a long period of time, at least since I've been in the United States Congress, and I want to commend him for his hard work, and especially commend CHRIS MURPHY from Connecticut as well for his work in this district.

I'm proud to say that this trail runs all the way through from Massachusetts to the Sound, and the Governor of the State of Connecticut has fully endorsed this matter, and it impacts the communities in my district of East Granby, Bloomfield, West Hartford, Southington, Berlin, Middletown. More than 2 million people, as you've heard other members come to the floor and enumerate, are going to be fortunate enough to share the values that we derive from going out and hiking and

being able to be part of this unbelievable MMM Trail that will be provided for our constituents and citizens. So I stand in strong support of this bill and thank Mr. OLVER again, and again, kudos to CHRIS MURPHY for his hard work making sure that this came to the floor.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Chairman, I wish to address one last element of this particular bill. As I've said, it is my hope that with some of the amendments that can be passed or added, some modification, this can be a very, very good bipartisan bill.

There is one concern I have that I want to specifically address, and it's been talked around the edges by everyone, but it is the concept of eminent domain. I have said before, in the original remarks, that oftentimes as a government we do things not intending to actually harm people, but that's the net result. And unless we are crystal clear on the language that what we intend to do is what will happen, that sometimes, down the road, tends to be the net result, and I want to try to avoid this in this particular trail situation.

The National Park Service is unique in that it does have condemnation power. This is an amendment to the National Trails System Act. The condemnation power within that act is not modified in any way. The language is there. It stays. It's not terminated. It's not finished in some particular way.

It is the intent, I assume, and I believe of the sponsor of this legislation, that condemnation would not be used on any of the private lands within this trails system. I think he's very sincere and legitimate in that. That is our effort as well. But the text of the bill, the amendment to the total act, is not crystal clear as to that point.

What they have tried to do in the text of this bill is say that land, if it's going to be taken over by the park service, would have to come from willing sellers. That is an effort to try and stop the Federal Government from using the condemnation power to take over land.

The problem is, though, is the definition of "willing seller" sometimes gets murky as time goes on, and what is specifically not allowed in the bill, or not solved, not clearly stated in the bill is what I call the loophole. It's that even though the Federal Government would have to buy from only willing sellers, State and local governments would not. State and local governments could condemn the property, and then they could become the willing seller. And as the act encourages the National Park Service to accept or acquire property, that is a way around the concept of what we're talking about. And I don't think that's what the sponsor intended. I'm not trying to put words in his mouth. Clearly, by the testimony in front of the committee, I don't think that's what he intended. I don't think that's what the committee intended to see happen. I know that is

what we fear, and I know we do not want that to be the concept taking place. What we need is very succinct and crystal clear language that said that no land will be accepted by the Federal Government if any of it was taken by the concept of eminent domain. So whether the Federal Government tries to use eminent domain or whether the State and local government uses eminent domain and then the State becomes the willing seller to give it to the Federal Government, that will not be a way our citizens will be treated in this trails system. That language is important to me. I think it's important to our side. That is what I talked about in the protection of the little guy who may not even know this is going to be imposed upon him. In this post-Kelo decision world, those kinds of concepts become important. If this issue was to be solved, it would be one of the things that I think would solve any other kind of acrimonious debate that would go forward. A couple of issues. This is one of the key ones. It's one of the important ones. And I bring that up because I know the language was put in there to prohibit the Federal Government from using eminent domain, but there is still a loophole, so the Federal Government could end up with land that had been condemned by the second party, which would be the State and the local governments. We should be very crystal clear that we do not wish to do that.

One of the amendments proposed to the Rules Committee said specifically that no land would be taken that had been acquired through eminent domain. That's one of our concepts. That's one of the principles. That's one, I think, of the elements that I think is significant.

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

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, it's a good piece of legislation, well crafted, well worked. Many of the doomsday scenarios we've heard about condemnation have no relationship to this legislation. I would urge its adoption.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1528, introduced by our friend and colleague, Representative JOHN OLVER.

This is a straightforward bill which would enhance the protection and interpretation of a network of trails that have been in existence for more than 50 years. This trail system is extremely popular and is managed and maintained by an enthusiastic army of volunteers.

The route that would be added to the National Trails System carries hikers through the heart of Massachusetts and Connecticut, past scenic vistas, unique geological formations, dinosaur footprints, and rare plants and animals. The trail provides recreation and relaxation for visitors from near and far, and valued open space for the many communities along the way.

H.R. 1528 has strong, bipartisan support and is important not only to the people of Massachusetts and Connecticut but also to visitors from around the world wishing to experience the beauty of New England on foot.

Given the popularity of the existing trail and the support for a federal designation, it is surprising that anyone would oppose H.R. 1528. In our view, such opposition is based on a misunderstanding of this legislation.

In the first place, the bill is based on a National Park Service study that found no need—let me repeat—no need, for direct Federal trail ownership or direct Federal trail management. The trail will be managed by state and local groups under cooperative agreements with the National Park Service.

Further, the bill itself expressly states, and I quote: "The United States shall not acquire for the trail any land or interest in land without the consent of the owner."

It is perfectly clear that this bill does not threaten property rights. In fact, the trails groups who have managed this trail network for half a century or more have gone out of their way to avoid those conflicts. There is no Federal land involved, and no Federal acquisition anticipated.

I strongly support this bill, and I want to take this opportunity to thank the bill's sponsor, Representative OLVER, for his hard work on the legislation, as well as his nine cosponsors from Connecticut and Massachusetts.

In the end, this is about providing Federal recognition and support to local, non-profit, volunteer organizations who want nothing more than to help people take an enjoyable walk through the woods. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1528.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1528, the New England National Scenic Trail Designation Act. This important legislation would amend the National Trails System Act of 1968 to designate a 220-mile long National Scenic Trail through Massachusetts and Connecticut. Designation as a National Scenic Trail will allow this important regional trail system to be supported, maintained, and protected at the highest possible level.

The bulk of this new trail would be comprised of the existing Metacomet-Monadnock-Mattabesett trail system—a 190-mile trail route through 39 communities in Massachusetts and Connecticut. This important regional recreation system has been in existence for more than fifty years and winds its way from the border of Massachusetts and New Hampshire through western Massachusetts and into Connecticut.

Designating this trail system as a National Scenic Trail will ensure that future generations of New Englanders will be able to fully enjoy the tremendous beauty of these trails and take advantage of their many recreational opportunities. Right now, more than 2 million people live within 10 miles of the Metacomet-Monadnock-Mattabesett trail system. As a result, this designation will not only allow millions of people to have access to the trail system but also ensure that it will be properly preserved from the threats and pressures of development and encroachment.

H.R. 1528 requires that the Secretary of the Interior administer the trail consistent with the recommendations of the National Scenic Trail Feasibility Study and Environmental Assessment that was conducted by the Department of the Interior. The legislation also ensures that no land can be incorporated into the trail system without the consent of the landowner, and I am pleased that the Administration has testified in support of this important legislation.

This National Scenic Trail designation would provide for increased cooperation between communities, citizens and the Department of Interior to conserve these special routes and expand the recreational opportunities of this New England treasure. I urge passage of the bill.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Chairman, as a cosponsor of the New England Scenic Trail Designation Act, I rise in strong support of this very important bill.

Connecticut is proud to be home to part of the Metacomet-Monadnock-Mattabesett Trail System, a beautiful nature trail that runs 190 miles from Massachusetts through Connecticut to the Long Island Sound. First established in 1931, the 700-mile long Blue-Blazed trail network in Connecticut join the Metacomet-Monadnock trail system in Massachusetts, a trail laid in the late 1950s. The trail is a vital part of the natural beauty and recreational activity of the First Congressional District of Connecticut, as well as the other parts of the state and neighboring Massachusetts. This distinctive trail passes through one of the most densely populated parts of the country—2 million people live within 10 miles of the trail.

In 2001, the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection designated the Metacomet Ridge System—part of the trail system—as an official state greenway. The ridge system contains a “spine” of traprock ridges, providing a habitat for various types of plants and animals. These living things that call the ridge home and add to its beauty are not protected from residential development pressures, and while seventeen towns in Connecticut have signed a compact to work towards protecting the ridge system the trail merits Federal protection.

In December of 2002, the President signed the Metacomet-Monadnock-Mattabesett Trail Study Act into law, which directed the National Park Service to study the trail to determine if the Metacomet-Monadnock-Mattabesett Trail should be included in the National Trail System. In April of 2006, the study recommended its inclusion. This legislation before us today urges the implementation of the study’s recommendations, while protecting land owners. The bill protects the trail system against encroachment by residential growth, but prohibits the government from seizing private land through eminent domain.

Mr. Chairman, designation of the New England Scenic Trail would be an important step towards preserving the 190-mile long trail and its natural and recreational value for years to come. I urge my colleagues to join me in ensuring the environmental preservation of the Metacomet-Monadnock-Mattabesett Trail by supporting the underlying bill.

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

The CHAIRMAN. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the amendment in the nature of a substitute printed in the bill shall be considered as an original bill for the purpose of the amendment under the 5-minute rule and shall be considered read.

The text of the committee amendment is as follows:

H.R. 1528

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “New England National Scenic Trail Designation Act”.

SEC. 2. AUTHORIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION.

Section 5(a) of the National Trails System Act (16 U.S.C. 1244(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“() NEW ENGLAND NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL.—The New England National Scenic Trail, a continuous trail extending approximately 220 miles from the border of New Hampshire in the town of Royalston, Massachusetts to Long Island Sound in the town of Guilford, Connecticut, as generally depicted on the map titled ‘New England National Scenic Trail Proposed Route’, numbered T06–80,000, and dated October 2007. The map shall be on file and available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the National Park Service. The Secretary of the Interior, in cooperation with Federal, State, tribal, regional, and local agencies, the Appalachian Mountain Club, the Connecticut Forest and Park Association, and other organizations, shall administer the trail consistent with the recommendations of the draft report titled the ‘Metacomet Monadnock Mattabesett Trail System National Scenic Trail Feasibility Study and Environmental Assessment’, prepared by the National Park Service, and dated Spring 2006. The United States shall not acquire for the trail any land or interest in land without the consent of the owner.”.

SEC. 3. MANAGEMENT.

The Secretary of the Interior (hereafter in this Act referred to as the “Secretary”) shall use the Trail Management Blueprint described in the draft report titled the “Metacomet Monadnock Mattabesett Trail System National Scenic Trail Feasibility Study and Environmental Assessment”, prepared by the National Park Service, and dated Spring 2006, as the framework for management and administration of the New England National Scenic Trail. Additional or more detailed plans for administration, management, protection, access, maintenance, or development of the trail may be developed consistent with the Trail Management Blueprint, and as approved by the Secretary.

SEC. 4. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.

The Secretary is authorized to enter into cooperative agreements with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (and its political subdivisions), the State of Connecticut (and its political subdivisions), the Appalachian Mountain Club, the Connecticut Forest and Park Association, and other regional, local, and private organizations deemed necessary and desirable to accomplish cooperative trail administrative, management, and protection objectives consistent with the Trail Management Blueprint. An agreement under this section may include provisions for limited financial assistance to encourage participation in the planning, acquisition, protection, operation, development, or maintenance of the trail.

SEC. 5. ADDITIONAL TRAIL SEGMENTS.

Pursuant to section 6 of the National Trails System Act, the Secretary is encouraged to work with the State of New Hampshire and appropriate local and private organizations to include that portion of the Metacomet-Monadnock Trail in New Hampshire (which lies between Royalston, Massachusetts and Jaffrey, New Hampshire) as a component of the New England National Scenic Trail. Inclusion of this segment, as well as other potential side or connecting trails, is contingent upon written application to the Secretary by appropriate State and local jurisdictions and a finding by the Secretary that trail management and administration is consistent with the Trail Management Blueprint.

The CHAIRMAN. No amendment to the committee amendment is in order except those printed in House Report 110–519. Each amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the

report; by a Member designated in the report; shall be considered read; shall be debatable for the time specified in the report, equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent of the amendment; shall not be subject to an amendment; and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. BISHOP OF UTAH

The CHAIRMAN. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in House Report 110–519.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 1 offered by Mr. BISHOP of Utah:

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

SEC. 6. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act shall be effective on the date that the Secretary issues a final National Scenic Trail Feasibility Study and Environmental Assessment for the New England National Scenic Trail.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to House Resolution 940, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Chairman, I have every intention of saving the committee some time on this particular amendment. It is, I think, very straightforward.

In the 107th Congress a bill was passed that said there would be a study, a feasibility study based on this project. The gentleman from Massachusetts was the author of that piece of legislation.

Bottom line is the feasibility study has yet to be completed, period. This is simply a concept of regular order. What this says is that this trail will not be slowed down, but it will be enacted once we have gone through the process outlined before, regular order, and the feasibility study is finalized and presented. Then the trail would actually be enacted. It’s an effort to try and maintain the standards and the process that we have established before.

With that, actually, Mr. Chairman, I will yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Arizona is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, this draft report that I’m holding is entitled The National Scenic Trail Feasibility Study and Environmental Assessment.

Like many products of the Federal Government, it’s lengthy and complicated. But let’s be perfectly clear. We’re not waiting for a separate environmental assessment. It’s all done and it’s all in here.

Even though it's labeled a draft report, the National Park Service doesn't do drafts like a high school assignment does drafts. This is a 75-page bound document, eight full color fold-out maps. It draws on more than 90 sources, from books on dinosaur footprints to books on the pioneers who first set foot on those trails, from scholarly histories of the ancient Earth to histories of the small communities along the trail. This study is done.

In reality, the process of changing the study from a draft into a final report is a bureaucratic one; it is not a substantive one, which makes this amendment dilatory, at best, and not a substantive one.

The draft study was completed in August of 2006. It has been under review at the Department of the Interior for 17 months. The National Park Service tells us that it needs approximately one dozen signatures from various Interior officials in order to be considered final. That's all we're waiting for.

In effect, therefore, the amendment could have us abdicate our authority and responsibility to designate trails and pass that authority over to the Secretary, so that whenever he and the various Deputy Assistant Secretaries at Interior get around to signing off on the study, then the trail would be designated. Such an abdication would not lead to a better study; it would just lead to delay.

It might be different, Mr. Chairman, if my good friend from Utah could point out something that is lacking in this study, if he wanted to wait because he felt the analysis of the affected environment on pages 61 and 62 were not entirely complete, or if he was contending that the book *The Indian Tribes of North America* by John R. Swanton and the Smithsonian Institution Press should not have been relied on in this study.

That is not the case, Mr. Chairman. The work of the study is done. The administration came before the National Parks, Forest and Public Lands Subcommittee in May and testified they do not anticipate any substantive changes to this document and that they support the designation.

Congress has, in this study, more than sufficient documentation to establish this trail. There is no reason to delay this designation. Only if you simply oppose the trail, then that would be the reason for delay.

Mr. Chairman, it's not the role of the Secretary of the Interior to designate trail. It's the role of this Congress, and we should get on with it. I urge a "no" vote on this amendment.

□ 1745

Mr. Chairman, I yield back my time. The CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP).

The amendment was rejected.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. BISHOP OF UTAH

The CHAIRMAN. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in House Report 110-519.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 2 offered by Mr. BISHOP of Utah:

Page 3, line 6, insert "(a) IN GENERAL.—" before "The Secretary".

Page 3, after line 17, insert the following:

(b) APPLICATION OF CERTAIN STATE AND LOCAL LAWS.—Notwithstanding subsection (a), all designated and future designated lands within the New England National Scenic Trail, including all Federal lands, shall be exclusively governed by relevant State and local laws regarding hunting, fishing, and the possession or use of a weapon (including concealed weapons), trap, or net.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to House Resolution 940, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Chairman, this particular amendment is one of the key concerns that we do have with this bill, that if it were solved would go a long way to satisfying our concerns with this particular bill.

It is one of the unique concepts that a power has been given to the National Park Service that is not given to the Bureau of Land Management or to the National Forest Service to regulate gun laws and hunting laws within their jurisdiction, even if it violates something that the local government in that jurisdiction would like to imply, something that happens to be different.

This trail, as we said, has been around for over 70 years, very efficiently and very effectively on private and state lands. And the argument that we made is that there is no reason that you should deny Park Service authority to curtail these activities because they're not going to get these activities or they're not going to get control of the land.

The problem is that there is a unique history on this trail of voluntary cooperation. That is not necessarily the same thing that takes place once the Federal Government takes ownership or the Federal Government takes administrative control of this particular trail.

The Park Service does have the authority to change the rules of local government. This is the language that's given in the bill. It is not modified by this particular act. Even though the intent may not be as we have heard to have the Federal Government take over property in this land, it is the intent of the management plan that is there.

If you look at the management plan, it talks about a blueprint for recommendations to utilize restrictive zoning, height restrictions, land acquisition easements, et cetera, et cetera, going through all sorts of other concepts.

This simply means this: this legislation authorizes and encourages the

Federal Government, the Park Service, to gain land in the future in this trail system. Once the Park Service has gained control of that land, then Park Service rules and regulations which limit and restrict hunting rights and gun rights would take precedence over it.

There is also a unique concern that none of us really know the answer to. If the National Park Service is the administrator of these lands, do they actually have the ability of imposing the rules and regulations on these lands, whether they own it or not, which is something that today we may know the answer, but you cannot predict what will happen in the future with some legislator, some judge, some administrator somewhere along the line; and as I said very early in a concept of this particular bill, often times the Federal Government does things, and we don't intend to hurt people but we end up hurting people.

What this amendment clearly says is that along this trail we will protect what has historically been done for the last 70 years. But whether the Federal Government, the Park Service, in particular, has administrative control or whether they access and acquire land in the future, that local ordinances will take precedence, that local ordinance on hunting rights, on gun rights, on fishing rights, will be what will take precedence in this particular situation.

This to us is important. We want it to be crystal clear. But what I think everyone intends in this trail is in reality what happens both now and in the future.

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

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Arizona is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, let me just say that this amendment is completely unnecessary. The trail crosses State land that is State-owned, local, and the property of willing private landowners. That's all. State and local hunting and fishing laws clearly govern all of these lands.

What's more, this amendment refers to "all designated and future designated land within the New England National Scenic Trail, including all Federal lands."

Mr. Chairman, once again, there are no Federal lands involved here.

So in addition to being unnecessary, the amendment is drafted and applies to land that does not exist.

Secondly, we are perplexed as to why we would single out State and local laws on hunting and fishing and the possession or use of a weapon, trap, or net. Why would we state that these laws, which, as I have already said, obviously apply to the lands along the trail, why would we state that these laws apply but not mention other equally applicable State and local laws.

The amendment could legitimately cause someone to wonder, because we mention only these activities, are other State and local laws somehow rendered inactive by this bill?

A Federal trail designation does not preempt State and local laws. But this amendment might make some believe that it does.

This amendment is not intended to solve what I believe is a real problem. It's, rather, an attempt to inject a made-up issue into a simple, straightforward trail designation. In the end, this amendment really only confuses the issue.

Having said that, however, if the language makes Mr. BISHOP comfortable enough to support this legislation, we are willing to consider it. We do not believe that it is needed or really even helpful. It will burden the bill, despite its redundancy, only slightly; and in the spirit of bipartisanship, we accept Mr. BISHOP's language.

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

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

The CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP).

The amendment was agreed to.

The CHAIRMAN. The question is on the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended, was agreed to.

The CHAIRMAN. Under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ) having assumed the chair, Mr. LYNCH, 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. 1528) to amend the National Trails System Act to designate the New England National Scenic Trail, and for other purposes, pursuant to House Resolution 940, he reported the bill back to the House with an amendment 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 to the amendment reported from the Committee of the Whole? If not, the question is on the amendment.

The amendment was 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 MR. BISHOP OF UTAH

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Madam Speaker, I offer a motion to recommit.

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

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Unfortunately, without this, yes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Bishop of Utah moves to recommit the bill H.R. 1528 to the Committee on Natural Resources with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendment:

Page 3, line 4, strike "owner." and insert "owner. The Secretary may not use eminent domain to acquire land for the trail and may not accept any land that was acquired through the use of eminent domain for inclusion in the trail."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Utah is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Madam Speaker, as we said at the very beginning of the discussion of this entire bill, there are some amendments that are made in an effort to slow down a bill or stop it from coming to passage. This is not one of those. That is why you will notice very carefully the verbiage here is "forthwith." We want to try and fix the bill so it can go on with its process, not send it back to committee.

What I have in front of me here is the poster of the language that you find in the Trail Act itself. What we are debating is not the Trail Act. It's simply an amendment to the Trail Act, and in the act itself it says the appropriate Secretary may utilize condemnation to acquire private property without the consent of the owner.

That is the language about which we object. It would be nice if at some time we could actually go in and attack this language and perhaps solve the problem once and for all forever. But as the time is right now, this condemnation power is still in the act. It's still in the bill. It's still in the act. It is still out there as a potential and a possibility. We do not believe that the sponsor ever intended this to be the way of things.

But the bottom line is the National Park Service still has the ability of condemning. The Federal Government still has the ability of condemning. As we said before, the committee, the sponsor, tried to solve that problem by saying land will only be taken from a willing seller. That may deal, hopefully, with the Federal Government aspect, but the Federal Government has to take the land from a willing dealer, but it also leaves a loophole for some other entity to do condemnation powers. The State or local government could still condemn property, and then they would become the willing seller who could offer this land to the Federal Government.

Please remember, the Federal Government is empowered in this act and bill to acquire property. They are encouraged to acquire property coming from a willing seller. I don't have a problem with that, if the willing seller is truly a willing seller.

And so the motion to recommit tries to cover every potential in the future, with once again the concept being that you want to make sure that individuals will always be protected in every cir-

cumstance in the future, many of which we cannot predict. It would be nice if everyone was simply wonderful and courteous, but that's not the way the real world is. We have to make predictions and plans for the future to protect individuals.

This bill says the Federal Government may not acquire land from anything other than a willing seller, but it also says they cannot accept land that has been condemned, regardless of whether it comes from a willing seller. It prohibits State and local governments from doing an end-run from the purpose of this act and protects private property.

We told you before that one person was able to come here and say I don't want my property part of this bill because she had the financial resources and the time to come down here to Washington to lobby. She's exempt. That's right, it's fair. It's the right thing to do. The committee should be commended for that.

The question is, are there others in like circumstances? And in the committee testimony there are. What we just put in by unanimous consent, there are, and that is the concern. Our concern has to be for the little guy whose home, whose property, whose heritage, whose farm may be put in danger by an overzealous local government that uses condemnation power to try and expand the scope of this particular trail.

□ 1800

It is possible. And the language should be crystal clear that that may not be what we do. That may not be our concept.

If only one individual is harmed by this act because we do not close every potential loophole, that is one individual too many. Our goal should be, and must be, to ensure that wherever a possibility of a loophole exists, we will close that loophole, and that we will make sure that every potential to save somebody's property will be there, and that no opportunity to do a laundering of land and make an end run around the purposes and goals of this bill will be there.

The language in the motion to commit is crystal clear, that no land may be taken by any level of government for any reason to be used in this trail. In our post-Kelo world, it is important that we make sure that every word in this bill make sense; it is clear, it is precise, it is our goal, it is our purpose. That's what this does. It solves this problem. And it solves it in a way that makes this a very, very good bill. Without it, it's a huge loophole that could be used to harm people in the future. We can never do that.

