

abroad, and we are engaged in a major effort here at home to protect our citizens. We are asking our citizens for sacrifice; we are asking our citizens to pull together.

Tomorrow, we will have an economic stimulus package from the House Committee on Ways and Means on a partisan basis which hands out \$25 billion to the largest corporations in this country and will take away \$5 billion a year from our State governments at a time when they need it most.

Mr. Speaker, the majority should be embarrassed by this legislation that is coming to the House floor tomorrow. These major American companies in energy areas, in automobiles, they should be embarrassed by this \$25 billion handout. We should turn our back on it and develop a real economic stimulus package for the people of this country.

AIRLINE SECURITY LEGISLATION NEEDED

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BROWN of South Carolina). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, this is day 42 after the attack of September 11, and still this Chamber has not had one single solitary itty-bitty vote to do a darn thing about airline safety. It is incredible to me that tomorrow we will be voting on these giant handouts, corporate tax breaks; and we have done absolutely nothing, Mr. Speaker, for the traveling public of this country to make airlines safer.

Let me tell you why I feel so strongly about this. Thursday I was flying up to New York, and the fellow next to me was going through security. And we have got National Guardsmen standing there, and they are doing the great duty standing there. And our screeners are I think trying to do a little better job.

The guy next to me had a nail clipper, and the screening people said, "Sir, you can't have that." They took the nail clipper and ripped off the little pointed deal to take the nail clipper away from him.

That is great, that we are taking nail clippers away from people. But they did not do anything about the guy's bag that he checked in that could have had 40 pounds of C-4 high explosives in it, that went right into the belly of the airplane I was getting on, with another 150 people getting on, who thought, who thought the bags are checked for explosives in this country.

In fact, they are not, because, Mr. Speaker, the sad fact is that 90 percent probably-plus of the bags that go into our airplanes go straight into the belly of the airplane, and they are not checked for anything. They could have dynamite, they could have nitrates, they could have C-4, they could have gasoline, and they are not checked about that. Do you know what the

House has done about that for the last 40 days is zip.

I have to tell you, Mr. Speaker, I am very frustrated by the majority's refusal to bring up a vote in this Chamber to do anything about airline safety when this incredible risk is being faced by the traveling public.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER).

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. I thank the gentleman for yielding and want to thank him and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. RAMSTAD) for rising also on this.

It is just unbelievable to our constituents when we go home and they ask about airport safety to tell them that we have done nothing; that the committee has completed its work, legislation is prepared to go, the Senate has passed the bill, and on the House floor we have done nothing.

It is even more unbelievable to them when they read one of the reasons the House has not taken action is that you have the leadership in the Republican Party now telling lobbyists that if they do not come and lobby against this legislation, they will not help them out in other pieces of legislation, they will not help them out on things that matter to them.

So what we have now is we have this lobbying game, or fund-raising game, or favors game being played in this Chamber, in this House, against the safety of the American people. It is an outrage to the American people, because the gentleman is so right.

Today I walked all over San Francisco airport. I saw the entire airport. I was in the line so I could get through the machines to clear your carry-on luggage. All that was was the appearance of safety. It was not safety, as the gentleman points out, because we still have not gotten to the point where we have the kinds of technology, the machines, the security, the training, the people in place.

So the gentleman is absolutely right. The leadership of this House on the Republican-side of the aisle absolutely ought to be ashamed. They are breaking faith with the American people on getting this legislation to the floor so that we can get on with it. And it is harming our communities, because the American people are not flying unless they absolutely have to. That is hurting the economies in Florida, Texas, Arizona, California, and the State of Washington and New York and all points in between, because the American people are still nervous. And they ought to be nervous, because this Congress has not addressed this issue.

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, let me tell you, I represent Boeing Company. We make the airplanes. If the airlines do not have passengers, we do not sell airplanes. The majority party is bringing up a stimulus package tomorrow that basically is a tax bill out for some corporate interests, which is okay. That is a legitimate issue at least to vote on.

But the fact of the matter is you could do the biggest stimulus package in this known universe; and if they take down a couple more of our airplanes, the U.S. economy is going in the tank. Boeing is going to have major problems; I will tell you that.

This is an economic and safety issue. To me, it is just absolutely stunning, when we would pass this bill, airline security, that passed 100 to zip in the Senate; and it would pass with overwhelming bipartisan support. If we had a vote on this, Republicans and Democrats would link hands and say we need some modicum of airline safety. This would not be a partisan issue. But the leadership, which wants to hand out these special goods to special interests, is blocking a bipartisan majority in this House to keep planes from being blown up in the sky. I think it is ridiculous.

We have had some good bipartisan cooperation, sending a message to the world that we are united in dealing with this menace. But when it comes time to stand up to the special interests, the majority leadership is not allowing us to do it. And it is wrong; and we are going to talk on this floor, until this gets done, every night.

AIRLINE SAFETY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STRICKLAND) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. STRICKLAND. Mr. Speaker, we are talking about a life and death matter this evening. And I think the American people, if they knew what is happening, would be justifiably outraged, because most people think when they go to an airport and they check their luggage, that that luggage is screened for explosive devices before it is placed in the belly of that airplane. So they get on that airplane, sometimes they allow their families, their children to get on those airplanes, thinking that it is safe to fly.

Now, by law, we have to put a disclaimer on the packs of cigarettes that says if you smoke these cigarettes, you are endangering yourself in certain ways. I believe if we continue to allow the current situation to exist, we should be required to put a disclaimer on airline tickets that says if you get on this airplane, you need to know that it has not been screened, the baggage has not been screened for explosives, and this airplane may explode in mid-air.