Madam Speaker, whatever time I don't have, I yield back.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Arizona is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Speaker, we accepted a motion on hunting and fishing that was consistent with State laws because that seemed to be the most pressing issue in the discussion and debate over this legislation. Now we have a motion to recommit that tries to solve a problem already dealt with which is easily and simply dealt with with the underlying legislation.

The bill specifically prohibits condemnation, so there is no legitimate concern regarding private property rights. There is no legitimate reason to say the same thing over and over again. But now we're in a whole other realm. We're in a conspiracy theory, Federal bogeyman kind of discussion where proponents of the bill say, Well, sure, you have stopped Federal condemnation, but what about our doomsday scenario where the Feds and a State or a locality team up in some secret plan to have the State condemn the land and then give it to the Feds. We better stop that scenario as well.

The point of the matter is that this motion is about usurping local control and, indeed, giving it to the Federal Government. I want to say enough is enough. At what point have we gone far enough to deal with any legitimate problem?

Supporters of this amendment and the motion see condemnation under every rock and around every corner, and there could never be enough language in this bill or any other bill to satisfy them.

Even worse, proponents of this language know full well that neither this motion nor anything else we do here in Congress can stop States from exercising their condemnation authority. Here we have a motion that is both completely unnecessary and completely ineffective. There is no condemnation under this bill. Proponents of this motion need to move on.

I urge defeat of the motion to recommit.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. OLVER).

Mr. OLVER. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I guess I thought that the problem was that the devil was the Federal Government here and that we wanted to make certain that there was no way for them to issue eminent domain, and the language of this bill, in relation to this trail, is quite clear on that point. In fact, it would appear that now we're trying to solve a problem which isn't there, which just is an order of magnitude somewhere farther away in concept, that somehow the local communities or the State is going to issue eminent domain and then pass the land to the Federal Government in some sort of manner. That really surprises me as there is nothing in the intent of this anywhere along the way to do such a thing.

I think we have solved the problem as much as it needs to be solved with the language which is in the bill, that

there can be no Federal acquisition of land here. Nobody wants Federal acquisition of land. There might well be community acquisition of a corridor somewhere along the way over time, but there is to be no Federal ownership of any of that land.

I hope the matter will be opposed and we will not adopt this amendment. This is finding a solution where there is no problem.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Speaker, I urge a "no" vote on the motion to recommit.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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.

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

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

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

Pursuant to clause 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—yeas 183, nays 205, not voting 42, as follows:

[Roll No. 27]

YEAS—183

Aderholt	Crenshaw	Johnson (IL)
Akin	Cubin	Johnson, Sam
Alexander	Culberson	Jones (NC)
Altmire	Davis (KY)	Jordan
Arcuri	Davis, David	King (IA)
Bachmann	Dent	King (NY)
Bachus	Doolittle	Kingston
Barrett (SC)	Drake	Kirk
Barrow	Dreier	Kline (MN)
Bartlett (MD)	Duncan	Knollenberg
Barton (TX)	Ehlers	Kuhl (NY)
Berkley	Emerson	LaHood
Biggert	English (PA)	Lamborn
Bilbray	Ferguson	Lampson
Bilirakis	Flake	Latham
Bishop (UT)	Forbes	Latta
Blackburn	Fossella	Lewis (CA)
Blunt	Fox	Linder
Boehner	Franks (AZ)	LoBiondo
Bonner	Frelinghuysen	Lucas
Bono Mack	Gallegly	Lungren, Daniel
Boozman	Garrett (NJ)	E.
Boustany	Gerlach	Mack
Brady (TX)	Gingrey	Manzullo
Broun (GA)	Gohmert	Marshall
Brown (SC)	Goode	McCarthy (CA)
Brown-Waite,	Goodlatte	McCaul (TX)
Ginny	Granger	McCotter
Buchanan	Graves	McHenry
Burgess	Green, Gene	McHugh
Burton (IN)	Hall (NY)	McIntyre
Buyer	Hall (TX)	McKeon
Camp (MI)	Hayes	McMorris
Campbell (CA)	Heller	Rodgers
Cannon	Hensarling	Mica
Cantor	Herger	Miller (FL)
Capito	Herseth Sandlin	Miller (MI)
Carney	Hobson	Moran (KS)
Castle	Hoekstra	Murphy, Tim
Chabot	Hulshof	Musgrave
Coble	Hunter	Myrick
Cole (OK)	Inglis (SC)	Neugebauer
Conaway	Issa	Nunes

Paul	Rogers (MI)	Sullivan
Pearce	Rohrabacher	Tancredo
Pence	Ros-Lehtinen	Terry
Peterson (PA)	Roskam	Thornberry
Petri	Royce	Tiahrt
Pickering	Ryan (WI)	Turner
Pitts	Sali	Upton
Platts	Schmidt	Walberg
Poe	Sensenbrenner	Walden (OR)
Porter	Sessions	Walsh (NY)
Price (GA)	Shadegg	Wamp
Ramstad	Shays	Weldon (FL)
Regula	Shimkus	Weller
Rehberg	Shuster	Whitfield (KY)
Reichert	Smith (NE)	Wilson (SC)
Renzi	Smith (NJ)	Wittman (VA)
Reynolds	Smith (TX)	Wolf
Rogers (AL)	Souder	Young (AK)
Rogers (KY)	Stearns	Young (FL)

NAYS—205

Abercrombie	Harman	Ortiz
Ackerman	Higgins	Pallone
Allen	Hill	Pascarell
Baca	Hincheey	Pastor
Baird	Hinojosa	Payne
Baldwin	Hirono	Perlmutter
Bean	Hodes	Peterson (MN)
Becerra	Holden	Pomeroy
Berman	Holt	Price (NC)
Bishop (GA)	Honda	Rahall
Bishop (NY)	Hooley	Rangel
Blumenauer	Hoyer	Reyes
Boren	Inslie	Richardson
Boswell	Israel	Rodriguez
Boyd (FL)	Jackson (IL)	Ross
Boyd (KS)	Jackson-Lee	Rothman
Brady (PA)	(TX)	Royal-Ballard
Braley (IA)	Jefferson	Ruppersberger
Brown, Corrine	Johnson (GA)	Rush
Butterfield	Johnson, E. B.	Ryan (OH)
Capps	Kagen	Salazar
Capuano	Kanjorski	Sánchez, Linda
Cardoza	Kaptur	T.
Carnahan	Kennedy	Sanchez, Loretta
Castor	Kildee	Sarbanes
Chandler	Kilpatrick	Schakowsky
Clarke	Kind	Schiff
Clay	Klein (FL)	Schwartz
Cleaver	Kucinich	Scott (GA)
Clyburn	Langevin	Scott (VA)
Cohen	Larsen (WA)	Serrano
Conyers	Larson (CT)	Sestak
Cooper	Lee	Shea-Porter
Costa	Levin	Sherman
Costello	Lewis (GA)	Shuler
Courtney	Loeb sack	Sires
Cramer	Lofgren, Zoe	Skelton
Crowley	Lowey	Smith (WA)
Cuellar	Lynch	Snyder
Cummings	Mahoney (FL)	Solis
Davis (AL)	Maloney (NY)	Space
Davis (CA)	Markey	Spratt
Davis (IL)	Matheson	Stark
Davis, Lincoln	Matsui	Stupak
DeGette	McCarthy (NY)	Sutton
Delahunt	McDermott	Tanner
DeLauro	McGovern	Tauscher
Dicks	McNerney	Taylor
Dingell	McNulty	Thompson (CA)
Doggett	Meek (FL)	Thompson (MS)
Donnelly	Meeks (NY)	Tierney
Edwards	Melancon	Towns
Ellison	Michaud	Tsongas
Ellsworth	Miller (NC)	Udall (NM)
Emanuel	Miller, George	Van Hollen
Engel	Mitchell	Velázquez
Eshoo	Mollohan	Visclosky
Etheridge	Moore (KS)	Walz (MN)
Farr	Moore (WI)	Waters
Fattah	Moran (VA)	Watson
Frank (MA)	Murphy (CT)	Watt
Giffords	Murphy, Patrick	Waxman
Gillibrand	Murtha	Weiner
Gonzalez	Nadler	Welch (VT)
Gordon	Napolitano	Wexler
Green, Al	Neal (MA)	Wilson (OH)
Grijalva	Oberstar	Woolsey
Gutierrez	Obey	Wu
Hare	Olver	Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—42

Andrews	Deal (GA)	Feeney
Baker	DeFazio	Filner
Berry	Diaz-Balart, L.	Fortenberry
Boucher	Diaz-Balart, M.	Gilchrest
Calvert	Doyle	Hastings (FL)
Carter	Everett	Hastings (WA)
Davis, Tom	Fallin	Jones (OH)

Keller
Lantos
LaTourette
Lewis (KY)
Lipinski
Marchant
McCollum (MN)
McCrery

Miller, Gary
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Saxton
Simpson
Slaughter
Tiberi

Udall (CO)
Wasserman
Schultz
Westmoreland
Wilson (NM)
Wynn

Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
King (NY)
Kirk
Klein (FL)
Knollenberg
Kucinich
LaHood
Lampson
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
LoBiondo
Loeb sack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lynch
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
McNulty
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Michaud
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)

Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Murtha
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Pomeroy
Price (NC)
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Reichert
Reyes
Richardson
Rogers (MI)
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Salazar
Sanchez, Linda
T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schmidt
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sessions
Shays

Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shuler
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stupak
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tiahrt
Tierney
Townes
Tsongas
Turner
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walsh (NY)
Walz (MN)
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Weller
Wexler
Whitfield (KY)
Wilson (OH)
Wittman (VA)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Yarmuth

DeFazio
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Doyle
Everett
Fallin
Feeney
Filner
Fortenberry
Gilchrest
Gillibrand
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)

Jones (OH)
Keller
Lantos
LaTourette
Lewis (KY)
Lipinski
Marchant
McCollum (MN)
McCrery
Miller, Gary
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich

Rodriguez
Ros-Lehtinen
Saxton
Sestak
Simpson
Tiberi
Udall (CO)
Wasserman
Schultz
Weldon (FL)
Westmoreland
Wilson (NM)
Wynn

□ 1829

Ms. HOOLEY, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, and Messrs. JACKSON of Illinois, MICHAUD, MAHONEY of Florida, BRALEY of Iowa, KENNEDY, MEEK of Florida, CARDOZA and OBERSTAR changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

Messrs. MILLER of Florida, MORAN of Kansas, ALTMIRE and WALSH of New York changed their vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mr. FILNER. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 27, I was away due to a family emergency. Had I been present, I would have voted “nay.”

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 27, had I been present, I would have voted “nay.”

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

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

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 261, noes 122, not voting 47, as follows:

[Roll No. 28]

AYES—261

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Altmire
Arcuri
Baca
Bachus
Baird
Baldwin
Barrow
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd (FL)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Brown, Corrine
Buchanan
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Carnahan
Carney
Castle
Castor
Chandler
Clarke
Clay

Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis, Lincoln
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Edwards
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Engel
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Farr
Fattah
Ferguson
Frank (MA)
Frelinghuysen

Gallegly
Gerlach
Giffords
Gonzalez
Gordon
Granger
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hare
Harman
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinchev
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hobson
Hodes
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Inglis (SC)
Inslie
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee
(TX)
Jefferson
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Kagen
Kanjorski

Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Bachmann
Barrett (SC)
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Boehner
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boustany
Broun (GA)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite,
Ginny
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cantor
Cannon
Capito
Chabot
Coble
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Crenshaw
Cubin
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Doolittle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Emerson

NOES—122

Flake
Forbes
Fossella
Fox
Franks (AZ)
Garrett (NJ)
Gingrey
Gohmert
Goode
Goodlatte
Graves
Hall (TX)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Hoekstra
Hulshof
Hunter
Issa
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jordan
King (IA)
Kingston
Kline (MN)
Kuhl (NY)
Lamborn
Latta
Lewis (CA)
Linder
Lungren, Daniel
E.
Mack
Manullo
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul (TX)
McCotter
McHenry
McHugh
McKeon

McMorris
Rodgers
Mica
Miller (FL)
Moran (KS)
Musgrave
Myrick
Neugebauer
Nunes
Paul
Pearce
Pence
Petri
Poe
Porter
Price (GA)
Rehberg
Renzi
Reynolds
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Roskam
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Sali
Sensenbrenner
Shadegg
Shimkus
Shuster
Smith (NE)
Souder
Stearns
Sullivan
Tancredo
Thornberry
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Wamp
Wilson (SC)
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—47

Andrews
Baker
Berry

Carter
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)

□ 1837

Mr. RAMSTAD changed his vote from “no” to “aye.”

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. FILNER. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 28, I was away due to a family emergency. Had I been present, I would have voted “aye.”

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Madam Speaker, because I was unavoidably detained, I was unable to cast a vote on rollcall 28. Had I been present, I would have voted “aye” on Final Passage of H.R. 1528.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Madam Speaker, due to events scheduled in my district, I will miss votes on January 29, 2008. Please let the RECORD reflect that had I been present, my vote would have reflected the following:

H.R. 5140 Recovery Rebates and Economic Stimulus for the American People Act of 2008—“yea.”

H.R. 1528 New England National Scenic Trail Designation Act—“aye.”

H.R. 933 Commending the Louisiana State University Tigers Football Team—“yea.”

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

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

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I would yield to my friend from Maryland, the majority leader, for information about the schedule.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

The schedule for the week of February 4 is attenuated, to some degree obviously, by the 22 States that have a primary on February 5. Both Democrats and Republicans obviously will be involved in those to one degree or another. Monday and Tuesday the House is not, therefore, in session.

On Wednesday, the House will meet at 2 p.m. for legislative business. Votes will be postponed until 6:30 p.m. On Thursday and Friday, the House will meet at 10 a.m. We will consider several bills under suspension of the rules. A list of those bills will be announced by the close of business this week. In addition, we will consider H.R. 4137, the College Opportunity and Affordability Act.

That is the schedule. Of course, I will tell my friend that we obviously have a couple of bills that we passed today

that we want to see move as quickly as possible, and if we could move those next week, we would certainly try to do so.

Thank you for yielding.

Mr. BLUNT. I thank the gentleman for that information. I am wondering, if those bills don't materialize, is it still an option for Friday, if those bills don't materialize, since we don't have any scheduled work for Thursday and Friday, are we committed for Friday to be a definite day here? Is that still going to be an option as the week develops?

I will yield.

Mr. HOYER. We only have, as you know, essentially 2 days and the evening of Wednesday, because we come in Wednesday at 6:30. So I am reluctant to give away Friday, given on this side we have worked so hard to get done in a relatively quick fashion, I think quick fashion, not relatively, on our stimulus package. So I do not want to speculate on giving that day away at this point in time, nor do I want to speculate that we will give the day away. If we do not have work to do, obviously we will not require Members to be here.

Mr. BLUNT. I appreciate that, and I also appreciate the work we all did this week on the stimulus package, to see that it is sent over on the timeframe that we have all discussed. As you mentioned in your remarks on the floor today, a timely, a targeted, and a temporary bill has to meet all of those things. Timely and temporary both have to mean that we get this done in a quick way. I am hoping that we can work with our friends on the other side of the building and get that done.

The other thing that we worked together on this week was to get an extension until the middle of February on the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act as it is currently in place, and has been since the first of August. I am hopeful that we don't run up to the deadline again in this 15-day opportunity that we have. I am wondering if the gentleman has any thoughts as to what we might be able to do even next week on that bill.

I would yield.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

He and I share that concern, of course. As I indicated, and he well knows, we passed a bill on November 16 of last year, which means that was 2½ months ago that we passed a bill. We have been waiting for the Senate to pass a bill. They have two bills, as you know: one out of their Intelligence Committee, one out of the Judiciary Committee. They have been unable to reach compromise. Two days ago, they had votes on cloture and did not receive that, either for the extension or for essentially the Intelligence bill.

As a result, we are very frankly in, as you well know as well as anybody, we are waiting on the Senate to pass a bill so that either our bill, we can send that to the President; their bill, send it

to conference, or whatever option. But we need them to take some action. We are hopeful they will take some action soon.

I met, along with other members of the leadership on our side of the aisle, just a short time ago, informed them that we had passed by vote an extension of 15 days, urged them to move as quickly as they could. The leader indicated to me that he was hopeful that they would be able to address that this week. I think he is going to be talking to the Republican leader to see what possibly could get 60 votes to move something to the floor and through consideration. But I am unable to tell you what we are going to do until such time as the Senate acts. As you and I have discussed, you have been there.

Mr. BLUNT. I appreciate that. I do hope we can find a permanent solution here. I think that the 2 weeks is important. I also think it's important that that law not be allowed to expire, which made this 2 weeks a significant development. At the same time, the question of immunity hasn't been addressed, and I don't think we can continue to put that question off.

□ 1845

I did notice last week when we discussed this, an article that I hadn't seen yet, and my good friend the majority leader read from that article to me a section that indicated that the work was in progress could keep on in progress for a long time. That was in the New York Times on January 23.

There was another paragraph that I surmised at the time might be there, but was there, that said "There is risk," according to this assistant Attorney General Mr. Weinstein, Weinstein said, "the officials would not be able to use their broadened authority to identify and focus on new suspects and would have to revert to the more restrictive pre-August standards if they wanted to eavesdrop on someone."

Those pre-August standards were, in my view, troublesome. I hope we don't revert to them, but we can't put the immunity issue off forever, and I am going to do everything I can, as I believe the majority leader is inclined to do as well, to encourage the Senate to move this process along so we can bring it to some conclusion.

I yield.

Mr. HOYER. I thank my friend for yielding, and I do want to comment, because our perspectives are somewhat different on the risks that would be created by failure to act or not have an extension, so we would be operating, as you pointed out, under the old FISA statute.

Very frankly, the good news is that the backlog that confronted the court now no longer exists.

Secondly, as you know, under the old law, the 72-hour period in which the Government could take action and then get sanction of the court after the fact is in the law.

So I believe that second paragraph, while I don't disagree with his speculation, I disagree with his conclusion in the sense that I think that the Government, the NSA or another agency, could in fact act within that 72 hours and get approval from the FISA Court for its actions. And, as the gentleman knows, the FISA Court rarely, if ever, and I don't know of an incident off the top of my head where they have disapproved an action that was taken and stopped it at that point in time.

So, I think the risk is minimal, because I think the old law, while, yes, they have to go to the court, and very frankly, this is why it was created, to be a check and balance on what might be, and I don't allege that this is happening, but certainly it was a check on arbitrary and capricious action by those in the Government. I happen to think that check and balance is an appropriate one; although, under the statute we passed, we gave broader authority, blanket authority, as you know.

But we are hopeful, as you are, that the Senate will act, that we be able to go to conference. We need to deal with the immunity issue, which is the difference between the two Houses, although they haven't passed a bill, but the bill that passed out of the Intelligence Committee did give retroactive immunity. That is controversial.

And we have just got, as I told you, the documentation last Friday that we have been asking for an opportunity to review to determine, A, the justification for the action of the telecom companies and the actions for which immunity is being sought. We think that is appropriate for us to know before we act.

But in any event, I did inform, as I told you, the leader that we had acted, and indicated to him I hope that they would act as soon as possible so that we could resolve this in conference.

Mr. BLUNT. I thank the gentleman for those views. I know that the majority is going to have their planning retreat for the rest of this week. Hopefully our staff is already and will continue to go through these documents that we were concerned we hadn't had, or the majority was concerned we hadn't had earlier, and look at those.

I would suggest that the penetrating analysis in one paragraph probably doesn't totally go away from the individual who was given so much credit in the next paragraph.

The only thing I would say about the FISA Court, I would really say two things. I missed some of this debate today, as you might be able to tell, because of another commitment I had to be off the floor as we were debating this.

The FISA Court, I believe, in 1978 was created for domestic cases. That is maybe an underlying difference here in the way we view this. And the backlog I would submit would develop again pretty quickly. It might not be a problem for 2 days; it might not even be a

problem for a week. But that backlog of every case from all over the world that suddenly wound up going to the FISA Court because of changes in technology quickly gets the FISA Court to where a 72-hour problem is a big problem because they just can't deal with it.

I would yield.

Mr. HOYER. I would agree with that. I think we solved the technological problem in the bill we passed. Very frankly, the only problem that I think the administration would have with our bill which we passed through the House would be the immunity issue.

The technological issue I think is addressed by the blanket approval by the court. Although the court has to approve certain objects and processes, it does not, as you know, need to approve specific instances of intercepts or specific targets of intercept.

So, from that standpoint, I think our bill solved that problem. But our bill has not been enacted so the technological issue of where the communication now goes through a U.S. switch, that is the technological difference now, and then goes back out, that needs to be addressed. It was addressed in our legislation, but the legislation needs to pass.

Mr. BLUNT. Well, I agree, and I intend to work to see that it passes so this works in the best possible way. I hope we take maximum advantage of this 15 or 16 days that we have now given ourselves to look at the information to try to do what we can to see that we come up with a permanent solution that deals with both the technological questions and the question of immunity for people who may have helped the government in a way that they now somehow could be held in legal limbo for until we have addressed this. I hope we do, and I pledge myself to work with you and others to see that we get that done.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

ANNOUNCING THE PASSING OF MARGARET TRUMAN DANIEL

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

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness that I announce to the House that Margaret Truman Daniel, the daughter of our 33rd President, Harry S. Truman, passed away today.

As the daughter of a Jackson County judge, a United States Senator from

Missouri, a Vice President and President, Margaret Truman grew up in politics. She was a good friend, and I know others in this House who knew her considered her a friend as well.

Margaret was an accomplished woman in her own right, but she also revered her father's memory. In this very Chamber in 1984 a Joint Session of Congress was convened to honor the 100th anniversary of President Truman's birth. As chairman of that event, I worked with Margaret closely and was grateful for her participation as a speaker.

I also had the honor of being with Margaret on the first day that the Truman Home in Independence, Missouri, was opened to the public as a museum in the National Park Service system. I will never forget watching her sign the guest book in her own home that day.

Margaret Truman Daniel was a great American and, as an independent-minded woman, was truly her father's daughter.

I know my colleagues join me in expressing this body's deepest condolences to the family of Margaret Truman Daniel, including her three surviving sons, Clifton, Harrison, and Thomas.

PROVIDING RELIEF FOR AMERICANS THROUGH THE ECONOMIC STIMULUS PACKAGE

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today on the floor of the House the Members had to address a number of crises that this Nation is facing. It is interesting that we face delay and, if you will, obstruction on many of the issues that the American people want us to be engaged in.

I am hoping that the economic stimulus package will move as quickly as possible, and when it comes back in its final form from the Senate and conference, that we will be assured that the individuals who are disabled and on Social Security also get a rebate, and that we have the sense of the Congress language that a moratorium should be in place for all of those individuals subject to subprime loans or on the brink of foreclosure and losing their homes. We must forge a pathway for the financial industry to begin to allow people to reconstruct their loans.

Lastly, we voted today to extend FISA. The bill that we passed out of the Judiciary Committee under JOHN CONYERS' leadership is a good bill. I voted reluctantly for the extension, but we must pass a bill that protects civil rights and protects the national security of America.

TRIBUTE TO THE LATE MARGARET TRUMAN DANIEL

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

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I want to rise to follow up on the announcement that my good friend Mr. SKELTON from Missouri just made.

Of course, all Missourians are proud of President Truman and his family. He was a man of great humility. In fact, one day recently in Washington I happened to be driving by, on Connecticut Avenue, the small apartment that he and Margaret and Mrs. Truman lived in when he was Vice President and for I think the first 3 days of his Presidency. Not the grandeur that anybody would expect, but something that the Trumans, a family who actually never lived in a house that they owned for most of Margaret Truman's life, appreciated.

I was just sharing with Mr. SKELTON the memory of Margaret Truman when we recommissioned the Battleship *Missouri* when it went back into active duty in 1985 or 1986, and I had the honor at the recommissioning dinner in San Francisco to introduce Margaret Truman, who had been the principal sponsor of the ship the first time when her father was in the Senate.

By that point in the evening, about every speaker had pronounced the name of our State differently. Some said "Missouri," some said "Missoura," and I made a couple of comments about that. And Margaret Truman got up and she said, "It is 'Missoura.' My father always said 'Missoura.' My family always said 'Missoura.' I was there when this ship was commissioned. We commissioned it the 'Battleship Missoura,' and that should settle it."

But she was a lady that led an interesting life, the truly adored daughter of her father, and she saw politics the way that very few people do. I appreciate her life and her family.

HONORING SENATOR GWENDOLYN BRITT

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

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, the civil rights movement was full of heroes whose names we know and many whose names we will never know despite the depth of their sacrifice.

Just recently, this Nation remembered Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., whose good works are known to our Nation and to the world.

Today I am honored to remember and celebrate the life of another extraordinary civil rights leader who helped stand up against injustice in our Nation.

State Senator Gwendolyn Britt passed away recently, but she left behind an extraordinary legacy. She first stood up against racial segregation not in Montgomery, Alabama, but in Montgomery County, Maryland, at Glen Echo Park, just a 20-minute drive from this Capitol.

It was a hot summer evening in June 1960. Glen Echo Park was segregated at

the time, and Gwendolyn Britt, an African American, purchased a ticket to ride on the carousel. She was arrested that day, and her case went to the Supreme Court of this country. It was the first of many brave acts in standing up against injustice by Gwendolyn Britt, a person who changed our community and changed our country.

The civil rights movement was full of heroes, some whose names we all know, and many whose names we never learned despite the depth of their sacrifice.

Just recently we remembered Dr. Martin Luther King, whose name and accomplishments have become well known as part of our country's history. And we know the story of Mrs. Rosa Parks, who showed courage when others were silent.

Today, I am honored to remember and celebrate the life of another extraordinary civil rights leader, a woman who, like Dr. King and Mrs. Parks, never sought credit for her actions, but only sought to do what was right.

She was only 18 years old when the world first met Gwendolyn Greene. It was a hot summer evening in June 1960 when Gwendolyn Greene, a student at Howard University entered Glen Echo Park. At that time, blacks were not allowed to enter that amusement park. This park, incidentally, is within 20 minutes of the floor on which I am speaking, just outside the District of Columbia in Montgomery County, Maryland.

Ms. Greene joined a small group of young people at the gates of this popular local park, determined to introduce freedom and equality through desegregation to Montgomery County, Maryland.

Gwen Greene chose to stand up. Despite the fear these young people felt, despite all of the turmoil they knew would arise from their illegal action, they entered Glen Echo Park. Gwen bought a ticket for the merry-go-round, and bravely and boldly sat upon a spotted horse, refusing to move until arrested.

At that very moment, this young woman chose to effect change. She didn't take the easy way out; she didn't stick with what was comfortable and safe. Not even after a trip to jail and the United States Supreme Court—not even after again being arrested, this time in Jackson, Mississippi, and spending 40 days in jail for refusing to leave a “whites-only” waiting room at a train station—would she be dissuaded from taking her fight for equal rights around the Nation as a Freedom Rider.

Gwen Greene later married, became Gwen Britt, and the mother of two sons. She worked for the telephone company for many years. But the effect of her action at Glen Echo and as a Freedom Rider was not lost on her. As she said many years later, “I became determined to do what I could to make a person's life better.”

And, throughout her life, that's what she tried to do, eventually culminating in her election to the Maryland State Senate in 2002. There, she quickly became a leader on issues that matter, such as education, health care, and civil rights. As one of the State senators in my congressional district, I was pleased to work in partnership with her on issues and projects that benefited our constituents and our State. At every meeting, I was inspired by the courtesy with which she treated everyone and the collaborative spirit she brought to every issue.

Gwen Britt never shied away from standing up for those who could not stand up for themselves. She went about her life's work with quiet dignity and humility, accomplishing so much for so many. Many who have benefited from Senator Britt's work never knew of her courageous stands on behalf of justice and equality. Many never knew that this brave woman, this woman who rarely sought the limelight, made such a profound difference in so many lives.

Senator Gwen Britt was dedicated to doing what was right. She serves as an inspiration to us all to fight for what is right regardless of the consequences.

Webster's defines “courage” as mental or moral strength to venture, persevere, and withstand danger, fear, or difficulty. In Gwen Britt, this word is personified.

My heartfelt condolences go to Travis Britt, Gwen Britt's devoted husband and partner, and to their two sons, Travis, Jr. and John. Our country thanks you for sharing your wife and mother with us so that she could make a difference in our lives.

□ 1900

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

ECONOMIC STIMULUS PACKAGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, our economy is at a crossroads. Low- and middle-income families are struggling to make ends meet. Rising food, energy, and housing prices combined with slow job creation and lower wages are straining our economy. The Federal Reserve continues to act, but it is clear that Congress must enact a temporary, targeted, and timely economic stimulus package. The American economy needs a quick stimulus, and low- and middle-income Americans need swift action as our economy works through these difficult times.

I rise to commend the bipartisan leadership of Speaker PELOSI and Leader BOEHNER who, along with President Bush, crafted an economic stimulus package that will not only provide the assistance our economy needs, but also will provide a helping hand to the American families currently struggling with the slowing economy.

It is refreshing to see Republicans and Democrats come together and put partisanship aside and develop this critical legislation together. The American people should be proud of this effort, and I am pleased to have supported this important first step earlier today.

Mr. Speaker, while important, the stimulus package this House voted on today is simply a first step in the road

toward stimulating our economy. Speaker PELOSI deserves incredible credit for negotiating the inclusion of a refundable tax rebate that will be delivered to anyone earning \$3,000 or more and the inclusion of a \$300 per-child rebate. Again, this is a good start.

Yet there are millions of Americans who will not benefit from this current stimulus package because they do not file income taxes. Any American who has exhausted or will exhaust their unemployment will not receive the help they need. States struggling with higher health care costs will be forced to balance their budgets on the backs of low-income individuals because there is no Medicaid assistance included in this package. And most importantly, a temporary extension of the food stamp program is sorely missing from this economic stimulus package.

Experts across the political and ideological spectrum agree that we must develop a plan that helps the most vulnerable people and households and that allows currency to flow. Former Reagan economic adviser, Martin Feldstein; former Clinton Treasury Secretary, Lawrence Summers; the Congressional Budget Office; economists at Goldman Sachs; and the chief economist at Moodys.com all agree that food stamps give the biggest bang for the buck and should be part of an economic stimulus.

According to the Congressional Budget Office: “The vast majority of food stamp benefits are spent extremely rapidly. And because food stamp recipients have low income and few assets, most of any additional benefits would probably be spent quickly.”

Administrative costs of such an increase are negligible, meaning that the majority of this stimulus will go directly into the economy. A 10 percent temporary increase in food stamps would result in an increase of almost 50 cents per day per person or \$14 per month in the food stamp benefit. That may not seem like much, but an extra 50 cents a day can make the world of difference for someone struggling to feed themselves.

More importantly, a temporary increase in food stamp benefits would generate \$1.73 in economic activity for every dollar in cost, and we know that a temporary increase in food stamps can be delivered quickly and will be spent right away.

Mr. Speaker, this bipartisan economic stimulus package is not perfect. But as I said earlier, it is a good first step. The Senate has a chance to make some improvements in this bill, most notably targeted and temporary increases in food stamps and unemployment insurance. I, for one, hope the United States Senate acts responsibly by including these important programs in their version of the stimulus package.

It is critical that this stimulus package move quickly, but it is just as critical that it include stimulus that jump-

starts the economy and gives assistance to those who truly need it.

And if the Senate includes funding for these critical programs, I strongly urge all my colleagues to support it, and I urge President Bush to then sign it into law. It is the right thing to do for our economy, and it is the right thing to do for the millions of low-income Americans who will not benefit from this stimulus package as it is currently written.

SUNSET MEMORIAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FRANKS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, because the end of the hour grows close, I would now come before this body with a sunset memorial. We intend to repeat this from time to time to chronicle the loss of life by abortion on demand in this country.

Mr. Speaker, it is January 29, 2008, in the land of the free and the home of the brave, and before the sun sets today in America, almost 4,000 more defenseless unborn children were killed by abortion on demand just today.

Exactly 35 years today, the tragic judicial fiat called *Roe v. Wade* was handed down. Since then, the very foundation of this Nation has been stained by the blood of almost 50 million children. Mr. Speaker, that is more than 16,000 times the number of innocent lives lost on September 11.

Each of the 4,000 children that we lost today had at least four things in common. They were each just little babies who had done nothing wrong to anyone. And each one of them died a nameless and lonely death. And each of their mothers, whether she realizes it immediately or not, will never be the same. And all the gifts that these children might have brought to humanity are now lost forever.

Mr. Speaker, those noble heroes lying in frozen silence out in Arlington National Cemetery did not die so America could shred her own Constitution, as well as her own children, by the millions. It seems that we are never quite so eloquent as when we decry the genocidal crimes of past generations, those who allowed their courts to strip the black man and the Jew of their constitutional personhood, and then proceeded to murderously desecrate millions of these, God's own children.

Yet even in the full glare of such tragedy, this generation clings to blindness and invincible ignorance while history repeats itself and our own genocide mercilessly annihilates the most helpless of all victims to date, those yet unborn.

Perhaps it is important for those of us in this Chamber to remind ourselves again of why we are really all here.

Thomas Jefferson said, "The care of human life and its happiness and not its destruction is the chief and only object of good government."

Mr. Speaker, protecting the lives of our innocent citizens and their constitutional rights is why we are all here. It is our sworn oath. The phrase in the 14th amendment capsulizes our entire Constitution. It says: "No state shall deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law."

The bedrock foundation of this Republic is the Declaration, not the casual notion, but the Declaration of the self-evident truth that all human beings are created equal and endowed by their creator with the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Every conflict and battle our Nation has ever faced can be traced to our commitment to this core self-evident truth. It has made us the beacon of hope for the entire world. It is who we are.

And yet today, Mr. Speaker, in this body we fail to honor that commitment. We fail our sworn oath and our God-given responsibility as we broke faith with nearly 4,000 innocent American babies who died without the protection we should have been given them.

And so for them in this moment, Mr. Speaker, without yielding my time, I would invite anyone inclined to join me for a moment of silence on their behalf.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that this discussion tonight presents this Congress and the American people with two destiny questions.

The first that all of us must ask ourselves is very simple: Does abortion really kill a baby? If the answer to that question is "yes," there is a second destiny question that inevitably follows. And it is this, Mr. Speaker: Will we allow ourselves to be dragged by those who have lost their way into a darkness where the light of human compassion has gone out and the predatory survival of the fittest prevails over humanity? Or will America embrace her destiny to lead the world to cherish and honor the God-given miracle of each human life?

Mr. Speaker, it has been said that every baby comes with a message, that God has not yet despaired of mankind. And I mourn that those 4,000 messages sent to us today will never be heard. Mr. Speaker, I also have not yet despaired. Because tonight maybe someone new, maybe even someone in this Congress, who heard this sunset memorial will finally realize that abortion really does kill a baby, that it hurts mothers more than anyone else, and that nearly 50 million dead children in America is enough. And that America is great enough to find a better way than abortion on demand.

So tonight, Mr. Speaker, may we each remind ourselves that our own days in this sunshine of life are numbered and that all too soon each of us will walk from these Chambers for the very last time.

And if it should be that this Congress is allowed to convene on another day yet to come, may that be the day that we hear the cries of the unborn at last. May that be the day we find the humanity, the courage, and the will to embrace together our human and our constitutional duty to protect the least of these, our tiny American brothers and sisters, from this murderous scourge upon our Nation called abortion on demand.

This is a sunset memorial, Mr. Speaker. It is January 29, 2008, in the land of free and the home of the brave.

ALL IS NOT QUIET ON THE SOUTHERN FRONT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, Iran, Somalia, Syria, Colombia, Afghanistan, and Iraq

have something in common. These are six nations, among several others, where the State Department recommends that Americans don't travel.

But today there was another advisory issued, but this one was not by the State Department but by the State of Texas through the Texas Department of Public Safety.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to read just a portion of this into the RECORD. Here is what it says. Texas Department of Public Safety dated today: "Due to the increased rising level of violence in Mexico—which is attributed to drug cartels, violent criminal organizations, and increased presence of military personnel in some Mexican border communities—it is recommended that persons be discouraged from traveling to Mexican border towns, particularly those that have recently been scenes of gang-related violent activity. These communities include Nuevo Laredo, Matamoros, Reynosa, Rio Bravo, Miguel Aleman, and Ciudad Juarez."

Mr. Speaker, you see, the Texas Department of Public Safety has issued an advisory for Americans: don't go to these border towns because of the violence. And the reason the violence has increased specifically has to do with what happened in Rio Bravo which is across the Rio Grande River from Texas. The Rio Bravo mayor last month was gunned down while leaving a restaurant, along with two other politicians. The Mexican Government sent in troops to help quell the violence. But 5 days ago, local police in several Mexican border towns, specifically Nuevo Laredo, Matamoros, and Reynosa, were relieved of their duties by the federal Government because of their alleged links to drug cartels, specifically the gulf drug cartel.

What that means, Mr. Speaker, now on the Mexican border, bordering Texas, there are 6,000 Mexican troops stationed there. They are stationed from Matamoros to Miguel Aleman. Now, Matamoros is the border town across from Brownsville, Texas. Brownsville is on the furthest eastern tip of Texas. Brownsville is a big community, and across the river is Matamoros. And Miguel Aleman is 100 miles upriver across the river from Roma, Texas. There is violence in these border towns.

Many people don't understand what a border town is. A border town is a town on the American border and has another town very similar to it on the Mexican border. And both of these towns, being border towns, border each other separated only by the border between Mexico and the United States.

The State Department has already issued a travel alert for Mexico because of the violence that occurs there. But now the State of Texas finds a need to warn all citizens, especially law enforcement officials, of the problems.

Mr. Speaker, the open-border crowd denies this violence occurs on our southern front. I have been down to the Texas-Mexico border now 13 times, and I have talked to the local people who

live there, and I have also talked to the chamber of commerce types who say, Oh, there is no problem here in our border towns. There is no violence or drugs. We don't have a problem with infiltration from drug cartels and criminals coming into our cities. Of course they say those things, in my opinion, because they want that open border for that travel back and forth between Mexico and the United States because of money, because of commerce, because of that greed that so many people have; and they deny the fact that the border needs to be secure.

We live in denial sometimes that there is a border war that is existing. It is a violent border war. It is a border war between drug cartels and criminals, and many of those people don't just stay on the Mexican side.

When Sheriff Rick Flores was here in Congress and testified before Congress, he is the sheriff in Webb County, Texas, he said we are naive to believe that the border problem only will be on the Mexican side. He is the sheriff in Laredo. Across the river is Nuevo Laredo. That is basically a ghost town now controlled by the drug cartels; and those criminals, they will come to the American side as well.

Sigi Gonzales, the sheriff in Zapata County, he told me that the drug cartels and the criminals, they have better equipment, they have more equipment, they have better money, and they have more people involved in doing what they want to do than we have in protecting the dignity of the United States.

And to illustrate how violent it is on the border, Mr. Speaker, I want to read you one more portion of this report: There currently exists a U.S. Department of State travel alert for Mexico. Fort Bliss officials announced Saturday that travel to Juarez has been declared off limits for U.S. military.

In other words, Fort Bliss, the United States Army, they can go to Iraq, they can go to Afghanistan, but they can't go to Juarez right across the river because it is too dangerous.

Mr. Speaker, there is a border war taking place on the southern border. All is not quiet on the southern border, and we need to understand that this is a tremendous problem and our government needs to get into action and protect Americans from this invasion.

And that's just the way it is.

BORDER TRAVEL ADVISORY

SUMMARY

Due to the rising level of violence in Mexico—which is attributed to drug cartels, violent criminal organizations, and increased presence of military personnel in some Mexican border communities—it is recommended that persons be discouraged from traveling to Mexican border towns, particularly those that have recently been scenes of gang-related violent activity. These communities include Nuevo Laredo, Matamoros, Reynosa, Rio Bravo, Miguel Aleman, and Ciudad Juárez. The increased levels of violence in recent weeks and potential for additional violence suggest that an advisory against traveling to these communities is warranted.

DETAILS

On November 30, 2007, gunmen opened fire on the former mayor of Rio Bravo—who was a two-term representative and one-time senator—and his entourage as they left a restaurant in Rio Bravo. The former mayor was killed along with two other politicians and two federal agents. The Los Zetas, an organized cell of the Gulf Cartel, had previously threatened the former mayor's life and attempted a prior assassination, prompting the government to assign bodyguards. In response to the assassination, the Mexican government immediately mobilized approximately 500 soldiers, federal police, and support personnel in order to conduct counterdrug operations in the state of Tamaulipas. The focus of the operation was on the cities of Matamoros, Rio Bravo, and Miguel Aleman, just south of Roma, Texas, and Reynosa, Mexico.

On Monday, January 7, 2008, members of the Mexico Federal Preventive Police (PFP) were patrolling Colonia Cuauhtémoc in Rio Bravo when they observed a 2005 Chevrolet Suburban occupied by heavily armed men. The officers attempted a traffic stop that resulted in shots being fired at the officers from the Suburban. A gun battle ensued, and additional officers and a contingent of the Mexican army responded. Three gunmen were killed and ten others were arrested, including three U.S. citizens, one of whom was from Texas.

On January 23, 2008, local police in the border cities of Nuevo Laredo, Matamoros, and Reynosa, Mexico, were relieved of their duties as army troops disarmed the officers and searched for evidence that might show links to drug traffickers. Eleven men were arrested by federal police in Nuevo Laredo, including four police officers, who were said to be operatives for the Gulf Cartel.

President Calderon has sent approximately 6,000 military troops and federal police to areas that extend from Matamoros—which is across the border from Brownsville, Texas—westward to Miguel Aleman, which is across the border from Roma, Texas. Mexican military and federal police personnel have also been sent to the city of Juárez. A similar operation was conducted last year in Tijuana when violence erupted there, with more than 3,500 soldiers and federal officers sent to the city.

Over the past weekend, a total of five people were either shot or beaten to death in separate incidents in Juárez. This comes on the heels of approximately 30 persons in Juárez being murdered since the beginning of the year, including 17 law enforcement personnel, as well as the recent attempted assassination of a Chihuahua State Police Commander Fernando Lozano Sandoval. Commander Sandoval is currently hospitalized in El Paso's Thomason Hospital under tight security. An alleged "hit list" of Mexican law enforcement was also discovered near Chihuahua state offices over the weekend.

There currently exists a U.S. Department of State travel alert for Mexico with a date to expire of April 15, 2008. Fort Bliss officials also announced Saturday that travel to Juárez has been declared off-limits for U.S. military personnel.

In addition to the travel advisory, law enforcement officials should be aware of the possibility that violent criminals and cartel members may seek to enter Texas in an attempt to escape Mexican military and law enforcement operations. As some persons seek refuge in Texas, their enemies may plan to conduct raids or hits on them here. The most significant violent criminals in the region are members of the Gulf Cartel or their violent enforcers, Los Zetas.

ANALYST'S COMMENTS

With the increased military and police presence in Mexican border towns, and the recent violence associated with shootouts between Mexican military and drug cartels, it is advised that Texas residents avoid traveling to Mexican border communities, particularly those that have recently been scenes of violent gang-related activity. In addition, there exists a possibility that Los Zetas and Cartel members may cross the border into Texas. Tactical operations, such as increased police patrols, should be initiated in high-profile and high-visibility areas—such as points of entry and between points of entry—to discourage cross-border incursions. If any contact is made with suspected Los Zetas or cartel members, an INT-7 form should be completed and forwarded to the Texas Intelligence Center.

Law enforcement officials are encouraged to remain vigilant and report any suspicious incidents to the Texas Intelligence Center.

WHERE'S W?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, last night this House was host to the President for his final State of the Union address. Like all past Presidential speeches in this Chamber, it was historic. But this time it may have been historic because of what it did not achieve and what it left unfinished.

Forget all of the unfulfilled commitments on education, health care, environmental conservation, employment, energy efficiency, worker protections and immigration. Let's just look at the record on foreign policy. The state of that union? Dismal.

Upon taking office in 2001, this administration promised a new kind of international engagement, one based on partnerships and regional alliances.

We didn't exactly get what we bargained for, unfortunately. And the recent administration tour through the Middle East just about summed it up.

Remember those children's books, "Where's Waldo?" We had a case of "Where's W?" Let's start our tour in Israel and the Palestinian-controlled lands.

After nearly two terms of ignoring the real crisis in the region, the administration tried to make a last-ditch effort at a peace agreement: first by hosting a summit, one that wasn't expected to achieve anything, and then by a visit to the region. No ideals were outlined, no real road map was sketched out. To be generous, it was a half-hearted effort. It greatly saddens me, Mr. Speaker, that such an important opportunity was squandered. The Israeli and Palestinian people deserve more. They deserve a chance to at least hope for peace.

Next stop on the Where's W? trip, Kuwait and Bahrain. In Bahrain, the political opposition faces arrest, torturers are granted immunity, and a woman must go before family, not civil courts, family to fight back against violence and abuse.

In Kuwait, the world saw how Kuwaiti justice is carried out when al-Azmi was hanged inside the Interior Ministry complex in Kuwait City on December 21.

Next stop, the United Arab Emirates. This is the land where noncitizens are a subclass of people. They have very few rights. They face huge obstacles and discrimination.

Oh, and another thing, women can't pass on citizenship to their children unless their husband is a citizen. What does that mean? It often means insurmountable barriers to education and employment.

Now we are on the home stretch. Where in the world is W?

□ 1915

Saudi Arabia. The country with the choke hold on international energy markets, the homeland of the majority of the 9/11 terrorists, the land where women cannot legally drive a car yet. Sure, there is a proposal on the table to give women this right, but I wouldn't hold my breath.

How did the United States President clearly demand the rights of all Saudi people? By walking hand in hand with members of the Saudi royal family. That sounds like a strange negotiating tactic to me.

And the final stop on this regional tour, Egypt. Let's just look at what Amnesty International has to say about Egypt. We have longstanding concerns on systematic torture, deaths of prisoners in custody, unfair trials, arrests of prisoners of conscience for their political and religious beliefs or for their sexual orientation, wide use of administrative detention and long-term detention without trial, and use of the death penalty.