Now, I do not want to be overly dramatic or I do not want to be an alarmist, but the American people have a right to accurate, factual information. They have a right to know that although the Senate has voted 100 to nothing to move an airline security bill, this House has refused to even allow that bill to come to this floor so that we can debate it and talk about it and air our differences and have a vote.

The leadership in this House, the Republican leadership in this House, is refusing to allow this bill to even come to this floor. And every day that an American citizen buys an airline ticket and gets on an airplane, they are in danger; and they need to know that.

I had a young stockbroker call me from New York City the other day when he heard about our efforts to get this done. He told me that he had a sister-in-law who was on, I think, the 19th floor of the first tower that was hit by the plane in New York; and thankfully, she was able to get to safety. But this young man said, "I am taking my family on a vacation in early November," and he said "I am outraged because I have always assumed that when I check my luggage, it was screened for explosives." He said, "What can I do to get this legislation passed into law?"

I suggested to that young man that he contact his Senators and that he contact his Representatives in this House, and I shared with him that the Senate has done their work, Republicans and Democrats alike. Not a single dissenting vote in the Senate. The most conservative Senators, the most liberal Senators, all agreed that it is time to take airport security seriously; and they joined together in a bipartisan way. They cast their votes, 100 to nothing.

The American people have a right to ask why is the House not taking action? Why is the House preventing this legislation from coming to this floor for a vote? It is unconscionable. I am convinced that if we do not deal with this legislation, Mr. Speaker, that American citizens some day in the future will get on a plane and it will explode and they will lose their lives. And if that happens, it will be because this House has been negligent and derelict in its duty.

We owe this to the American people. They want it, and the only thing that is keeping it from happening is the leadership on that side of the aisle that refuses to allow this legislation to come to the floor for a vote.

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. STRICKLAND. I yield to the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, I think the gentleman raises a very important point. You know, we have had to have a little bump in the road because of this anthrax issue to prevent us from working. But it is not anthrax that is keeping us from working, it is the poisonous special interests which have got the Republican leadership to refuse to allow the House to vote.

I will tell you, we are going to get over this anthrax thing. We are going to find a way to open our mail, a way to vote. If we do not get the Republican leadership to put this on the agenda, the House is not going to be working.

So I have confidence, we are going to get over the scare, but we have to get over the leadership decision to prevent us from voting.

Mr. STRICKLAND. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time. My friend from Washington, and I took an amendment to the Committee on Rules this evening asking that this be made a part of the stimulus package. That request has been denied. This is just unconscionable.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman raised a very important point. We are not voting on airline security, yet we are voting on a stimulus package, yet the two industries that are most hurt, the airlines and tourism, is there anything in this so-called stimulus package that does anything to get our airlines flying better, any deductions, any support? Is there anything in that stimulus package for the airlines?

Mr. STRICKLAND. Mr. Speaker, Not to my knowledge.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from characterizing actions of the Senate.

MUNICIPAL PREPARATIONS STRATEGIC RESPONSE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise to address the House on the Municipal Preparations Strategic Response Act of 2001, H.R. 3161.

Mr. Speaker, I think it has become clear to a number of Members that September 11 has clearly changed the lives of all American citizens. And, as we reflect on the events of September 11, I do not think it is lost on the Members here about the tremendous heroic effort that was put forward on behalf of the victims of the World Trade Center, of the Pentagon, and those valiant people of Flight 93. But also not lost on the Members of this body and the other body was that it was not the FBI or the CIA or the FAA or the Armed Services that was first to respond to these tragic events of September 11.

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They are local firefighters, police, emergency medical teams, allied health professionals, hospitals. They are, in fact, our first line of defense.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the President for his appointment of Tom Ridge and the emphasis on homeland defense. What the Municipal Preparations Strategic Response Act of 2001 recognizes is that homeland defense begins at home, and it begins with those who are in the front lines, those that respond first.

The genesis for this bill comes from a series of meetings that a number of Members on both sides of the aisle have

been conducting back in their home districts. In the process, what we have heard is that when it comes to the Federal budget with respect to dealing with terrorism, that of approximately \$8.9 billion that is appropriated, only a scant \$300 million makes it back out to our municipalities. The rest remains here in the beltway with Federal agencies.

The concern, of course, is that in our ability to deal with terrorist attacks, we must make sure that all of our frontline responders are well equipped, are well trained, and are well prepared. As important, as many municipalities and many States, as has the great State of California, have prepared for many natural disasters, there is much that we can learn from our local county and State government, and that should all be part of the bottom-up strategic planning that goes forward as Mr. Ridge takes over his most important office of Homeland Defense. But without appropriate funding, without making sure that the first-line responders have the kind of financial aid that they are going to need, this simply will not take place.

Mr. Speaker, I am joined this evening by several of my colleagues who have both conducted hearings and are co-authors of this legislation. Let me prevail first upon the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER), the ranking member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce, who most recently this past week had one of these such meetings.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Connecticut for yielding, and I thank him very much for being the prime mover in this effort to make sure that our local community first-responders are fully engaged as this Nation prepares to deal with the threat of terrorism at the local level, and for coming up with legislation that recognizes the difficulty of doing this, but also provides the resources so that it can be done properly; so that, in fact, assessments can be made at the local level of exactly what those kinds of threats might be to our communities; so that there can be regional cooperation; so that the HAZMAT teams can work together, they can learn to share their resources and their knowledge and their training of their personnel and of their response plans; so that there can be a working together, both up and down the infrastructure of our local communities between police and fire, HAZMAT, public health, private health hospitals, people who are going to be called upon to respond to possibly decontaminate a significant number of citizens, or to help a local agency next to them respond with an attack that could take place there. This is not about getting overly dramatic, but it is recognizing that this is something the local communities have done for many years.

In California we have earthquake plans; we have flood plans; we have fire