This, Mr. Speaker, was a tour of wasted opportunity and flagrant disregard for the most basic human rights.

So what will the President's legacy be in the Middle East? What is the state of that union? Not good. Not good at all.

We have a seemingly endless occupation of Iraq destabilizing the region. Osama bin Laden is still missing. We have the rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan.

Opportunity after opportunity for regional stability has been squandered and our standing in the region is embarrassingly low. But know this: This Congress will continue to demand an end to the occupation of Iraq and a return to sensible and sustainable policies in the Middle East. We will not stand by while the clock runs out on this administration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. ROHRBACHER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

CONGRATULATING THE RICHLAND SPRINGS COYOTES SIX-MAN FOOTBALL TEAM ON THEIR STATE AND NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the students and families of the Richland Springs Coyote football team for winning the 2007 Texas Division I Six-Man Football Championship and the Six-Man Illustrated National Championship poll.

Six-man football has been a part of Texas history for almost 70 years, and today there are over 160 public and private schools fielding teams. For many small towns in Texas' 11th Congressional District, six-man football is simply a way of life. It is no different in Richland Springs, where the Coyotes carry on the best traditions of Texas football every fall weekend.

Before a crowd of 5,000 cheering fans in San Angelo's Bobcat Stadium, the Coyotes played the Rule Bobcats in a rematch of last year's championship. It was an exciting game that was close through the first three quarters, but in the end the Coyotes simply outran the Bobcats and won the game 98-54. Throughout their 2007 campaign, the Coyotes went a perfect 14-0 and outscored their opponents 1,015-225.

This victory secured the Coyotes their third State championship in 4 years and cemented their reputation as the Nation's best six-man football team. With this national championship, they become only one of two teams to have earned three national championships. During this run, the Coyotes have gone an unbelievable 56-1.

As I look ahead to next summer, the Coyotes will lose five seniors. I wish the 29 returning students the best of luck in continuing the outstanding success that the Richland Springs six-man football team has achieved.

I'd like to commend Coach Burkhart, Coach Ethridge, Coach Dodson and Coach Rogers for their hard work in preparing, training, and coaching their teams to the championship.

Finally, I'd like to extend my personal congratulations to Mark Williams, Haustin Burkhart, Stephen Fowler, Neil McMillan, Shelby Smith, Joe Tomlinson, Nigel Bates, Mitchell Jacobson, Andrew Fowler, Tyler Etheridge, Riche Daniels, Brennen McGinty, Elbert Thomas, Khalid Khatib, Patrick Couch, Randy Couch, Daniel Barrett, Tommy Hollon, Abraham Ahumada, Branch Vancourt, Stephen Thornhill, Franky Soto, C.J. Finke, Dean King, David Greenwood, and Ryan Soto for winning both of their 2007 championships. These young men have proven themselves to be good sportsmen, able competitors and fine athletes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. CUMMINGS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

SOVEREIGN WEALTH FUNDS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, the recent shocks to the global economy and U.S. financial institutions have revealed a major new source of investment in the U.S. economy called Sovereign Wealth Funds. These funds are the surplus savings of our trading competitors from foreign countries and have been key in bailing out major U.S. corporations like CitiGroup, Merrill Lynch, Blackstone, and so many others that have made terrible decisions and played with the people's money to abandon. Three billion dollars was invested by the Chinese, for example, just in the Blackstone Group.

Put into perspective, the Chinese Government, and I underline "government," is projected to have more than \$3 trillion by 2010 that can be used to buy our stocks, bonds, real estate, and entire corporations. They're just getting started. Put into context, the Government of China will soon have enough investment monies to buy 51 percent; that is absolute control of more than 40 percent of all the U.S.-based corporations whose stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange. Think about that. The Government of China literally could buy half of all the stock listed on the New York Stock Exchange. And that's only China.

Many people in this Nation and in this Congress would strongly oppose having the United States Government buy control of two out of every five companies listed there. It would be called socialism. But how will we react if the Chinese Government buys those same companies, which is, my friends, underway?

Already we see China, Kuwait, Norway, and other nations buying major stakes in our banks and in investment houses, institutions that exert enormous political and economic influence in our Nation and world. Can we trust that those investments are purely for economic returns?

Secretary of the Treasury Paulson has repeatedly stated that this administration has no interest in knowing the details of such investments by sovereign wealth funds. The present panic in our banks and financial institutions to secure capital to offset their mortgage and credit card debacles may induce the heads of those corporations to take bailouts on virtually any terms. But we must be wiser. A head-in-the-sand ostrich policy by the United States Government is simply not acceptable. Indeed, it is reckless, and it threatens national security.

At a minimum, Congress and the American people need to know the details of those transactions. Thus, foreign governments investing in U.S. companies through these funds should be required to make public their activities here, just as we require of public companies in the United States. Sunshine, as always, is good public policy. And if disclosure turns away investment, then the obvious question is what was the real goal of those funds.

Simultaneously, Congress needs to seriously consider whether limits should be placed on foreign investments in critical U.S. industries. Germany, Japan, Korea, and China all do. They understand that foreign economic control brings with it foreign political involvement in internal affairs.

In sum, sovereign wealth funds are a large and growing influence in the global economy and inside the United States. They have the potential to buy absolute control of a significant portion of the United States' economy, and that is under way. For the present, we need full disclosure about their U.S. holdings and intentions.

Simultaneously, we need to quickly and seriously think about what limits and controls the American people, through their government, should place on such investments.

Strangely, last week, President Bush signed an executive order transferring his power to the Treasury Department to authorize or reject such foreign takeovers of American companies. But officials from the Department of Defense, Department of Justice, and Department of Homeland Security objected to the order over the past few months saying it served business interests over national security interests. It allows Wall Street to gain an edge at the expense of national security. This Congress should not allow that. Economic and national security should go hand in hand. We cannot allow lax regulation of foreign involvement in our economy, and we cannot allow our indebtedness to foreign interests to continue to mount.

I would like to place two articles in the RECORD tonight, one from the Washington Times on January 24, entitled, "Treasury Gets New CFIUS Authority."

This is the entity at Treasury that reviews these deals. And it talks about how CFIUS is reviewing a proposed merger between the telecommunications equipment manufacturer 3Com and China's Huawei Technology Corporation, a company linked in the past to illegal international activities including violations of U.N. sanctions on Iraq and industrial espionage against the United States and Japanese firms. The Boston-based Bain Capital Partners would undermine U.S. national security, and this is one of the groups that's handling this.

Interestingly, Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson recused himself from this particular review because his former company, Goldman Sachs, is a paid advisor to 3Com.

And also I wish to place in the RECORD and will end, Mr. Speaker, with a January 25 Wall Street Journal article, "Lobbyists Smoothed the Way for a Spate of Foreign Deals," which goes into heavy analysis of the \$37 billion of stakes in Wall Street financial institutions, the bedrock of our financial system, by selling these growing sovereign wealth funds.

[From the Washington Times, Jan. 24, 2008]

TREASURY GETS NEW CFIUS AUTHORITY

(By Bill Gertz)

President Bush yesterday signed a new executive order on foreign investment that gives the Treasury secretary, instead of the president, key power to authorize or reject purchases of U.S. companies by foreign buyers.

The president said the order bolsters recently passed legislation by ensuring the Treasury-led Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS) "will review carefully the national security concerns, if any, raised by certain foreign investments into the United States."

At the same time, Mr. Bush said, the order recognizes "that our openness is vital to our prosperity and security."

Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff said his agency is "happy with the final order."

"I think it creates a process that will achieve the dual objectives of promoting investment but making sure we don't compromise our national security," Mr. Chertoff said from Switzerland.

The legislation and order are a result of a bid in 2006 by United Arabs Emirates-based Dubai Ports World to take over operation of six U.S. ports.

CFIUS approved the purchase but it later was canceled under pressure from Congress over concerns that terrorists might infiltrate U.S. ports through the company. Critics questioned the deal because two of the September 11, 2001, hijackers were UAE nationals, and the Persian Gulf state was used as a financial base for al Qaeda.

Rep. Carolyn B. Maloney, New York Democrat and a key sponsor of the CFIUS-reform law, called the new order a positive step.

"I remain confident that the Treasury Department intends to follow the law as I wrote it, and have received assurances that the department is already adhering to the new reforms," she said.

The order outlines more clearly the role of the director of national intelligence (DNI) in providing CFIUS with threat assessments posed by a foreign purchase and adds a requirement for the DNI to assess "potential consequences" of a foreign deal involving a U.S. company.

However, a comparison of the new order with a draft order from October—which was opposed by U.S. national security officials—shows that CFIUS will continue to be dominated by pro-business elements of the government.

As late as last month, national security officials from the Homeland Security, Justice and Defense departments expressed concern the order was being co-opted by pro-business officials at Treasury, Commerce and other trade agencies.

A memorandum from the three national security agencies obtained by The Washington Times called for tightening the draft order's national security provisions to "accurately reflect pro-security interests."

The final order released by the White House yesterday removed a provision that would have required the committee to "monitor the effects of foreign investment in the United States."

One new authority in the order is a provision strengthening so-called "mitigation agreements" between companies. The agreements are designed to reduce the national security risks as a condition for committee or presidential approval.

The order states that companies involved in a U.S.-foreign transaction "in extraordinary circumstances" can be required to state they will comply with a mitigation agreement.

CFIUS currently is reviewing a proposed merger between the telecommunications equipment manufacturer 3Com and China's Huawei Technology, a company linked in the past to illegal international activities, including violations of U.N. sanctions on Iraq and industrial espionage against U.S. and Japanese firms.

U.S. officials said a review by the DNI's office determined the Huawei purchase, through the Boston-based Bain Capital Partners, would undermine U.S. national security.

3Com manufacturers computer intrusion-detection equipment used by the Pentagon, whose networks are a frequent target of Chinese military computer attacks.

Treasury Secretary Henry M. Paulson Jr. recused himself from CFIUS' 3Com-Huawei review because his former company, Goldman Sachs, is a paid advisor to 3Com.

[From the Wall Street Journal, Jan. 25, 2008]

LOBBYISTS SMOOTHED THE WAY FOR A SPATE OF FOREIGN DEALS

(By Bob Davis and Dennis K. Berman)

WASHINGTON.—Two years ago, the U.S. Congress pressured the Arab emirate of Dubai to back out of a deal to manage U.S. ports. Today, governments in the Persian Gulf, China and Singapore have snapped up \$37 billion of stakes in Wall Street, the bedrock of the U.S. financial system. Lawmakers and the White House are welcoming the cash, and there is hardly a peep from the public.

This is no accident. The warm reception reflects millions of dollars in shrewd lobbying by both overseas governments and their Wall Street targets—aided by Washington veterans from both parties, including big-time Republican fund-raiser and lobbyist Wayne Berman. Also easing the way: The investments have been carefully designed to avoid triggering close U.S. government oversight.

Clearly, U.S. financial firms that have been deeply weakened by the credit crisis, including Citigroup Inc. and Merrill Lynch & Co., need the cash. Meanwhile, investment pools funded by foreign governments, called sovereign-wealth funds, have trillions to invest. Some American politicians, though suspicious of foreign governments, deem it suicidal to oppose aid to battered financial companies.

"What would the average American say if Citigroup is faced with the choice of 10,000 layoffs or more foreign investments?" asks New York Democratic Sen. Charles Schumer, who played a central role in killing the Dubai port deal but has applauded recent foreign investment.

But by making investment by foreign governments seem routine, Washington may be ushering in a fundamental change to the U.S. economy without assessing the longer-term implications. Some economists warn that the stakes could provide autocratic governments an important say in how U.S. companies do business, or give them access to sensitive information or technology. Those familiar with the deals' governmental review processes say military officials worry that a foreign government, especially China, may be able to coax an executive into turning over secrets.

Former U.S. Treasury Secretary Lawrence Summers counsels caution. "There should be a very strong presumption in favor of allowing willing buyers to take noncontrolling stakes in companies," Mr. Summers says. "However, it's imaginable that government-related entities [investing in the U.S.] will be motivated to strengthen their national economies, make political points, reward or punish competitors or suppliers, or extract know-how."

Sovereign-wealth funds, meanwhile, continue to seek opportunities. Thursday at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, Qatar's prime minister said the oil-rich sheikdom's investment arm wants to invest \$15 billion in European and U.S. banks. "We're looking at buying stakes in 10 or 12 blue-chip banks," Sheikh Hamad bin Jasssem Al Thani told Zawayya Dow Jones. "But we will start small."

In nearly every case, American financial companies are escaping detailed U.S. government review by limiting the size of stakes they sell to government investment funds. The multiagency Committee on Foreign Investment in the U.S., led by the U.S. Treasury, can recommend that the president block foreign acquisitions on national-security grounds. Congress also can block deals by pressuring companies or by passing legislation.

Under CFIUS rules, a passive stake—one in which investors don't seek to influence a company's behavior—is presumed not to pose national-security problems. Neither is a small voting stake, usually of less than 10%. During the recent string of deals, financial companies whose investments have met those requirements have notified CFIUS and haven't had to go through 30-day initial reviews.

A backlash could still develop if the funds throw their weight around in U.S. companies. The government reserves the right to examine an investment even after the deal closes.

When the U.S. economy was riding high in 2004, sovereign money was sometimes shunned. Dubai's Istithmar investment fund was viewed warily in New York when it went hunting for real estate. In part, that is because sellers worried that Istithmar's government ownership would lend the company sovereign immunity, insulating it from lawsuits if it reneged on a contract. (As a commercial arm of the government, it wouldn't have been immune.)

Now Wall Street is thirsting for new capital, preferably in huge amounts and deliverable at a moment's notice. Sovereign-wealth funds look like an oasis. These government-funded pools have about \$2.8 trillion in assets, which Morgan Stanley estimates could grow to \$12 trillion by 2015 as Middle Eastern funds bulk up on oil receipts and Asian ones expand from trade surpluses.

"You can't have a \$9 trillion debt and huge trade deficit and not expect at some point you'll have to square accounts," says David Rubenstein, CEO of Washington-based private-equity firm Carlyle Group. Foreign savings have to go somewhere, he says: "Better that it come to the U.S. than anywhere else." (An Abu Dhabi fund, Mubadala Development Corp., has a 7.5% stake in Carlyle.)

As the U.S. financial crisis deepened over the summer, sovereign-wealth funds became a favorite of capital-short Wall Street firms. That is because state funds presumably have an incentive to be passive investors, to avoid raising objections to their stakes. Domestic investors, on the other hand, might demand a bigger say or board seats for a similar-size stake. As it sought its most recent cash infusion of \$6.6 billion, Merrill Lynch turned away possible investments from U.S. hedge funds in favor of investments from govern-

ment funds from South Korea and Kuwait, say people involved with negotiations.

A senior official at China Investment Corp., which has about \$200 billion in assets including a \$3 billion stake in private-equity firm Blackstone Group LP, says it doesn't want to play an active role in corporate governance. "We don't even want to take the kind of stand of someone like Calpers," which is the California state pension fund, the official said. "We don't have enough people, and we can't send directors out to watch companies."

Behind Washington's acceptance of large-scale foreign investments lies a well-funded lobbying campaign, spurred when Congress objected to government-owned Dubai Ports World's investment in a U.S. port operator. The United Arab Emirates—a federation of seven ministates including Dubai and Abu Dhabi—was seared by the accusation that an Arab government-owned company couldn't be trusted to protect U.S. ports against terrorists. Last year, the U.A.E. launched a three-year, \$15 million Washington lobbying campaign, the U.S.-Emirates Alliance, to burnish its reputation.

The alliance, headed by former Hillary Clinton campaign aide Richard Mintz, recruited about two dozen businesses to form a support group. It contributed \$140,000 to a prominent Washington think tank, the Center for Strategic and International Studies, to start a "Gulf Roundtable" discussion series. It also forged alliances with prominent Jewish groups by persuading the U.A.E. to clear the way for U.S. travelers whose passports had Israeli visas; such travelers sometimes had been turned away by U.A.E. customs agents, Jewish groups said.

Such openness has its limits, though. In June 2007, the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority, the world's largest sovereign-wealth fund, with an estimated \$875 billion in assets, hired public-relations firm Burson-Marsteller for \$800,000 for an initial eight-month contract to improve communications. But it still has no press department or press kits. It forbids its Washington representative, James Lake, to talk to the media.

Even as the Dubai port controversy spurred sovereign investors to engage in a charm offensive, it led lawmakers to re-examine laws governing the Committee on Foreign Investment in the U.S. Some proposed to vastly expand the definition of investments that could pose a threat to national security. Both foreign firms and U.S. banks lobbied fiercely in response, pressing to keep the reviews narrow enough to encourage foreign investment.

Their lobbying largely succeeded. The Financial Services Forum, which represents the 20 largest U.S. financial firms, focused on Sen. Schumer, a frequent Wall Street ally. In one April 2006 session, a dozen CEOs, including then-Goldman Sachs CEO Henry Paulson, who is now U.S. Treasury Secretary, told the senator about the importance of open investment. A participant says Sen. Schumer described the Dubai port controversy as an "anomaly." Since then, executives from top financial firms have consulted with Sen. Schumer when foreign firms seek to buy stakes and regularly win his endorsement.

Sen. Schumer says the executives assure him that foreign investors will have "not just virtually no control, but virtually no influence."

Compared with the ports industry, the financial sector speaks with an outside megaphone in Congress. In the 2006 election cycle, commercial banks and securities firms, and their employees, contributed \$96.3 million to congressional campaigns—32 times as much as the sea-transport industry, which includes ports, according to the nonpartisan Center

for Responsive Politics. Banks and securities firms are also the largest industry contributors to members of the Senate Banking Committee and House Financial Services Committee, which can review investments in Wall Street firms. Sen. Schumer is a member of the Senate Banking Committee.

Wall Street and the U.A.E. thought they had turned the corner by spring 2007 when another Dubai-owned company, Dubai Aerospace Enterprise Ltd., bought two firms that owned small U.S. airports and maintenance facilities that serviced some navy transport-plane engines. The Dubai firm pledged to submit to government security reviews and submit its employees for security screening. It also thoroughly briefed lawmakers on the deal. It ran into no obstacles on Capitol Hill.

"I call the strategy, 'wearing your underwear on the outside,'" says one of Dubai Aerospace's Washington lobbyists, Joel Johnson, a former Clinton White House communications adviser. "We have to show everybody everything—no secrets, no surprises."

The deal that provided a blueprint for the current wave of foreign investments was China's \$3 billion stake in Blackstone Group's initial public offering, announced last May. In helping to gain congressional approval for the deal, lobbyist Mr. Berman emerged as a key strategist.

Mr. Berman, a Commerce Department official in the administration of George H.W. Bush, has been one of the Republican Party's most adept fund-raisers, bringing in more than \$100,000 for President George W. Bush in 2000 and more than \$300,000 in 2004. Mr. Berman cultivates a range of contacts with salon-style dinners at his home with his wife, Lea, who was Laura Bush's social secretary. He is now a fund-raiser for Sen. John McCain's presidential bid.

Blackstone asked Mr. Berman, a longtime lobbyist for companies in the financial industry, to help smooth the way in Congress for China to buy a piece of the private-equity firm. A minority stake made sense to both sides: Blackstone wanted to boost its presence in China. China, which was in the process of setting up China Investment Corp., wanted to show it could become a trusted investor in top U.S. firms.

Mr. Berman pointed out that offering a board seat, or a stake of more than 10%, would invite government review. Ultimately, the two sides agreed on a stake of as much as 9.9% and passive investment. "Our intention was not to arouse too much sensation in any way," says the senior China Investment Corp. executive.

Mr. Berman says the goal wasn't to get around the rules but to work within them. "Policy considerations didn't drive the specifics of the deal," says Mr. Berman. "Policy considerations informed the deal."

Blackstone executives briefed several dozen lawmakers, with the firm's chief executive, Stephen Schwarzman, sitting in on some sessions. Stiff opposition came from Sen. James Webb, a first-term Virginia Democrat. Sen. Webb wrote a novel published in 1991, "Something to Die For," in which Japan uses its financial muscle to gain influence in Washington. The senator worries Beijing could do the same.

Mr. Webb wanted the China investment deal delayed so regulators could examine whether Blackstone's stake in a semiconductor company posed national-security problems. One of Mr. Berman's partners pointed out that the firm produced off-the-shelf chips. Sen. Webb withdrew his objections to the deal, though he remains skeptical of sovereign investors.

Mr. Berman's firm, Ogilvy Government Relations, a unit of WPP Group PLC, billed Blackstone \$3.9 million in 2007 for the work on the investment, tax and other issues.

Other deals followed, similarly structured to avoid raising congressional uproar. Two other Berman clients, Carlyle Group and Citigroup, negotiated investments with sovereign-wealth funds—both marked by passive stakes and no board seats—and faced no resistance. Mr. Berman says he didn't lead strategizing in either deal.

Citigroup and Merrill Lynch, in their most recent round of capital-raising, included U.S. investors, including New Jersey's Division of Investment, giving politicians even more reason to support the deals. "The principal of New Jersey" is now buying stakes in Citigroup and Merrill Lynch, jokes Democratic Rep. Barney Frank of Massachusetts, who heads the House Financial Services Committee.

Other sovereign-wealth funds have turned to Washington experts for advice. Former New York Fed Chairman William McDonough, a vice chairman of Merrill Lynch, is also a member of the international board of advisers of Temasek Holdings Pte. Ltd. of Singapore. Temasek has stakes in Merrill Lynch as well as British banks Barclays PLC and Standard Chartered PLC. Former Senate Banking Committee Chairman Phil Gramm, now an adviser to Sen. McCain, is vice chairman of investment banking at UBS AG of Switzerland, which sold a stake to another Singapore government investment fund. He says he talks regularly with sovereign-wealth funds who seek his advice on dealing with Washington.

U.S. financial firms say the welcoming attitude of the U.S. Treasury has also helped. Essentially, the Treasury and other industrialized nations have subcontracted some of the most difficult questions concerning sovereign-wealth funds to the International Monetary Fund. In particular, the IMF is trying to persuade the funds to adopt voluntary codes to act for commercial, rather than political, reasons.

Presidential candidates have widely ignored sovereign-wealth funds' investments. Democrat Hillary Clinton, alone among top contenders for the White House, has addressed their downsides. "Globalization was supposed to mean declining state ownership," she said in an interview. "But these sovereign-wealth funds point in the opposite direction." She wants to go beyond the IMF efforts and look into a "regulatory framework" for the investments.

Banking Committee Chairman Christopher Dodd said on Wednesday that his committee would be "examining" sovereign-wealth-fund investments. So far, the only congressional hearing on the funds was held by Indiana Democratic Sen. Evan Bayh. "No one wants to rock the boat," Sen. Bayh says, because flagship financial institutions need the cash.

Still, he is skeptical of the sovereign money. "If you had unfettered U.S. government investments in markets, you'd have people throwing around words like socialism," says Sen. Bayh. "With foreign government investments, the silence is deafening on all sides."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. JONES of North Carolina addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

□ 1930

HONORING HELEN GANNON GINGREY ON HER 90TH BIRTHDAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take time this evening to address the House of Representatives regarding a very important person, someone who has meant so much to me throughout my life. My mother, Ms. Helen Gingrey, turns 90 years old February 8, 2008.

Mr. Speaker, I know that you and Members of the House of Representatives will want to join me tonight in saying "Happy 90th birthday, Mom."

It's important in this day and age for children to grow up in a strong family environment like the one that my parents provided for me. And I would hope that throughout my tenure here representing the 11th Congressional District of Georgia that I'll always be aware of how my actions will affect the American families who are, after all, the backbone of this Nation.

My mother has had a great life, and she's been a blessing to both her community and to her family. She is the daughter of Irish and Scotch immigrants, John Gannon and Ellen Heron. She was born in New York City in 1918, where she grew up with her three sisters, Peggy, Mary and Catherine, and brother, Dan. Raised in Manhattan, she met and, after a 10-month courtship, she married my dad when she was 20 years old.

James Franklin Gingrey was a native of Aiken County, South Carolina. He and his two brothers and a sister, struggled in childhood after their mother died in childbirth at age 25. Dad came to New York at age 16 and near poverty with little means of support. God did not bless him with material things, but allowed him, by pure chance, to meet the love of his life, Helen Cecelia Gannon, my mom. Jimmy and Helen became husband and wife in 1938, and they remained together for 44 years until his death.

After Dad finished high school in the New York City Night program, my parents, with a 1-year-old son, William, Bill, my brother, moved back to South Carolina and settled in Edgefield. Soon the family unit grew to five, as my brother James and I were born in nearby Augusta, Georgia.

My dad left this world 28 years ago having worked side by side with my mom in a number of labor-intensive small businesses. These included, Mr. Speaker, a used car lot, a curb service drive-in restaurant, a package shop, and finally a "Mom and Pop" motel. They never had a chance to attend college, but by the sweat of their brow, they gave that opportunity to their three sons. To my knowledge, there were no welfare checks, food stamps or Medicaid program to lighten their load.

Mr. Speaker, as I honor my mother today, I want to thank her for a loving parenthood and for instilling in my brothers and me the principles of hard work, good education, personal responsibility, respect for the diversity of

others, love of family, love of country but, most important, love of God. These are not only excellent principles for rearing children, Mr. Speaker, but also a good recipe for the initiatives we continue to work on here in the 110th Congress.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I urge the House to use the examples of Helen Cecelia Gannon Gingrey and all wonderful mothers like her to set an agenda that emphasizes and supports our Nation's greatest treasure, the American family.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

STATUS REPORT ON CURRENT LEVELS OF ON-BUDGET SPENDING AND REVENUES FOR FISCAL YEARS 2007 AND 2008 AND THE 5- YEAR PERIOD FY 2008 THROUGH FY 2012

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I am transmitting a status report on the current levels of on-budget spending and revenues for fiscal years 2007 and 2008 and for the 5-year period of fiscal years 2008 through 2012. This report is necessary to facilitate the application of sections 302 and 311 of the Congressional Budget Act and sections 204, 206, and 207 of S. Con. Res. 21, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2008.

The term "current level" refers to the amounts of spending and revenues estimated for each fiscal year based on laws enacted or awaiting the President's signature.

The first table in the report compares the current levels of total budget authority, outlays, and revenues with the aggregate levels set by S. Con. Res. 21. This comparison is needed to enforce section 311(a) of the Budget Act, which creates a point of order against measures that would breach the budget resolution's aggregate levels.

The second table compares the current levels of discretionary appropriations for fiscal year 2008 with the "section 302(b)" suballocations of discretionary budget authority and outlays among Appropriations subcommittees. The comparison is needed to enforce section 302(f) of the Budget Act because the point of order under that section applies to measures that would breach the applicable section 302(b) suballocation.

The third table compares the current levels of budget authority and outlays for each authorizing committee with the "section 302(a)" allocations made under S. Con. Res. 21 for fiscal years 2007 and 2008 and fiscal years 2008 through 2012. This comparison is needed to enforce section 302(f) of the Budget Act, which creates a point of order against measures that would breach the section 302(a) allocation of new budget authority for the committee that reported the measure.

The fourth table gives the current level for fiscal years 2009 and 2010 for accounts identified for advance appropriations under section 206 of S. Con. Res. 21. This list is needed to enforce section 206 of the budget resolution, which creates a point of order against appropriation bills that contain advance appropriations that: (i) are not identified in the statement of managers; or (ii) would cause the aggregate amount of such appropriations to exceed the level specified in the resolution.

REPORT TO THE SPEAKER FROM THE COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET—STATUS OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2008 CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET ADOPTED IN SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 21

[Reflecting action completed as of January 23, 2008—On-budget amounts, in millions of dollars]

	Fiscal year—		
	2007	2008 ²	2008–2012
Appropriate Level:			
Budget authority	2,250,680	2,354,721	1
Outlays	2,263,759	2,358,831	1

REPORT TO THE SPEAKER FROM THE COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET—STATUS OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2008 CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET ADOPTED IN SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 21—Continued

[Reflecting action completed as of January 23, 2008—On-budget amounts, in millions of dollars]

	Fiscal year—		
	2007	2008 ²	2008–2012
Revenues	1,900,340	2,016,859	11,141,734
Current Level:			
Budget authority	2,250,680	2,333,106	1
Outlays	2,263,759	2,346,261	1
Revenues	1,904,516	2,000,661	11,267,618
Current Level over (+)/under (-) Appropriate Level:			
Budget authority	0	-21,615	1
Outlays	0	-12,570	1
Revenues	4,176	-16,198	125,884

¹ Not applicable because annual appropriations Acts for fiscal years 2009 through 2012 will not be considered until future sessions of Congress.

² Current aggregates do not include spending covered by section 207(d)(1)(E) (overseas deployments and related activities). The section has not been triggered to date in Appropriations action.

BUDGET AUTHORITY

Enactment of measures providing new budget authority for FY 2008 in excess of

\$21.615 million (if not already included in the current level estimate) would cause FY 2008 budget authority to exceed the appropriate level set by S. Con. Res. 21.

OUTLAYS

Enactment of measures providing new outlays for FY 2008 in excess of \$12,570 million (if not already included in the current level estimate) would cause FY 2008 outlays to exceed the appropriate level set by S. Con. Res. 21.

REVENUES

Enactment of measures resulting in any revenue reduction for FY 2008 (if not already included in the current level estimate) would cause FY 2008 revenue to fall further below the appropriate level set by S. Con. Res. 21.

Enactment of measures resulting in revenue reduction for the period of fiscal years 2008 through 2012 in excess of \$125,884 million (if not already included in the current level estimate) would cause revenues to fall below the appropriate levels set by S. Con. Res. 21.

DISCRETIONARY APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2008 COMPARISON OF CURRENT LEVEL WITH APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE 302(a) ALLOCATION AND APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE 302(b) SUBALLOCATIONS

[In millions of dollars]

Appropriations Subcommittee	302(b) suballocations as of Jan. 23, 2008 (H. Rpt. 110–236)		Current level reflecting action completed as of Jan. 23, 2008		Current level minus suballocations	
	BA	OT	BA	OT	BA	OT
	Agriculture, Rural Development, FDA	18,817	20,027	18,093	19,528	-724
Commerce, Justice, Science	53,551	55,318	51,803	53,441	-1,748	-1,877
Defense	459,332	475,980	459,332	475,164	0	-816
Energy and Water Development	31,603	32,774	30,888	32,340	-715	-434
Financial Services and General Government	21,434	21,665	20,599	20,903	-835	-762
Homeland Security	36,262	38,247	34,852	38,028	-1,410	-219
Interior, Environment	27,598	28,513	26,555	28,052	-1,043	-461
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education	151,748	148,174	144,841	146,292	-6,907	-1,882
Legislative Branch	4,024	4,042	3,970	4,008	-54	-34
Military Construction, Veterans Affairs	64,745	54,832	60,213	52,232	-4,532	-2,600
State, Foreign Operations	34,243	33,351	32,800	32,841	-1,443	-510
Transportation, HUD	50,738	114,528	48,821	114,270	-1,917	-258
Unassigned (full committee allowance)	0	1,646	0	0	0	-1,646
Subtotal (Appropriations allocations)	954,095	1,029,097	932,767	1,017,099	-21,328	-11,998
Reduction for non-inclusion of program integrity initiatives (sec 207(d) of S. Con. Res. 21)	-1,042	-699	0	0	1,042	699
Total (Section 302(a) Allocation)	953,053	1,028,398	932,767	1,017,099	-20,286	-11,299

DIRECT SPENDING LEGISLATION—COMPARISON OF CURRENT LEVEL WITH AUTHORIZING COMMITTEE 302(a) ALLOCATIONS FOR RESOLUTION CHANGES REFLECTING ACTION COMPLETED AS OF JANUARY 23, 2008

[Fiscal years, in millions of dollars]

House Committee	2007		2008		2008–2012 total	
	BA	Outlays	BA	Outlays	BA	Outlays
Agriculture:						
Allocation	0	0	0	0	0	0
Current Level	0	0	0	0	0	0
Difference	0	0	0	0	0	0
Armed Services: ¹						
Allocation	0	0	-56	-81	-139	-427
Current Level	0	0	-6	-31	271	-17
Difference	0	0	50	50	410	410
Education and Labor:						
Allocation	-4,877	-4,886	-288	-977	5,042	4,175
Current Level	-4,877	-4,886	-288	-977	5,042	4,175
Difference	0	0	0	0	0	0
Energy and Commerce:						
Allocation	-1	-1	1,571	1,567	2,285	2,272
Current Level	-1	-1	1,568	1,562	2,205	2,187
Difference	0	0	-3	-5	-80	-85
Financial Services:						
Allocation	0	0	200	200	3,100	3,100
Current Level	0	0	200	200	3,100	3,100
Difference	0	0	0	0	0	0
Foreign Affairs:						
Allocation	0	0	0	0	0	0
Current Level	0	0	0	0	0	0
Difference	0	0	0	0	0	0
Homeland Security:						
Allocation	0	0	0	0	0	0
Current Level	0	0	0	-425	0	-500
Difference	0	0	0	-425	0	-500
House Administration:						
Allocation	0	0	0	0	0	0
Current Level	0	0	0	0	0	0
Difference	0	0	0	0	0	0
Judiciary:						
Allocation	0	0	0	0	0	0
Current Level	0	0	0	0	0	0
Difference	0	0	0	0	0	0
Natural Resources:						
Allocation	0	0	0	0	0	0
Current Level	0	0	0	0	0	0
Difference	0	0	0	0	0	0
Oversight and Government Reform:						
Allocation	0	0	0	0	0	0

DIRECT SPENDING LEGISLATION—COMPARISON OF CURRENT LEVEL WITH AUTHORIZING COMMITTEE 302(a) ALLOCATIONS FOR RESOLUTION CHANGES REFLECTING ACTION COMPLETED AS OF JANUARY 23, 2008—Continued

[Fiscal years, in millions of dollars]

House Committee	2007		2008		2008–2012 total	
	BA	Outlays	BA	Outlays	BA	Outlays
Current Level	0	0	-2	-2	-14	-14
Difference	0	0	-2	-2	-14	-14
Science and Technology:						
Allocation	0	0	0	0	0	0
Current Level	0	0	0	0	0	0
Difference	0	0	0	0	0	0
Small Business:						
Allocation	0	0	0	0	0	0
Current Level	0	0	0	0	0	0
Difference	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transportation and Infrastructure:						
Allocation	0	0	128	0	1,567	0
Current Level	0	0	2	-10	36	-63
Difference	0	0	-126	-10	-1,531	-63
Veterans' Affairs:						
Allocation	0	0	0	0	0	0
Current Level	0	0	0	0	-10	-10
Difference	0	0	0	0	-10	-10
Ways and Means:						
Allocation	0	0	2,830	4,029	-1,814	-1,814
Current Level	0	0	2,843	4,042	-1,778	-1,778
Difference	0	0	13	13	36	36

¹ Both current level and allocation reflect pending National Defense Authorization Bill.

FY2009 AND 2010 ADVANCE APPROPRIATIONS UNDER SECTION 206 OF S. CON. RES. 21
[Budget authority in millions of dollars]

	2009	2010
Appropriate Level	25,558	25,558
Enacted advances:		
Accounts Identified for Advances:		
Corporation for Public Broadcasting ...	400	420
Employment and Training Administration	2463	0
Education for the Disadvantaged	7935	0
School Improvement	1435	0
Children and Family Services (Head Start)	1389	0
Special Education	6856	0
Vocational and Adult Education	791	0
Payment to Postal Service	89	0
Section 8 Renewals	4158	0
Other Advances:		
Title 17 Innovative Technology Loan Guarantee	42	0

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, January 29, 2008.

Hon. JOHN M. SPRATT, Jr.,
Chairman, Committee on the Budget, House of Representatives Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The enclosed report shows the effects of Congressional action on

the fiscal year 2008 budget and is current through January 23, 2008. This report is submitted under section 308(b) and in aid of section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act, as amended.

The estimates of budget authority, outlays, and revenues are consistent with the technical and economic assumptions of S. Con Res. 21, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2008, as approved by the Senate and the House of Representatives.

Pursuant to section 204(b) of S. Con. Res. 21, provisions designated as emergency requirements are exempt from enforcement of the budget resolution. As a result, the enclosed current level report excludes these amounts (see footnote 1 of the report).

Since my last letter to you, dated October 24, 2007, the Congress has cleared and the President has signed the following acts that affect budget authority, outlays, or revenues for fiscal year 2008: Water Resources Development Act of 2007 (Public Law 110-114); Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-116); Fair Treatment for Experienced Pilots Act (Public Law 110-135); United States-Peru Trade Promotion Agree-

ment Implementation Act (Public Law 110-138); Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (Public Law 110-140); Mortgage Forgiveness Debt Relief Act of 2007 (Public Law 110-142); A bill to amend title 39, United States Code, to extend the authority of the United States Postal Service to issue a semipostal to raise funds for breast cancer research (Public Law 110-150); Terrorism Risk Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2007 (Public Law 110-160); Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-161); Tax Increase Prevention Act of 2007 (Public Law 110-166); Medicare, Medicaid, and SCHIP Extension Act of 2007 (Public Law 110-173); and OPEN Government Act of 2007 (Public Law 110-175).

In addition, the Congress has cleared the National Defense Authorization Act—for Fiscal Year 2008 (H.R. 4986) for the President's signature,

Sincerely,
ROBERT A. SUNSHINE
(For Peter R. Orszag, Director).

Enclosure.

FISCAL YEAR 2008 HOUSE CURRENT LEVEL REPORT AS OF JANUARY 23, 2008

	Budget authority	Outlays	Revenues
Enacted in previous sessions:			
Revenues	n.a.	n.a.	2,050,796
Permanents and other spending legislation	1,450,532	1,390,611	n.a.
Appropriation legislation	0	419,269	n.a.
Offsetting receipts	-575,635	-575,635	n.a.
Total, enacted in previous sessions	874,897	1,234,245	2,050,796
Enacted this Congress:			
Authorizing Legislation:			
An act to extend the authorities of the Andean Trade Preference Act until February 29, 2008 (P.L. 110-42)	0	0	-41
A bill to provide for the extension of Transitional Medical Assistance (TMA) and the Abstinence Education Program through the end of fiscal year 2007, and for other purposes (P.L. 110-48)	96	99	0
A joint resolution approving the renewal of import restrictions contained in the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003, and for other purposes (P.L. 110-52)	0	0	-2
Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 (P.L. 110-53)	0	-425	0
College Cost Reduction and Access Act (P.L. 110-84)	-326	-992	0
Food and Drug Administration Amendments Act of 2007 (P.L. 110-85)	-3	-3	0
An act to extend the trade adjustment assistance program under the Trade Act of 1974 for 3 months (P.L. 110-89)	9	9	0
TMA, Abstinence Education, and QI Programs Extension Act of 2007 (P.L. 110-90)	815	804	0
Water Resources Development Act of 2007 (P.L. 110-114)	-1	-1	0
Fair Treatment for Experienced Pilots Act (P.L. 110-135)	4	-9	0
United States-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement Implementation Act (P.L. 110-138)	4	4	-20
Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (P.L. 110-140)	66	64	1,016
Mortgage Forgiveness Debt Relief Act of 2007 (P.L. 110-142)	0	0	-162
A bill to amend title 39, United States Code, to extend the authority of the United States Postal Service to issue a semipostal to raise funds for breast cancer research (P.L. 110-150)	0	-2	0
Terrorism Risk Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2007 (P.L. 110-160)	200	200	0
Tax Increase Prevention Act of 2007 (P.L. 110-166)	0	0	-50,593
Medicare, Medicaid, and SCHIP Extension Act of 2007 (P.L. 110-173)	3,465	4,644	0
OPEN Government Act of 2007 (P.L. 110-175)	-2	-2	0
Total, authorization legislation enacted in this Congress	4,323	4,390	-49,802
Appropriation Acts:			
U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Care, Katrina Recovery, and Iraq Accountability Appropriations Act, 2007 (P.L. 110-28) ¹	1	42	-335
Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2008 (P.L. 110-116) ¹	459,550	311,596	0
Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2008 (P.L. 110-161) ¹	1,041,512	831,744	0
Total, appropriation acts enacted in this Congress:	1,501,063	1,143,382	-335

FISCAL YEAR 2008 HOUSE CURRENT LEVEL REPORT AS OF JANUARY 23, 2008—Continued

	Budget authority	Outlays	Revenues
Pased, pending signature:			
National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (H.R. 4986)	-6	-31	2
Entitlements and mandatories:			
Budget resolution estimates of appropriated entitlements and other mandatory programs	-47,171	-35,725	0
Total Current Level ^{1,2}	2,333,106	2,346,261	2,000,661
Total Budget Resolution ³	2,500,489	2,474,575	2,016,859
Adjustment to the budget resolution for emergency requirements ⁴	-606	-49,900	n.a.
Adjustment to the budget resolution pursuant to section 207(d)(1)(E) ⁵	-145,162	-65,754	n.a.
Adjusted Budget Resolution	2,354,721	2,358,831	2,016,859
Current Level Over Adjusted Budget Resolution	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Current Level Under Adjusted Budget Resolution	21,615	12,570	16,198
Memorandum:			
Revenues, 2008-2012:			
House Current Level	n.a.	n.a.	11,267,618
House Budget Resolution	n.a.	n.a.	11,141,734
Adjusted Budget Resolution	n.a.	n.a.	11,141,734
Current Level Over Adjusted Budget Resolution	n.a.	n.a.	125,884
Current Level Under Adjusted Budget Resolution	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

Note: n.a. = not applicable; P.L. = Public Law.
SOURCE: Congressional Budget Office.

¹ Pursuant to section 204(b) of S. Con. Res. 21, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2008, provisions designated as emergency requirements are exempt from enforcement of the budget resolution. The amounts so designated for fiscal year 2008, which are not included in the current level totals, are as follows:

	Budget authority	Outlays	Revenues
U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Care, Katrina Recovery, and Iraq Accountability Appropriations Act, 2007 (P.L. 110-28)	605	48,639	n.a.
An act making continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2008, and for other purposes (P.L. 110-92)	5,200	1,024	n.a.
Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2008 (P.L. 110-116)	11,630	1,047	n.a.
Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2008 (P.L. 110-116B)	6,400	1,369	n.a.
Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2008 (P.L. 110-161)	81,125	40,568	n.a.
Total, enacted emergency requirements	104,960	92,647	n.a.

² For purposes of enforcing section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act in the House, the budget resolution does not include budget authority, outlays, or revenues for off-budget amounts. As a result, current level excludes these items.

³ Periodically, the House Committee on the Budget revises the totals in S. Con. Res. 21, pursuant to various provisions of the resolution:

	Budget authority	Outlays	Revenues
Original Budget Resolution	2,496,028	2,469,636	2,015,858
Revisions:			
To reflect the difference between the assumed and actual nonemergency supplemental appropriations for fiscal year 2007 (section 207(f))	1	1	-17
For extension of the Transitional Medical Assistance (TMA) program (section 320(c))	96	99	0
For the College Cost Reduction and Access Act (section 306(b))	-176	-842	0
Extension of the Transitional Medical Assistance (TMA) program (section 320(c)) (updated to reflect final scoring)	815	804	0
For the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (section 302)	-6	-31	2
For the Energy Independence & Security Act of 2007 (section 308(b)(1))	66	64	1,016
For the Terrorism Risk Insurance Revision & Extension Act of 2007 (section 310)	200	200	0
For changes in the Medicare, Medicaid and SCHIP Extension Act of 2007 (sections 301, 304(a), 320(a)(c))	3,465	4,644	0
Revised Budget Resolution	2,500,489	2,474,575	2,016,859

⁴ S. Con. Res. 21 assumed \$606 million in budget authority and \$49,990 million in outlays from emergency supplemental appropriations. Such emergency amounts are exempt from the enforcement of the budget resolution. Since current level totals exclude the emergency requirements enacted in P.L. 110-28 (see footnote 1 above), budget authority and outlay totals specified in the budget resolution also have been reduced (by the amounts assumed for emergency supplemental appropriations) for purposes of comparison.

⁵ Section 207(d)(1)(E) of S. Con. Res. 21 assumed \$145,162 million in budget authority and \$65,754 million in outlays for overseas deployment and related activities. Because action to date has not triggered this provision, the House Committee on the Budget has directed that these amounts be excluded from the budget resolution aggregates in the current level report.

HONORING THE AUGUSTA METRO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BROUN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor and pay tribute to a non-profit community organization in my 10th Congressional District of Georgia.

The Augusta Metro Chamber of Commerce is celebrating more than 100 years of dedicated service to Augusta, Georgia's economic development. Founded in 1905, the chamber has grown to include more than 1,100 members. The chamber and its members provide citizens with a strong business environment that increases employment, retail trade and commerce, and industrial growth in Augusta.

The Augusta Metro Chamber of Commerce has worked to promote a prosperous future for all Augustans through legislative efforts and through networking programs, such as Women in Business, Leadership Augusta, and the Chamber Business Academy. The chamber promotes healthy and productive workforces through its nationally-recognized Drugs Don't Work program.

The Augusta Metro Chamber of Commerce is also committed to being a good neighbor, with committees designated to serve as liaisons between businesses and local educators

and military communities. Furthermore, the chamber promotes business while working carefully to protect Augusta's natural environment. The chamber works with State and Federal agencies to minimize the impact economic development has on the environment.

Such a diligent organization is to be commended for its efforts. The Augusta Metro Chamber of Commerce is an investment in the present and future well-being of the Augusta community. As it celebrates a centennial milestone, may this chamber of commerce continue steadfast in its work to ensure Augusta's continued competitiveness in our domestic and global economies.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PALLONE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

IRAQ ASSESSMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, as we begin to talk about our national security and our troops and the surge and the success of that and why our troops choose to defend this great Nation, I want to stop and just join Mr. GINGREY in congratulating his mother on her 90th birthday. Certainly, Helen Cecelia Gingrey sounds like the type of woman that truly takes a leadership role, first of all, in her family and role models that leadership and how to carry that out in how to encourage children to dream big dreams and have great adventures in their life and to desire that.

That is something you learn at a mother's knee. That is something you see role modeled by parents, and Mr. Speaker, that is something that we need to keep in mind as we are here on the floor of the House in this body, as we make decisions about how our Nation moves forward in this 21st century.

We need to remember that there are future generations that are relying on us to be certain that this Nation stays secure. There are future generations that are looking to us that go every single day and say, what will my tomorrow be like? Is my community going to be secure? What is America going to look like when I am 20, when I'm 30, when I get ready to retire?

We would do well to be mindful of that every single day as we make decisions that affect America's families and realize, yes, indeed, those families are our greatest treasure. Those precious minds of those precious children are indeed what we are to be protecting and be certain that they have the ability to dream those big dreams.

So to Dr. GINGREY's mom, Helen Gingrey, happy birthday. We all congratulate you, and we are so pleased that we live in a free Nation and we can stand on the floor of this House and celebrate those birthdays and join your son in wishing you happy birthday and many, many more.

Mr. Speaker, I recently did return from a trip to Afghanistan and Iraq to visit with our troops. And tonight I want to spend some time talking about what has been going on in Iraq and the success that we have seen there, the success that our troops have brought to bear on Iraq and on the environment that is there.

Just about 3 weeks ago, we had the 1-year anniversary of the surge, and everyone had a lot to say about that surge and a lot to say about how successful they thought it would or would not be. I think, Mr. Speaker, it's very easy for us to be Monday morning quarterbacks or armchair quarterbacks and to always have our opinion of how we think these things are going to work out.

The 101st is in my district in Tennessee. We also have the National Guardsmen from our State that have been deployed, Reservists who have been deployed, and we would always say we need to be listening to the troops that are in the field and the commanders that are there on the ground.

We saw a change about a year ago. The change was in the form of the surge. The implementation of that surge was carried out by General David Petraeus. He was joined by Ambassador Crocker as they moved forward with the preparations and the implementation of that surge, and we have seen results.

Over the December and January period of time, we had the opportunity to visit, and I am pleased to be joined tonight by my colleague from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) who has been on the ground in Iraq several times, I think six times he has been to visit our troops in Iraq. And he wanted to join me tonight for a few minutes and talk about what he saw and give a firsthand account of what he saw.

I'm so pleased that he has chosen to join us because one of the things our

troops mentioned to us on our trip was, We are fighting every day. We are in a war. And we are winning significant battles every single day. And we want the American people to know we are fighting. We are giving it our all, and yes, indeed, we are winning every day.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think it's important for us to realize that a lot of times, success comes in odd ways. Progress comes in unexpected ways. And it is not just on a trajectory where every day is better and better and better. We take a few steps forward, we take a few steps back. We take a few more steps forward, we take a little step back. But when you add it up, you are trending the right direction.

That is certainly what we have seen in the success of the surge. We have seen every major news outlet declare it a success. The American people know that it is a success. And our troops are to be commended for that success. Certainly, the President was right in making that commendation last night.

As I said a moment ago, Dr. BURGESS from Texas who's been to Iraq six times wants to join us and share his impressions of what he saw on the ground in Iraq, and I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlelady from Tennessee for yielding to me.

It is kind of ironic. We were here on the floor of this House last night. The House was full, Members on both sides. We heard the President deliver his final State of the Union address, and of course, as is typical for a State of the Union address, he touched on subjects near and far, went through the domestic agenda, went through the foreign agenda.

When he got to talking about the conditions on the ground in Iraq, I don't know about the gentlelady from Tennessee, but I was just absolutely struck by the scene in this House when he commended the troops for the activities and the success that they had achieved on the ground. One-half of the House stood up and applauded; the other half sat on their hands.

And Mr. Speaker, I don't know if there's been another time in American history when America goes to war, sends their sons and daughters to war, America is winning the war, and it's become something we don't want to talk about. There's other things that command our attention now, and we'll go on to other things.

The gentlelady was right, it was a year ago that we stood on the floor of this House and debated for hour after hour after hour on the efficacy of sending additional troops to Iraq. We were told by the majority leader over in the Senate, the Democratic majority leader, that the war was lost; there was no need to send additional men because we had already made the decision in the Senate, or the other body in the Capitol of the United States, that the war was over and the war was indeed lost.

The gentlelady's right, you can pick data points to prove whatever you

want to prove in Iraq. They're all over the map, but if you look at trend lines over time, you begin to see a story taking shape, and that is the story that began to take shape in April of last year, perhaps a little reinforced in June of last year, July of last year.

My most recent trip to Iraq, my sixth trip, I wasn't sure what I was going to find because when you picked up the papers, the data points were scattered all over the place, but little by little, the story came out. And about a week after I was there in July, the New York Times finally broke the story, hey, there's a war we just might win going on in the country of Iraq, written by two individuals who, quite frankly, aren't always on the side of the President of the United States, so it seems, in their writings in the New York Times. The New York Times itself is not always on the same page as the President in a lot of foreign policy issues, but there it was in black and white for all to see.

Now, I went to Iraq in July of 2007. I very much wanted to go because I knew that the surge had started. I knew that General Petraeus had committed to come back and present data to Congress in September of 2007 to talk about the success, or lack thereof, of the additional reinforcements that were sent into the country of Iraq. And I knew that this House, I knew myself as a Member of this House, was going to have to come to some decisions or some conclusions, if it's working it or it's not working; if it's not working, we will have to rethink the strategy.

So it was an important trip for me to take because I knew on every other trip that I had taken to Iraq what I saw on the ground bore no resemblance to what I was seeing on my television screens on CNN and CBS and the evening news and the morning shows. You have to go and look at it for yourselves to be able to understand what is happening.

You know it's not an easy job. It was a brief war, but it's been a long hard slog to get to where we are today, and history will have to decide whether the investment in time, the investment in lives, the investment in families who are deprived of their loved ones during these long deployments, history will decide the accuracy of the words that we speak tonight.

But I will tell you from the strength of that last trip in July and what I have seen reported since that time, I have to believe that this country going forward is going to be in far better shape in 10 years', 20 years', 30 years' time because we have an Iraq that has an opportunity now to be a stable partner in a quest for peace in the Middle East, as opposed to a haven and an outpost for continued terrorism in that part of the world.

In July of 2006, I took a trip to Iraq. Peter Chiarelli on that trip said, you know, it's funny, I don't know what to make of it, but in a part of the country of Iraq that is very, very dangerous, al

Anbar province, a city called Ramadi, we don't know what to make of it but some insurgents that were in the hospital yesterday turned over all of their arms to our soldiers, and we'll just have to wait and see what develops. In fact, he asked me not to talk about it when I got back in July of 2006 because, again, he was not sure what that meant.

July of 2007, fast forward to that time. We got off the C-130 in Baghdad International Airport, get on the helicopters and are immediately taken to Ramadi. Ramadi, that was too dangerous a place to travel to a year before, was our first stop. We met General Gaston of the 2nd Marine Expeditionary Force there on the ground in Ramadi. Ramadi is a city about the size of Ft. Worth. Ft. Worth, Texas, is the largest city in my district back home. It was the provincial capital of the resurgent caliphate as established by al Qaeda in western Iraq.

The reality, though, was that things had changed enormously over that past year and in ways that, quite honestly, had not been reported in the press back here at home. Again, I didn't know what I was going to find when I went there, but I have to tell you the job that was done by the Marines in the 2nd Marine Expeditionary Force, the job that was done by the troops on the ground on these long deployments that they were undertaking, the job was truly phenomenal.

A year before I would not have been able to travel to the city of Ramadi. Now, not only could I travel to the city of Ramadi, after the briefing, after the endless Power Point that the military always gives you when you go over there, we got in vehicles and drove to downtown Ramadi.

□ 1945

I've got to tell you, I was a little concerned; General Gaston, are you sure that it's okay for us to go to downtown Ramadi? Last year, General Chiarelli said it's kind of dangerous out there. He said, "Let's go."

We drove downtown. It was a Saturday morning, early on a Saturday morning. We drove to the market. It looked like a market any other place in the Middle East. There was a lot of activity. In fact, there were the typical sights and sounds of a city that has, perhaps, seen better days. They were working on some sewer pipes. There was, in fact, a little bit of construction going on.

But this photograph was taken last July 17th in the city of Ramadi. This shows the shops. I don't know where all this stuff came from. If this was an American market, I would assume all this stuff came from China. I'm not sure where it was made. But all of these wares were for sale, and there was shop after shop after shop lined up and down either side of the street.

You can see the faces of the young men there; a little bit of curiosity, all of these Americans showing up and

walking through their streets. I'm sure for them it was a sight that they had not seen too often. But again, you see on the faces of these young men, these are not faces that are suspicious, these are not faces that are fearful, these are faces that are smiling. They were, in fact, glad to see us. And I found out a few minutes later why they were glad to see us; they were hoping that we had a pen or a quarter. They had apparently been well coached by our marines. Their school was going to start in a few weeks, and because they would be attending their classes, they were anxious to know if we had a writing instrument that we might part with that they could have.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. If the gentleman will yield.

Mr. BURGESS. I'll be happy to yield.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. I would like to put that photo back up, if you do not mind.

Now, I think it is significant that you're talking about Ramadi, which is in al Anbar Province. And you're talking about a photo that was made during the summer, July 14, 2007, which is the photo stamp date that is there on the photo. And if I am picking all of this up, it looks like tools and implements that are hanging in the ceiling of the shop, and plastic buckets, rubber buckets, and probably some plastic hampers that are there. And when I was in Iraq, I noticed that there was lots of produce that was also being sold in some of the shops.

But one of the things that is of interest to me is the photo that you're showing indicates to us that we do have import and export that is taking place, and we do have commerce that is taking place. And so, as you were on that street in Ramadi, how many shops did you see; do you remember a number? How many were lining the street? And how far did you drive from the base into town to begin to see this type of commerce and the happy kids that are obviously learning how to do a little bit of retail merchant work there?

I yield back to the gentleman.

Mr. BURGESS. Well, I'll be honest, I don't remember the number of shops. There were many. Perhaps on the side street that we were on, at least a dozen on one side, and then a similar number on the other side.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. If the gentleman will yield, a dozen shops in any of our towns in our districts is a pretty good number of shops. So, we've got a lot of commerce that is beginning to take place there. And I yield back.

Mr. BURGESS. And of course I do need to make the point that this was an area that just a few months before had seen some of the most intense fighting. And many of the buildings at the front of the street, well, let's just put it this way, a JDAM doesn't do anything for your drive-up appeal. And there were several buildings that obviously had suffered the scars of war. But as you went a little further down the street, you began to come upon scenes such as this.

And I would simply point out that at the very edge of the photograph here, and I had forgotten this, we see a brightly colored garment set that looks like it would be appropriate for a woman to wear. I saw more women on this trip to Iraq than I can recall seeing at any other trip where I had been through the country. And it was, to me, reassuring that the female members of Iraqi society felt comfortable enough to travel out to the shops on a Saturday morning and be with their husbands and their children, as you so eloquently point out, as commerce was breaking out all over on the streets of Ramadi.

Again, I just want to show another picture of some children. These guys were pretty curious as to what was going on with all of these strange folks that had shown up and were walking through town. Again, you can see in the background some additional brightly colored wares for sale. This fellow turned out to be fairly inquisitive. And he had a keen interest, again, in writing instruments that I want to assume that's because his school was starting up in a few weeks' time.

What has been described as "The Anbar Awakening," we heard the President reference it last night, began in the city of Ramadi where the Sunnis began to recognize, you know, these guys from al Qaeda; they're actually not our friends. They refer to the Americans as occupiers, but maybe it's the al Qaeda guys that are actually the occupiers. And we do believe that at some point the Americans want to go home, but we can't say the same for our friends in al Qaeda. And the Sunni sheiks, the tribal leaders in the towns, rapidly turned it. And to hear it be described by our marines and our soldiers there, it literally turned on a few weeks' time, some rather intense fighting as the surge began to mount its full reinforcement, and then suddenly things changed dramatically for the better.

And for me, on this trip, the one thing that I saw that was different from any other trip that I had taken over there on the ground, now, we can criticize the Baghdad government, and both sides of the aisle I know will do that with regularity, I may do so before this night is over, but the local political shift that's taking place on the ground in Iraq, the county commissioners, the city councilmen, the mayors that are doing the kinds of work that you want your local government to do, you know, quite honestly, I go home every weekend and the people are happy to see me. But if there's a problem at home, most of the time they're not going to call their Congressman; they'll call their mayor, they'll call their county commissioner, or they'll call their county administrator or their county judge because those are the folks that are closest to the people, and it's up to them to deliver for their constituents, the same conditions we have here in our districts back home.

The local political shift really is what, to me, is the fundamental building block of the return of civil society, a civil society that had been so badly damaged under the years of Saddam, a civil society that has been so badly damaged by the war and then the insurgency that followed is now beginning to take hold. And it is very effective.

Now, the question remains, will the central government in Baghdad respond to the needs of those local officials with enough dispatch that they are, in fact, bolstered and supported by the central government in Baghdad? It is sometimes startling to me to think that a government so young can already have such an entrenched bureaucracy that is slow to act. But nevertheless, we hear some stories coming out that there is more and more of this type of activity occurring. But again, the stability at the local level was something that I don't think I can tell you that I had witnessed on any of the five previous trips through that country. All of those trips more dealt with the security that our forces were establishing. Now we see the security that is actually being established by the Iraqis themselves.

They had a job fair, I understand, in this part of town about a week before and hired everything that showed up. And there were a lot of people that came. The jobs were fairly labor intensive. Again, there had been a lot of bombing in the city. There was a lot of concrete littering the street that had to be picked up. The reinforcing steel that was embedded in the concrete had to be broken out or dissected out. There were several groups of men that were straightening out this rebar to use as reconstruction projects. But again, the work was going on. And the mood, this was July in western Iraq, it's 10 o'clock in the morning and probably already 125 degrees, but the mood of the people was truly something that I will always remember because they were doing for themselves the types of things that free people want to do for themselves. And it was a wonderful feeling. And you know the soldiers could feel it, too, when they walk through these towns.

The ability to give to these young men a life ahead of them that they wouldn't have had, they would have been conscripted into Saddam's army and fought a war at someplace or other; they now have a life ahead of them that really, quite honestly, their parents dared not hope for them and now it is brought to them courtesy of the United States Marines, United States Army.

I yield back to the gentlelady from Tennessee, and I want to thank her for allowing me to participate in the discussion this evening.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. I thank the gentleman for yielding back the time. And I am so pleased to see these pictures. And I appreciate so much his participation in this, and the conversation

about the establishment of commerce and how he witnessed this firsthand with shops that were open. As he said, one little side street where they went there were about 12 shops that were on that. And indeed, these are more like stalls that we would have at one of our swap meets or flea markets. But as you can see, they're full of kids that are happy, that are playing, that are enjoying being around the normalcy of a life. They are full of commerce and goods, items that are coming in for sale. We even saw soft drinks, Coca-Cola. In Afghanistan, we saw cell phones that were being sold. So, in this region of the world, the commerce that is there on the ground.

And in talking about Iraq, the gentleman mentioned the local stability. And indeed, that was something we had the opportunity to witness, also, and we're pleased to see that. We had a visit to Urbil in Kurdistan, had the opportunity to go to the home of the Prime Minister of Kurdistan. We drove to that home. Mr. Speaker, I want to be certain that everyone realizes what I just said. We drove to the home of the Prime Minister of Kurdistan for lunch and joined him where he thanked us profusely for all that the U.S. Armed Forces have done for that region, not only in the past few years, but for the decade prior.

While we were in Iraq, we had the opportunity to go to the home of Deputy Prime Minister Barzani, to his home in the Green Zone to meet with him. And I will tell you, we visited with him about how hopeful we had experienced the mood of the people. There is a sense of hope that things are getting better, that there is a return to normalcy in their everyday life, and how encouraging to us it was to witness this hopefulness.

His comment to us was, we know that sometimes people get frustrated with us, but do not give up this mission. Do not give up on this mission because things are trending the right direction. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, it's all important components in winning, in having Iraq be a nation that can function with some predictability, stability and self-governance.

It is also important because, as we look at defeating terrorists who want to defeat us, it is important that we win the war of ideas. And the photos that Dr. BURGESS shared with us, the young men in those photos, we have to win the war of ideas with them to reach them, to make certain that over the next decade, as they begin an adult life, that they make a choice to live in freedom rather than choosing a life under a dictator.

Indeed, our job is also to make certain that our troops have what they need to do their job. And that is a responsibility of this House, as the President said last night. And certainly, as we are in the midst of a swing, a dramatic swing, if you will, in the momentum in Iraq, especially on the security situation, it is imperative that we pay

close attention to meeting the needs of those troops.

Now, quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, I will tell you, I do not think it is helpful to this situation that we debated over 30 different resolutions about Iraq and timelines and withdrawals and trying to micromanage what is taking place on the ground because there has been a swing and a shift. We have transitioned from 2.5 years of increases in violence with more than 24 weeks of a steady decline.

Now, Dr. BURGESS mentioned, when we go to Iraq, and I want to clarify one thing here before I move on, this week I had the opportunity to visit with the Tennessee Marine Family Association, and what a wonderful, wonderful group of moms and dads and brothers and sisters and marines who have retired from active duty. And I enjoyed my time with them tremendously. And one of them said, you know, tell me, when you go to Iraq, why do you go? And are you taking the troops' time away from work in the field? And I said no, we go because we are asked to go, especially those of us that have posts. As I've said, Fort Campbell, the 101st is in my district, and they invite us and ask us to come and see how they are carrying out their mission and experience that firsthand with them.

□ 2000

But as Dr. BURGESS said, when we make those trips, we have the power points and we have the briefings from the commanders on the ground and we have the opportunity while we are there to hold a town hall meeting, if you will, with our troops that are deployed and are carrying out this mission. So I have put some of that endless power point onto some charts that I would like to share with those who are watching us this evening.

The first chart that I'm going to show you is one that comes from our commanders there in Iraq, and it shows their assessment of al Qaeda Iraq. And many times people will see AQI, that is, the abbreviation for al Qaeda Iraq, and where they were when the surge began last year. And you can see the dark red areas. It shows where they were operating, and the pink areas show what were their transit routes. And you can see how in the city of Baghdad where they were operating, and then as you look at the country you can see where they were transiting in and out of the country and then where they were holding their primary areas of operation. Again, the pink shading is their transit areas, and the red is where they were operational and where they were working. And the inset is Baghdad and what we saw in Baghdad and how that looked before the surge began.

Now I want to move to the second chart and show you what this looks like today. This is what Iraq looks like today. And, again, this is not my chart. This is a chart from our commanders on the ground in Iraq. This is their assessment.

So, Mr. Speaker, to the American people that are watching this tonight, I will simply say this is the chart that is your commanders' assessment of where al Qaeda is as of December 2007. And, of course, al Qaeda is still a threat. Of course, they are still there. But as you can see, by looking at the pink areas and the red areas, this has been diminished. They have been pushed out of the urban centers, look at the inset, with Baghdad. You can see where they have been squeezed down and where they have been moved to and how much smaller their area of operation is and how much smaller their transit area is. They know that the Iraqi people, the Iraqi forces, and the U.S. Armed Forces and our coalition forces mean business on this.

Look at the map of the entire country. When you can see their egress, ingress with the surrounding countries, and then see the pockets where al Qaeda Iraq is still operational. So they have been pushed out of many of the urban areas, and they have been moved over into some of the isolated rural areas.

I want to touch base too on our troops' contribution to this because it has been significant. Our U.S. Armed Forces and the 30,000 that went in for the surge made a marked difference. And I think there is, of course, the physical strength that our troops brought to this, the firepower, if you will, and the training and the strength and the determination. There are no better forces on the face of the Earth than the U.S. military. And we also have to recognize the Iraqis and the force that they brought to bear on this.

When we talk about the surge, sometimes many of us think only in terms of the 30,000 of our troops that have led the way in this fight. What we have to realize also is that we have 110,000 Iraqi troops that have lent their power to this effort, 110,000. They were joined in this effort by 70,000 local citizens.

Dr. BURGESS mentioned earlier the local stability, and there is a reason for that. You had 70,000 Iraqi citizens that basically banded together in what we would call a "neighborhood watch," and they decided to take things into their own hands and to take responsibility. And in many of these areas in the surge the Iraqi troops would lead. They were coached. They were trained. They were supported in so many ways by our U.S. military and by our coalition forces. And the local Iraqi citizen groups would work with those military forces, those combined forces. So together you had 180,000 Iraqis working with our 30,000 U.S. troops that have made this surge successful and have changed that map so that it looks today like it does, with al Qaeda being moved into some isolated areas and with more of the country being able to function with a sense of normalcy.

Now, we've already talked a little bit about al Anbar province and the success that was there because that is where al Qaeda Iraq had planted its

flag. It was the capital of the caliphate, and that is where they were going to put down roots, if you will. What we saw happen in al Anbar province during the surge, I think, is just nothing short of remarkable, and the photos that you've just seen from the streets of Ramadi and the commerce that was taking place and the difference that the surge has made there. Basically, the citizens of Ramadi and al Anbar province said we are sick and tired of this. We do not want al Qaeda Iraq to be running the show in our town. So they joined with the Iraqi troops and the U.S. troops, and they literally threw al Qaeda out.

So many of the experts tell us that this is the first place that the Arab people have stood up to their own and have rejected, openly rejected, al Qaeda and have defeated al Qaeda. And I think that that is significant. And, Mr. Speaker, I believe and I certainly am hopeful in believing that we are going to see other areas follow the lead that al Anbar has set.

Now, we have seen some other effects of that team effort over the past year, and I want to move on to a couple of other charts. Now, this is the overall attack trends, Iraq attack trends; and it shows you what has happened, if you look from December 2006, and where your attacks were in December 2006, with over 5,000, and then you go up into April and May where they reach their height, and then you can see where they have dropped down, less than half, and the reduction that is there. It is actually down about 60 percent by the time you get to December 2007. That is the difference that the surge has made. From December 2006, where you're up above 5,000 attacks and then coming down where you have seen that number drop by about 60 percent. That's the difference that the surge has made in the overall attacks.

Well, let's look at the IED explosions. This is something that our constituents always ask us about because they hear so much about the explosive devices and the way these IEDs and these IED systems are developed and set up and the way those explosions are carried out.

You can see, if you go in here and you look at December 2006, where they are. They move up in June to a high of about 1,700, and then take a look over here, about 700 in December. And there you go from beginning to the end of surge, the year of the surge, and what you have seen. It is almost as if you have al Qaeda jumping in here and saying we're not going to let them get the best of us. They give it a shot, and then in June look how every single month you're dropping. And that's the difference that a year of the surge has made.

Let's move on to another figure on this chart, the killed-in-action figure. And as we look at this chart and we see the dramatic drop that is here, Mr. Speaker, we feel so deeply for the families that have experienced a loss, and

at Fort Campbell we have seen some losses recently, and we just continue to hold those families close. And we are grateful, so grateful, to them for their service, for their sacrifice, and we grieve with them in those losses. And we know that over the course of the year we have seen a dramatic decrease in those losses.

Now, chart number six, the Iraqi civilian deaths attributed to violence, these have dropped significantly. And you can see in December 2006, where we were at about 3,000 and then where we are way down, well under 1,000 by the time we get to December 2007. So this shows us how security is improving. Ethnosexual violence has dropped by about 85 percent. All of these are the right type trend. And it shows how things are moving a little bit at a time, moving in the right direction.

We know there are no guarantees. This is tough. Our military men and women know that they are fighting and winning every day. But, Mr. Speaker, I will tell you they do know that they are seeing some successes, that security is improving, and that they are seeing some success with economic issues. And I want to give you just a couple of examples of these.

I had made a comment as we were leaving Baghdad the other night, and it was in the evening; so you could see the lights in Baghdad. I had been going in and out to visit our troops since 2003, and for the first time it really looked like a city. You could see the lights on all over the city and cars driving on the streets. You could see outdoor restaurants. You could see colorful awnings. You could see fruit stands and market areas. And it really was beginning to look like a city. And I did a little checking to see what kind of success stories we could find with the work that USAID and some of our organizations are providing to the area to see that commerce stand up and that sense of normalcy return. So let me tell you a quick little story, Mr. Speaker, and I think this is great.

We love success stories. We love it when we have someone who by their bootstraps pulls themselves up and realizes a wonderful dream of having a business or building a company. We as Americans love that entrepreneurial spirit. And I loved this story of Amhed who is in the Mansour neighborhood in Baghdad, and he was able to get a \$2,500 microgrant. Now, I know many of our constituents may have been reading in the paper about some of the microgrants and the microbusinesses that are going into Iraq and other countries also to help entrepreneurs start these businesses.

Well, Amhed used his grant to buy chest freezer shelves and an awning to open a store. And the store is now self-sufficient. It is supporting him and his family. He now is a merchant with his store, his produce store, on a corner there in the Mansour neighborhood in Baghdad. And it came about because there was a grant that helped him to get that store in place.

Now, this is important, Mr. Speaker, because you wouldn't go take out a loan and you wouldn't be approved for that loan if there was not the ability to put things in place and begin to see some success in that neighborhood.

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Well, we also have another one, a juice merchant, that used a USAID microfinance grant and opened a juice factory in Baghdad. There's lots of pomegranate juice and orange juice and the different juices they are beginning to manufacture and bottle and sell. This juice factory in Baghdad, with a microfinance grant from our USAID, has created 24 full-time jobs in Baghdad. That one little grant. And that gentleman is now making that juice. Of course, I said, well, I hope that Ahmed is one of the customers of the juice factory and selling that juice in his store on the corner, his produce store on the corner.

Now, I know that there are some who want to say that the security improvements aren't meaningful because we are not seeing enough political progress in Iraq. I will tell you that, and I think we all agree, that that political progress has not moved forward as quickly as we would like to. But we were reminded last week as we visited with Ambassador Crocker and General Petraeus that the Washington clock and the Baghdad clock move at different speeds. You know, I guess that as impatient as many times as we are, we do have to realize this is a country that was under a dictator, a very brutal dictator for over three decades.

We are beginning to see some very encouraging signs of political progress, and I think this year is going to be a year when we see some more of that. Just over a week ago, the Iraqi Parliament did pass what was for them a very difficult law. They have taken a long time to look at de-Ba'athification reform, and that was passed. It has been difficult for them to address that central question of how the Iraqi people are going to deal with their past and with the legacy of Saddam Hussein.

The law has gone through their parliament, and it has passed. It was passed with Shiite sponsorship, which is significant. We have also seen some key Sunni political blocks return to parliament, to return to their work to be a part of the process.

Those are very encouraging steps. They are steps in the right direction. Certainly, the success of the surge has allowed the ability for this to take place. We have also seen the Iraqi Government has developed and is working on an ambitious budget. We are certainly hoping that they are going to do the same thing as they work through this current year. We have seen some encouraging signs of critical power sharing arrangements within the Iraqi Government. Their Prime Minister, Nouri Maliki, is apparently more willing to share power with the three-person presidency council, which represents each of the major sects in Iraq. So that is another sign that is very encouraging to us.

Anybody who is a serious and objective observer can say that the surge has worked. They admit that. We know that we are going to face more debate in the coming year over the length and nature and the size of our mission in Iraq. I would encourage all of my colleagues to take the success of the surge to heart and to be certain that they are not trying to snatch a defeat from the jaws of victory, but that they are being fair to our troops, that they are recognizing the success that these troops have given us in the surge, and that they are taking time to commend and thank the troops and the commanders that are on the ground.

I think it's fair to say, Mr. Speaker, that we all, I know I certainly appreciate those troops and their families, and I appreciate having the opportunity to support them and to let them know how much I appreciate having that opportunity to support them and also to honor them and to honor their families. My hope is that as we go through 2008 and as we look at our legislative agenda, Mr. Speaker, I hope that the work of this body will honor those men and women who honor us

every single day, who honor the legacy of freedom every single day by the way that they choose to carry out their job and by the way they choose to represent this great Nation.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. WYNN (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today after 6 p.m.

Mr. BARTON of Texas (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today after 7 p.m. on account of attending a funeral.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Ms. WOOLSEY) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. MCGOVERN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CUMMINGS, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SPRATT, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. GINGREY) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. ROHRBACHER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CONAWAY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GINGREY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia, for 5 minutes, today.

ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 279, 110th Congress, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 20 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until Wednesday, February 6, 2008, at 2 p.m.

EXPENDITURE REPORTS CONCERNING OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL

Reports concerning the foreign currencies and U.S. dollars utilized for Speaker-Authorized Official Travel during the fourth quarters of 2007 and the first quarter of 2008, pursuant to Public Law 95-384 are as follows:

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, HON. FRANK R. WOLF, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN JAN. 1 AND JAN. 9, 2008

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Hon. Frank R. Wolf		1/1	United States				3	9,544.00			9,544.00
		1/2	Kuwait								
		1/2	Iraq								
		1/3	Kuwait		4	164.00					164.00
		1/5	Jordan			291.00					291.00
		1/6	Israel			2,095.00					2,095.00
		1/9	United States								
Committee total					5	2,550.00		9,544.00			12,094.00

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.
³ Total cost of all commercial flights.
⁴ Hotel bill paid directly from fund site.
⁵ Returned \$500.00 to U.S. Treasury via cashiers check.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, DANIEL F. SCANDLING, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN JAN. 1 AND JAN. 9, 2008

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Daniel Scandling	1/2	1/1	United States								9,544.00
	1/2	1/2	Kuwait								
	1/2	1/3	Iraq								
	1/3	1/4	Kuwait		4 164.00						164.00
	1/5	1/6	Jordan		291.00						291.00
	1/6	1/9	Israel		2,095.00						2,095.00
	1/9		United States								
Committee total					5 2,550.00				9,544.00		12,094.00

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.
³ Total cost of all commercial flights.
⁴ Hotel bill paid directly from fund site.
⁵ Returned \$500.00 to U.S. Treasury via cashiers check.

DANIEL SCANDLING, Jan. 22, 2008.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON RULES, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2007

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Hon. Betty Sutton	10/05	10/07	Qatar		220.00				238.00		458.00
	10/07	10/08	Jordan		137.00				142.00		279.00
	10/08	10/09	Germany		174.00				49.00		223.00
Hon. David Dreier	11/26	11/27	Czech Republic		153.00						153.00
	11/27	11/28	India		536.00						536.00
	11/28	11/28	Afghanistan		75.00						75.00
	11/29	11/30	Pakistan		339.00						339.00
	11/30	12/03	India		1,608.00						1,608.00
Brad Smith	12/03	12/04	Hungary		131.00						131.00
	11/26	11/27	Czech Republic		153.00						153.00
	11/27	11/28	India		536.00						536.00
	11/28	11/28	Afghanistan		75.00						75.00
	11/29	11/30	Pakistan		339.00						339.00
	11/30	12/03	India		1,608.00						1,608.00
	12/03	12/04	Hungary		131.00						131.00
Rachel Lehman	11/26	11/27	Czech Republic		153.00						153.00
	11/27	11/28	India		536.00						536.00
	11/28	11/28	Afghanistan		75.00						75.00
	11/29	11/30	Pakistan		339.00						339.00
	11/30	12/03	India		1,608.00						1,608.00
	12/03	12/04	Hungary		131.00						131.00
David Goldenberg	12/14	12/21	Israel		1,602.00		7,594.28		3 660.00		9,856.28
Committee total					10,659.00		7,594.28		1,089.00		19,342.28

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.
³ Lodging.

LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER, Chairman, Jan. 23, 2008.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS OF OFFICIAL CONDUCT, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2007

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Ken Kellner	11/01	11/05	Bahrain		10,343.00						10,991.00
Committee total					10,343.00						10,991.00

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

STEPHANIE TUBBS JONES, Chairman, Jan. 16, 2008.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2007

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²

HOUSE COMMITTEES

Please Note: If there were no expenditures during the calendar quarter noted above, please check the box at right to so indicate and return.

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

BOB FILNER, Chairman, Jan. 15, 2008.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, JOINT COMMITTEE ON TAXATION, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2007

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²

HOUSE COMMITTEES

Please Note: If there were no expenditures during the calendar quarter noted above, please check the box at right to so indicate and return. ¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

MAX BAUCUS, Chairman, Jan. 14, 2008.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS,
ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

5164. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Difenoconazole; Pesticide Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2007-0541; FRL-8343-5] received January 3, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

5165. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Fluroxypyr; Pesticide Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2007-0114; FRL-8343-2] received December 21, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

5166. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Dimethenamid; Pesticide Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2007-0116; FRL-8342-7] received December 21, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

5167. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement; Lead System Integrators [DFARS Case 2006-D051] (RIN: 0750-AF80) received December 21, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

5168. A letter from the Counsel for Legislation and Regulations, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting the Department's final rule — Project-Based Voucher Rents for Units Receiving Low-Income Housing Tax Credits [Docket No. FR-5034-F-02] (RIN: 2577-AC62) received December 20, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

5169. A letter from the Director, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Identity Theft Red Flags and Address Discrepancies Under the Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act of 2003 [Docket ID OCC-2007-0017] (RIN: 1557-AC87) received December 20, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

5170. A letter from the General Counsel, National Credit Union Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Purchase, Sale, and Pledge of Eligible Obligations (RIN: 3133-AD37) received December 20, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

5171. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; West Virginia; Section 110(a)(1) 8-Hour Ozone Maintenance Plan and Amendments to the 1-Hour Ozone Maintenance Plan [EPA-R03-OAR-2007-0215; FRL-8513-8] received January

3, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5172. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Michigan: Final Authorization of State Hazardous Waste Management Program Revision [Docket No. EPA-R05-RCRA-2007-0722; FRL-8514-1] received January 3, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5173. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Revisions to Consolidated Federal Air Rule; Correction [EPA-HQ-OAR-2007-0429; FRL-8511-7] (RIN: 2060-A045) received December 21, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5174. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Regulation of Oil-Bearing Hazardous Secondary Materials From the Petroleum Refining Industry Processed in a Gasification System to Produce Synthesis Gas [RCRA-2002: FRL-8511-5] (RIN: 2050-AE78) received December 21, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5175. A letter from the Acting Director Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Summer Flounder Fishery; Commercial Quota Harvested for New York [Docket No. 061020273-7001-03] (RIN: 0648-XD45) received December 20, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5176. A letter from the Acting Director Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Bluefish Fishery; Quota Transfer [Docket No. 061109296-7009-02] (RIN: 0648-XD65) received December 20, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5177. A letter from the Acting Director Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fraser River Sockeye and Pink Salmon Fisheries; Inseason Orders (RIN: 0648-XD05) received December 20, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5178. A letter from the Secretary, Federal Maritime Commission, Federal Maritime Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Amendment to Regulations Governing the Filing of Proof of Financial Responsibility [Docket No. 07-06] (RIN: 3072-AC33) received January 4, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5179. A letter from the Director of Regulations Management, Office of Regulation Policy & Management, VA, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's

final rule — Dependents' Educational Assistance (RIN: 2900-AM72) received January 4, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

5180. A letter from the Director of Regulations Management (00REG), Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule — Education: Approval of Accredited Courses for VA Education Benefits (RIN: 2900-AM80) received January 4, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

5181. A letter from the Director of Regulations Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule — VA Acquisition Regulation: Plain Language Rewrite (RIN: 2900-AK78) received January 4, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

5182. A letter from the Acting SSA Regulations Officer, Social Security Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Privacy and Disclosure of Official Records and Information [Docket No. SSA-2007-0067] (RIN: 0960-AG14) received December 20, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON
PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts: Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 3521. A bill to improve the Operating Fund for public housing of the Department of Housing and Urban Development; with an amendment (Rept. 110-521). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

DISCHARGE OF COMMITTEE

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XII the Committee on Energy and Commerce discharged from further consideration. H.R. 2830 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. RAHALL (for himself, Mrs. CAPITO, and Mr. MOLLOHAN):

H.R. 5151. A bill to designate as wilderness additional National Forest System lands in the Monongahela National Forest in the State of West Virginia, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. KIRK (for himself, Mr. KLEIN of Florida, Mr. CROWLEY, and Ms. BERKLEY):

H.R. 5152. A bill to authorize assistance for ethnic and religious minorities in Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. KANJORSKI:

H.R. 5153. A bill to increase temporarily the conforming loan limits of the Federal National Mortgage Association and the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation in certain areas, enhance mortgage market liquidity, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. FALCOMA VAEGA:

H.R. 5154. A bill to condition further increases in the minimum wage applicable to American Samoa and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands on a determination by the Secretary of Labor that such increases will not have an adverse impact on the economies of American Samoa and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Ms. SHEA-PORTER:

H.R. 5155. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to prohibit the Secretary of Veterans Affairs from collecting certain debts to the United States in the case of veterans who die as a result of a service-connected disability incurred or aggravated on active duty in a combat zone, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. CLAY (for himself and Mr. WAMP):

H.R. 5156. A bill to require a study of the feasibility of establishing the John Lewis Civil Rights Trail System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts (for himself, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. FILNER, Ms. CLARKE, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. BUCHER, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. TIERNEY, Ms. NORTON, Mr. DEFAZIO, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. FARR, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. HINCHAY, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. KUCINICH, Ms. LEE, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. COHEN, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. OLVER, Mr. ACKERMAN, Mr. HARE, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. McDERMOTT, Mr. HONDA, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. WYNN, Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. LANTOS, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. STARK, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. PAUL, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. WATT, Mr. CLAY, Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. MATHESON, Mr. SNYDER, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. NADLER, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. RUSH, and Mr. LEWIS of Georgia):

H.R. 5157. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to repeal the provisions prohibiting persons convicted of drug offenses from receiving student financial assistance; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. BOSWELL:

H.R. 5158. A bill to direct the United States Postal Service to designate a single, unique ZIP Code for Windsor Heights, Iowa; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania (for himself and Mr. EHLERS):

H.R. 5159. A bill to establish the Office of the Capitol Visitor Center within the Office of the Architect of the Capitol, headed by the Chief Executive Officer for Visitor Services, to provide for the effective management and administration of the Capitol Visitor Center, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committee on Rules, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. KIND (for himself and Mr. HULSHOF):

H.R. 5160. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to encourage retirement savings by modifying requirements with respect to employer-established IRAs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Education and Labor, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. WU:

H.R. 5161. A bill to provide for the establishment of Green Transportation Infrastructure Research and Technology Transfer Centers, and for other purpose; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Science and Technology, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BRADY of Texas:

H.R. 5162. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on a certain chemical used in the production of textiles; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BRADY of Texas:

H.R. 5163. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on a certain chemical that is used for dyeing apparel home textiles; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BRADY of Texas:

H.R. 5164. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on a certain chemical that is used for dyeing apparel home textiles; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BRADY of Texas:

H.R. 5165. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on 4-Anilino-3-nitro-N-phenylbenzenesulphonamide; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BRADY of Texas:

H.R. 5166. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Naphthalenedisulfonic acid; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BRALEY of Iowa (for himself,

Mr. CONYERS, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. SESTAK, Mr. HARE, Ms. SUTTON, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. KAGEN, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. KILPATRICK, Mr. HALL of New York, Mr. WELCH of Vermont, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. WALZ of Minnesota, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. CARNAHAN, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut, Ms. LEE, Ms. CASTOR, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, and Ms. HOOLEY):

H.R. 5167. A bill to amend the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 to remove the authority of the President to waive certain provisions; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida (for herself, Mr. YOUNG of Florida, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida, Mr. BOYD of Florida, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. KELLER,

Mr. PUTNAM, Mr. WELDON of Florida, Mr. MAHONEY of Florida, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. MEEK of Florida, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. FEENEY, Ms. ROSLEHTINEN, Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida, Mr. MACK, Mr. BUCHANAN, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mr. STEARNS, Mr. MICA, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. CASTOR, Mr. KLEIN of Florida, and Mr. WEXLER):

H.R. 5168. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 19101 Cortez Boulevard in Brooksville, Florida, as the "Cody Grater Post Office Building"; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. CANTOR:

H.R. 5169. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reduce marginal income tax rates on corporations; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. CARNEY (for himself and Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi):

H.R. 5170. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to provide for a privacy official within each component of the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. COSTA (for himself and Mr. RAHALL):

H.R. 5171. A bill to reauthorize and amend the National Geologic Mapping Act of 1992; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. DONNELLY (for himself, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. ELLSWORTH, and Mr. BUCHANAN):

H.R. 5172. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide recovery rebates to certain individuals receiving social security benefits; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. ELLISON (for himself, Mr. COOPER, Mr. DUNCAN, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, Mr. RAMSTAD, Mr. WALZ of Minnesota, Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota, Mr. CUMMINGS, and Mr. OBERSTAR):

H.R. 5173. A bill to temporarily delay application of proposed changes to Medicaid payment rules for case management and targeted case management services; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania (for himself, Mr. POMEROY, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, and Ms. ROSLEHTINEN):

H.R. 5174. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to continue the ability of hospitals to supply a needed workforce of nurses and allied health professionals by preserving funding for hospital operated nursing and allied health education programs; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. FOXX (for herself, Mr. LINDER, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. TANCREDO, Mr. WELDON of Florida, Mr. KINGSTON, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. DOOLITTLE, Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey, Mr. PENCE, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. PAUL, Mr. FLAKE, Mrs. MYRICK, Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland, and Mrs. CUBIN):

H.R. 5175. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the withholding of income and social security taxes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas (for himself and Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 5176. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act with respect to mental health services; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. GRIJALVA:

H.R. 5177. A bill to provide for a land exchange involving certain Bureau of Land Management lands in Pima County, Arizona,

for the purpose of consolidating Federal land ownership within the Las Cienegas National Conservation Area, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. GRIJALVA (for himself, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, and Ms. CLARKE):

H.R. 5178. A bill to enhance public safety by improving the reintegration of youth offenders into the families and communities to which they are returning; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committees on Education and Labor, and Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. HOLT (for himself, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. EHLERS, and Mr. MARKEY):

H.R. 5179. A bill to establish in the Department of Education an Assistant Secretary for International and Foreign Language Education and an Office of International and Foreign Language Education; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. LOEBSACK (for himself, Mr. BOSWELL, and Mr. BRALEY of Iowa):

H.R. 5180. A bill making supplemental appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for the Department of Justice's Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant program; to the Committee on Appropriations, and in addition to the Committee on the Budget, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. MALONEY of New York (for herself, Ms. SUTTON, Mr. McNULTY, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Ms. WOOLSEY, and Mr. ABERCROMBIE):

H.R. 5181. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to establish a program of research regarding the risks posed by the presence of dioxin, synthetic fibers, and other additives in feminine hygiene products, and to establish a program for the collection and analysis of data on toxic shock syndrome; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mrs. MALONEY of New York:

H.R. 5182. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on cyclopentadecanolate; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. MALONEY of New York:

H.R. 5183. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on cis-3-Hexen-1-ol; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. MALONEY of New York:

H.R. 5184. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on 2-methyl-3-(3,4 methylenedioxyphenyl) propanal; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. MALONEY of New York:

H.R. 5185. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on polytetramethylene ether glycol; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. MALONEY of New York:

H.R. 5186. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on magnesium zinc aluminum hydroxide carbonate hydrate; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. MALONEY of New York:

H.R. 5187. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on Magnesium aluminum hydroxide carbonate hydrate; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. MALONEY of New York:

H.R. 5188. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on C12-18 alkenes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MEEK of Florida:

H.R. 5189. A bill to establish the Orange Juice Promotion and Production Improve-

ments Trust Fund; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. MILLER of Florida:

H.R. 5190. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on certain acrylic fiber tow; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. PAUL:

H.R. 5191. A bill to prohibit the use of Federal funds to carry out the highway project known as the "Trans-Texas Corridor"; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Ms. PRYCE of Ohio (for herself and Mr. MURTHA):

H.R. 5192. A bill to improve the palliative and end-of-life care provided to children with life-threatening conditions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. RUSH (for himself, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. GUTIERREZ, and Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas):

H.R. 5193. A bill to award a congressional gold medal to Barry C. Scheck and to Peter Neufeld in recognition of their outstanding service to the Nation and to justice as co-founders and co-directors of the Innocence Project; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mrs. TAUSCHER:

H.R. 5194. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on Clethodim; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. TAUSCHER:

H.R. 5195. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Red 30-kilovolt high-frequency cable, 30 square millimeters; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. TAUSCHER:

H.R. 5196. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on UNITRONIC LIYCY-type 350-volt Multi-conductor copper cable, PVC (Polyvinylcarbonate) insulation, 8.9 millimeter diameter; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. TAUSCHER:

H.R. 5197. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on White plastic mounting flange, 286 millimeter diameter, 45 millimeter thickness; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. TAUSCHER:

H.R. 5198. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Cathode high voltage connector; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. TAUSCHER:

H.R. 5199. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Stainless steel Vacuum Feed-Through for optical sensor, 41 millimeter diameter, MANSKE part number 43935/2; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. TAUSCHER:

H.R. 5200. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on fiber optic amplifier type ILVS 19/4 with metal housing; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. TAUSCHER:

H.R. 5201. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on single light optical sensor, stainless steel casing, 0.5 meter-long, 2.2 millimeter diameter cable; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. TAUSCHER:

H.R. 5202. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on optical fiber sensor, consisting of a 10 millimeter diameter lens built in an M14 screw feedthrough with 10-meter long fiber optic cable of 2.2 millimeter diameter; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. TAUSCHER:

H.R. 5203. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on 2.5-Kilowatt drive motor, Flange diameter 160 millimeter, shaft diameter 30 mil-

limeter; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. TAUSCHER:

H.R. 5204. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on fork-style optical sensor with special vacuum application, 2.5 meter-long cable, stainless steel casing and sheath material; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. TAUSCHER:

H.R. 5205. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on cathode drive unit includes 89-Kilowatt Gearmotor, synchronous belt, stainless steel bearing housing, bearings, stainless steel drive shaft, cooling water lead-through, stainless steel driveflange connection, rubber seals, PEEK high performance plastic, insulators, water fittings and metric stainless steel hardware; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. TAUSCHER:

H.R. 5206. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Steel Ball Bearing, 62 millimeters outside diameter x 30 millimeters inside diameter x 16 millimeters width; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. TAUSCHER:

H.R. 5207. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Gas Flow Control Valve, 500 milliliters minimum; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. TAUSCHER:

H.R. 5208. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on 1.25 inch Stainless Steel Tee Pipe Fitting; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. TAUSCHER:

H.R. 5209. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Pressure Hose with red jacket, 42 millimeters outside diameter x 32 millimeters inside diameter; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. TAUSCHER:

H.R. 5210. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Black NBR rubber O-ring, 3150 millimeters diameter, 9896 millimeters circumference; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. TAUSCHER:

H.R. 5211. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on stainless steel Hose Barb, 88.5 millimeters length x 34 millimeters diameter; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. TAUSCHER:

H.R. 5212. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Gas Flow Control Valve 100 milliliters minimum; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. TAUSCHER:

H.R. 5213. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Mounting Fixture, 230 millimeters length x 150 millimeters width x 12 millimeters thick; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. TAUSCHER:

H.R. 5214. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on feedthrough with housing 125 millimeters long, Housing mounting flange 180 millimeters outside diameter x 20 millimeters thick; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. TAUSCHER:

H.R. 5215. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on coupling assembly with 2 steel hubs with 32 millimeter outside diameter, 18 millimeter inside diameter, and a white plastic sleeve with 46 millimeter outside diameter and 28 millimeter width; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. UDALL of Colorado:

H.R. 5216. A bill to promote as a renewable energy source the use of biomass removed from forest lands in connection with hazardous fuel reduction projects on certain Federal land, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. UDALL of Colorado:

H.R. 5217. A bill to direct the Administrator of the Small Business Administration

to conduct a demonstration program to raise awareness about telework among small business employers, and to encourage such employers to offer telework options to employees, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business.

By Mr. UDALL of Colorado (for himself and Mr. FILNER):

H.R. 5218. A bill to promote fire-safe communities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committees on Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Science and Technology, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. WEINER:

H.R. 5219. A bill to authorize appropriations for the seafood inspection regime of the Food and Drug Administration; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. WU (for himself, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. DEFAZIO, Ms. HOOLEY, and Mr. WALDEN of Oregon):

H.R. 5220. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 3800 SW 185th Avenue in Beaverton, Oregon, as the "Major Arthur Chin Post Office Building"; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. AKIN (for himself and Mr. CLEAVER):

H. Con. Res. 284. Concurrent resolution encouraging the President to proclaim 2008 as "The National Year of the Bible"; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. KANJORSKI (for himself, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. WILSON of Ohio, Mr. ALTMIRE, Mr. MURTHA, Mr. CARNEY, Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. CHANDLER, Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. WOLF, and Mr. SPACE):

H. Con. Res. 285. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of the Congress that a postage stamp should be issued honoring the Nation's coal miners; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. MORAN of Virginia (for himself, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Mr. WOLF, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. CLAY, Mr. TOWNS, Ms. KILPATRICK, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. RUSH, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. OBERSTAR, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. HALL of Texas, Mr. SHAYS, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. WATT, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mr. SCOTT of Georgia, Ms. WATSON, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. ROSS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. CARDOZA, Mr. SERRANO, and Mr. MCGOVERN):

H. Con. Res. 286. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that Earl Lloyd should be recognized and honored for breaking the color barrier and becoming the first African American to play in the National Basketball Association League 58 years ago; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. UDALL of Colorado (for himself, Mr. GORDON, Mr. HALL of Texas, Mr. FEENEY, and Mr. LAMPSON):

H. Con. Res. 287. Concurrent resolution celebrating the 50th anniversary of the United States Explorer I satellite, the world's first scientific spacecraft, and the

birth of the United States space exploration program; to the Committee on Science and Technology.

By Mr. KUHL of New York (for himself and Mr. ARCURI):

H. Res. 946. A resolution recognizing the Canandaigua Veterans Affairs Medical Center on its 75th anniversary; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. ROYCE (for himself, Mr. LANTOS, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. FALCOMA, Ms. WATSON, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. FOSSELLA, Mr. ACKERMAN, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. HONDA, Mr. MCCOTTER, and Mr. MORAN of Virginia):

H. Res. 947. A resolution congratulating Lee Myung-Bak on his election to the Presidency of the Republic of Korea and wishing him well during his time of transition and his inauguration on February 25, 2008; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas (for herself, Mr. MOORE of Kansas, Mr. TIAHRT, and Mr. MORAN of Kansas):

H. Res. 948. A resolution congratulating the University of Kansas ("KU") football team for winning the 2008 FedEx Orange Bowl and having the most successful year in program history; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. BROUN of Georgia (for himself, Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina, and Mr. BARROW):

H. Res. 949. A resolution recognizing and commending the 100th Anniversary of the Augusta Metro Chamber of Commerce; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida:

H. Res. 950. A resolution recognizing the 19th annual "Zora Neale Hurston Festival of the Arts and Humanities" which will be held from January 26, 2008, to February 3, 2008; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey (for himself, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. HENSARLING, and Ms. BERKLEY):

H. Res. 951. A resolution condemning the ongoing Palestinian rocket attacks on Israeli civilians, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. KLEIN of Florida (for himself, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. HOLDEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. ROSS, Mr. MCINTYRE, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. KELLER, Mr. SHULER, Mr. COHEN, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. SUTTON, Mr. ALTMIRE, Mr. EHLERS, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. BACA, Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California, Mr. HINGHEY, Mr. SESTAK, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mr. LAMPSON, Ms. BORDALLO, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mr. INSLEE, Mr. MEEK of Florida, Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas, Mr. SKELTON, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. FILNER, Mr. ROTHMAN, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. WALZ of Minnesota, Mr. ETHERIDGE, Mr. MAHONEY of Florida, Mr. CLEAVER, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. LYNCH, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. WYNN, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, Mr. HONDA, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HILL, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. FARR, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. MATHESON, Mr. MOORE of Kansas, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. MITCHELL, Mr. KAGEN, Mr. WU, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. CARNEY, Mr. GORDON, Mr. WELCH of Vermont, Mrs. CAPPS,

Mr. BERRY, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. ORTIZ, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. REYNOLDS, Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. ARCURI, Mr. KUHL of New York, Mr. SOUDER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. LANTOS, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. RAMSTAD, Mr. SIRES, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. WALDEN of Oregon, Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey, Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky, Mr. KIRK, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. BOSWELL, Mr. RODRIGUEZ, Mr. REYES, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. RUSH, Mr. HOLT, Ms. CASTOR, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. LINCOLN DAVIS of Tennessee, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. LANGEVIN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. SHAYS, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. REHBERG, Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California, Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, Mr. HARE, Mr. CHANDLER, Mr. WILSON of Ohio, Ms. WATSON, Mr. KIND, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. HALL of New York, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. FATTAH, Ms. KILPATRICK, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. ACKERMAN, Mr. KILDEE, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. FOSSELLA, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. PUTNAM, and Ms. GRANGER):

H. Res. 952. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that there should be established a National Teacher Day to honor and celebrate teachers in the United States; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. KNOLLENBERG:

H. Res. 953. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that all Americans should participate in a moment of silence to reflect upon the service and sacrifice of members of the United States Armed Forces both at home and abroad; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California (for herself, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. REYES, Ms. GHFFORDS, Mr. CARNEY, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. DAVIS of Alabama, Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California, Mr. RODRIGUEZ, Mr. GALLEGLY, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. PENCE, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. HILL, Mr. SHULER, Mr. WALZ of Minnesota, Mr. SPACE, Mr. ELLSWORTH, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. HALL of New York, Mr. MAHONEY of Florida, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mr. DONNELLY, and Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas):

H. Res. 954. A resolution honoring the life of senior Border Patrol agent Luis A. Aguilar, who lost his life in the line of duty near Yuma, Arizona, on January 19, 2008; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII, memorials were presented and referred as follows:

225. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the Legislature of the State of Alaska, relative to House Joint Resolution No. 11 urging the Congress of the United States to take action to honor the sovereignty of the individual states to regulate and command the National Guard of the states; to the Committee on Armed Services.

226. Also, a memorial of the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, relative to House Resolution No.

447 expressing support for the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2007 and urging the Congress of the United States to override the veto; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

227. Also, a memorial of the Senate of the State of Michigan, relative to Senate Resolution No. 131 requesting the Congressional Joint Committee on the Library to approve the replacement of Michigan's statue of Zachariah Chandler with an image of President Gerald R. Ford as part of the National Statuary Hall collection; to the Committee on House Administration.

228. Also, a memorial of the Legislature of the State of Alaska, relative to Senate Joint Resolution No. 6 urging the Congress of the United States to defeat H.R. 39, titled "To preserve the Arctic coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska, as wilderness in recognition of its extraordinary natural ecosystems and for the permanent good of present and future generations of Americans"; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

229. Also, a memorial of the Legislature of the State of Alaska, relative to House Joint Resolution No. 21 urging the Congress of the United States to enact legislation to require congressional approval before an area in the United States may be considered for an international designation; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

230. Also, a memorial of the Legislature of the State of Alaska, relative to House Joint Resolution No. 17 encouraging Coeur Alaska, Inc., to pursue all legal options to resolve the issues presented in Southeast Alaska Conservation Council v. United States Army Corps of Engineers on behalf of itself and consistent with the state's efforts to enforce its rights as a state over its resources; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

PRIVATE BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

Mr. REYES introduced a bill (H.R. 5221) for the relief of Kumi Iizuka-Barcena; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 181: Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.

H.R. 197: Mr. ELLSWORTH.

H.R. 241: Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. FEENEY, Mr. PENCE, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. HERGER, Mr. THORBERRY, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee, Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. PITTS, and Mr. BURGESS.

H.R. 281: Mr. THOMPSON of California.

H.R. 550: Mr. PORTER.

H.R. 551: Mr. WALDEN of Oregon.

H.R. 583: Mr. SESTAK.

H.R. 585: Mrs. LOWEY.

H.R. 621: Mr. LOBIONDO.

H.R. 648: Mrs. CUBIN and Mr. HOLDEN.

H.R. 685: Mr. ROSS, Mr. BURGESS, and Mr. MARCHANT.

H.R. 706: Mr. CONYERS.

H.R. 821: Mr. GONZALEZ.

H.R. 871: Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California.

H.R. 891: Ms. CLARKE, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, and Mr. CALVERT.

H.R. 913: Mr. BACHUS.

H.R. 946: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 1000: Mr. DICKS.

H.R. 1017: Ms. WATERS and Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California.

H.R. 1102: Mr. SMITH of Washington.

H.R. 1223: Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas.

H.R. 1232: Mr. REBERG.

H.R. 1390: Mr. WU.

H.R. 1419: Mr. WEXLER.

H.R. 1428: Mrs. CAPITO.

H.R. 1444: Mrs. LOWEY.

H.R. 1456: Mr. SIREs.

H.R. 1497: Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 1540: Mrs. BLACKBURN.

H.R. 1553: Mr. JACKSON of Illinois.

H.R. 1584: Ms. MATSUI and Mr. RADANOVICH.

H.R. 1589: Mrs. CAPITO.

H.R. 1609: Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. REYES, and Mr. WHITFIELD of Kentucky.

H.R. 1610: Mr. HASTINGS of Washington, Mr. REYNOLDS, and Mr. ALTMIRE.

H.R. 1621: Mr. JACKSON of Illinois.

H.R. 1653: Ms. RICHARDSON, Mr. SESTAK, and Mr. MICHAUD.

H.R. 1691: Mr. WEXLER.

H.R. 1738: Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 1742: Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. ROSKAM, and Mr. MORAN of Virginia.

H.R. 1748: Mr. MANZULLO.

H.R. 1772: Mr. ELLSWORTH.

H.R. 1789: Mr. GOODLATTE.

H.R. 1801: Mr. DOGGETT.

H.R. 1818: Mrs. CAPITO.

H.R. 1829: Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida.

H.R. 1843: Mr. LOBIONDO.

H.R. 1881: Mr. KING of New York.

H.R. 1953: Mr. ELLISON and Mr. JACKSON of Illinois.

H.R. 1956: Ms. RICHARDSON.

H.R. 1964: Mr. RUPPERSBERGER.

H.R. 1965: Mr. BRALEY of Iowa.

H.R. 1975: Ms. MATSUI.

H.R. 2032: Mr. ELLISON.

H.R. 2045: Mr. WEXLER and Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California.

H.R. 2049: Mr. ISRAEL.

H.R. 2054: Mr. SIMPSON.

H.R. 2091: Mr. MOORE of Kansas.

H.R. 2188: Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas.

H.R. 2267: Mr. SESTAK and Mr. HOLDEN.

H.R. 2353: Ms. CLARKE.

H.R. 2464: Mr. WAMP.

H.R. 2495: Mr. MICHAUD and Mr. PATRICK MURPHY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 2510: Mr. HALL of Texas.

H.R. 2580: Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky.

H.R. 2596: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.

H.R. 2604: Ms. BALDWIN.

H.R. 2611: Mr. BRALEY of Iowa.

H.R. 2676: Mr. KING of New York.

H.R. 2685: Mr. MAHONEY of Florida.

H.R. 2686: Mr. MAHONEY of Florida.

H.R. 2702: Mr. COURTNEY.

H.R. 2708: Mr. ACKERMAN.

H.R. 2711: Mr. PORTER.

H.R. 2712: Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 2734: Mrs. BONO Mack and Mr. MCKEON.

H.R. 2802: Mr. DELAHUNT.

H.R. 2840: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.

H.R. 3014: Mr. NADLER.

H.R. 3016: Mr. UDALL of Colorado.

H.R. 3051: Mrs. MUSGRAVE.

H.R. 3057: Mr. HINOJOSA.

H.R. 3182: Mr. MORAN of Virginia.

H.R. 3185: Mr. MICHAUD.

H.R. 3232: Mr. BILBRAY, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, and Mrs. CAPITO.

H.R. 3298: Mr. FORTUÑO and Mr. KUCINICH.

H.R. 3314: Mr. RANGEL.

H.R. 3363: Mr. SMITH of Nebraska and Mr. KIND.

H.R. 3378: Mr. HONDA, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, and Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas.

H.R. 3439: Mr. SESTAK and Mr. DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 3547: Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida.

H.R. 3609: Mr. SARBANES and Mr. DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 3616: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.

H.R. 3622: Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. CLEAVER, and Mr. WEXLER.

H.R. 3689: Mr. GONZALEZ and Ms. BALDWIN.

H.R. 3697: Mr. WEXLER.

H.R. 3717: Mr. KAGEN.

H.R. 3735: Mr. RAMSTAD.

H.R. 3750: Mr. MARSHALL.

H.R. 3797: Mr. SESTAK, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, Ms. GIFFORDS, and Mr. ALTMIRE.

H.R. 3815: Ms. RICHARDSON.

H.R. 3819: Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, and Ms. MATSUI.

H.R. 3825: Mr. BURGESS, Mr. FOSSELLA, Ms. PRYCE of Ohio, Mrs. CAPITO, and Mr. MCHUGH.

H.R. 3846: Mr. WEXLER, Mr. GONZALEZ, and Mr. MEEKS of New York.

H.R. 3852: Mr. LATTA.

H.R. 3899: Mr. GOODE.

H.R. 3934: Mr. ALTMIRE and Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 3980: Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 4044: Mr. WOLF.

H.R. 4061: Mr. EHLERS.

H.R. 4063: Mr. VAN HOLLEN.

H.R. 4088: Mr. KINGSTON.

H.R. 4105: Mr. JACKSON of Illinois.

H.R. 4125: Mr. POE.

H.R. 4126: Mr. DAVIS of Alabama, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. ALLEN, and Mr. HERGER.

H.R. 4236: Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. SCOTT of Georgia, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, and Mr. HILL.

H.R. 4244: Mr. NUNES.

H.R. 4318: Mr. BOYD of Florida.

H.R. 4355: Mr. ALEXANDER, Ms. WATERS, and Mr. SHIMKUS.

H.R. 4461: Mr. PERLMUTTER.

H.R. 4464: Mr. ADERHOLT, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey, Ms. FALLIN, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. BACHUS, Mrs. EMERSON, Mr. SESSIONS, and Mr. FORBES.

H.R. 4544: Mr. HINOJOSA.

H.R. 4651: Mr. GRIJALVA.

H.R. 4833: Mr. SERRANO and Mr. PASTOR.

H.R. 4838: Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, and Ms. ESHOO.

H.R. 4841: Mr. CALVERT.

H.R. 4915: Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina and Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 4930: Mr. YOUNG of Florida, Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina, Mr. LOBIONDO, and Mr. SHUSTER.

H.R. 5032: Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. JONES of North Carolina, Mr. LINDER, Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey, Mr. SOUDER, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. PITTS, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. BROUN of Georgia, Mr. FORBES, Mr. GOODE, and Mr. RENZI.

H.R. 5035: Mr. JACKSON of Illinois.

H.R. 5036: Mr. GORDON, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. ALTMIRE, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. WYNN, Ms. WOOLSEY, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Ms. KILPATRICK, Mr. COOPER, and Mr. JACKSON of Illinois.

H.R. 5056: Mr. WELCH of Vermont.

H.R. 5057: Mr. KILDEE, Mr. SMITH of Washington, and Mr. BERMAN.

H.R. 5058: Mr. HARE, Mrs. CAPPs, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Ms. LEE, Ms. DELAULO, Mr. SESTAK, Ms. WOOLSEY, and Mr. FARR.

H.R. 5060: Mr. MILLER of North Carolina and Mr. CHANDLER.

H.R. 5087: Mr. SHULER, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. KAGEN, and Mr. DEFazio.

H.R. 5105: Mr. HELLER.

H.R. 5109: Mr. BARTON of Texas, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. GOODE, Mr. JONES of North Carolina, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. RADANOVICH, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. TANCREDO, Mr.

McCOTTER, Mr. STEARNS, Mr. DEAL of Georgia, and Mr. FOSSELLA.

H.R. 5124: Mr. SAXTON, Mr. GRAVES, Mr. BILBRAY, Mr. GINGREY, Mr. COBLE, Mrs. MYRICK, and Mr. MARCHANT.

H.R. 5132: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida.

H.R. 5143: Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. ORTIZ, Mr. SIRES, Mr. PASTOR, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. REYES, and Mr. BACA.

H.J. Res. 6: Mr. DENT.

H.J. Res. 67: Mr. MARSHALL.

H. Con. Res. 32: Mr. YOUNG of Florida, Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS, and Mr. MITCHELL.

H. Con. Res. 40: Mr. STUPAK.

H. Con. Res. 70: Mrs. DAVIS of California and Ms. BALDWIN.

H. Con. Res. 244: Mr. REYES, Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California, and Mr. HOLDEN.

H. Con. Res. 263: Mr. NUNES, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. LATTI, Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland, Mr. HASTINGS of Washington, Mr. FOSSELLA, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. ROYCE, and Mr. PETRI.

H. Con. Res. 267: Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. COLE of Oklahoma, and Mr. LATOURETTE.

H. Con. Res. 278: Mr. CALVERT, Mr. FOSSELLA, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. WU, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. BOSWELL, and Ms. WATSON.

H. Con. Res. 280: Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. WATSON, Ms. SUTTON, Ms. CLARKE, Mr. MEEK of Florida, Mr. DAVIS of Alabama, and Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California.

H. Res. 102: Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin.

H. Res. 373: Mr. CROWLEY and Mr. ROYCE.

H. Res. 530: Mr. MARKEY.

H. Res. 556: Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky and Mr. COLE of Oklahoma.

H. Res. 758: Mr. LAMBORN.

H. Res. 783: Mr. ADERHOLT.

H. Res. 792: Mrs. LOWEY.

H. Res. 796: Mr. KUHL of New York.

H. Res. 821: Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey.

H. Res. 834: Ms. GIFFORDS.

H. Res. 848: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina and Mr. COLE of Oklahoma.

H. Res. 868: Mr. WEXLER.

H. Res. 881: Mr. HOEKSTRA.

H. Res. 892: Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. GORDON, and Mr. RAHALL.

H. Res. 896: Mr. FARR.

H. Res. 917: Ms. HOOLEY, Ms. ESHOO, Mrs. MYRICK, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. WEXLER, Mr.

BILBRAY, Mr. BROUN of Georgia, Mr. GINGREY, Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida, Mr. ROSS, and Mr. MATHESON.

H. Res. 929: Mrs. MYRICK.

H. Res. 930: Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. SPACE, Mrs. DRAKE, Mr. REICHERT, and Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota.

H. Res. 931: Mr. RAMSTAD, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. GOODE, Mr. KUHL of New York, Mr. TIAHRT, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mrs. DRAKE, Mr. ISSA, Mr. STUPAK, and Mr. HALL of Texas.

H. Res. 939: Mr. KIRK, Mrs. MYRICK, and Mr. ROHRBACHER.

H. Res. 943: Mr. CHANDLER, Ms. WOOLSEY, and Mr. HONDA.

H. Res. 944: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.

H. Res. 945: Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN and Mr. ROSS.

PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 3 of rule XII, petitions and papers were laid on the clerk's desk and referred as follows:

203. The SPEAKER presented a petition of the City Council of New Orleans, Louisiana, relative to Resolution No. R-07-530 urging the Congress of the United States to appropriate funds for 3,000 Permanent Supportive Housing subsidies for the hurricane — devastated areas of Louisiana; to the Committee on Financial Services.

204. Also, a petition of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, California, relative to Resolution No. 641-07 urging the Federal Government to impose stricter relations on International Ship Traffic and supporting the Marine Vessel Emissions Reduction Act of 2007; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

205. Also, a petition of the Legislature of Rockland County, New York, relative to Resolution No. 574 requesting the Congress of the United States support ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

206. Also, a petition of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, California, relative to Resolution No. 594-07 urging Speaker Nancy Pelosi to continue support and immediately schedule a vote on H.R. 106, which reaffirms the proper recognition of the Armenian Genocide; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

207. Also, a petition of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, California, relative to Resolution No. 569-07 urging neighboring nations and major investors to defend peaceful pro-democracy demonstrators in Burma; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

208. Also, a petition of the Legislature of Rockland County, New York, relative to Resolution No. 584 requesting that the United States Postal Service issue a postal stamp honoring Helen Hayes, October 10, 1900 — March 17, 1993; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

209. Also, a petition of the City Council of Santa Rosa, California, relative to Resolution No. 26998 recommending impeachment of President George W. Bush and Vice President Richard Cheney; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

210. Also, a petition of the Legislature of Ulster County, New York, relative to Resolution No. 392 urging the Congress of the United States to create a Select Committee to investigate the Presidential Administration and to make recommendations regarding grounds for possible impeachment; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

211. Also, a petition of the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners, Florida, relative to Resolution No. R-1246-07 urging the Congress of the United States to reinstate the federal assault weapons ban; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

212. Also, a petition of the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners, Florida, relative to Resolution No. R-1264-07 urging the Florida Legislature to designate NW 7th Avenue from NW 35th Street to 79th Street as Dr. Barbara Carey-Shuler Avenue; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

213. Also, a petition of the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners, Florida, relative to Resolution No. R-1245-07 urging the Florida Legislature to increase the penalties and fines for dog and other animal fighting; jointly to the Committees on Agriculture and the Judiciary.

214. Also, a petition of the Senate of the Associated Students of the University of Nevada, relative to a resolution petitioning the Congress of the United States to pass the DREAM Act; jointly to the Committees on Education and Labor and the Judiciary.