

rights throughout the world, must ensure that the rights and freedoms denied to Afghan women for so long are restored as soon as possible.

In my national address this past weekend on behalf of the Democratic Caucus, I pointed out that we must strongly support the funding for resettlement and humanitarian efforts to aid Afghan women. We are at a crossroads, Mr. Speaker, since we have reached a stage of military advantage that few of us expected to reach so quickly. We must find common ground to push ahead to support reconstruction at the same time that the military actions are being concluded.

The women Members of the House of Representatives are working with the U.N. women ambassadors and women's NGOs toward this purpose. We will continue to hold meetings and briefings to give public exposure to all of the concerns I mentioned above. Several of us, as I did on November 15, have introduced bills to authorize the provision of educational and health care assistance to women and children of Afghanistan. My bill, H.R. 3304, has been referred to the Committee on International Relations and awaits a full hearing.

Let me say emphatically, we cannot afford to exclude more than half of Afghanistan's population in helping to bring about an interim settlement and peaceful resolution to this troubled country. Afghan women must be assured of their basic human rights once more; to gain access to safe drinking water and sufficient food; to receive decent health and maternal care; and foremost, to again move freely in their society without being subjected to harassment and abuse. Above all, they must be allowed to practice their religious beliefs as Islamic women, veiled or unveiled, without retribution.

I urge all of us to help these women in Afghanistan regain the basic freedom and freedoms we so cherish as a people. I urge us as Members of the House to join together to forge a comprehensive package of assistance that can help achieve the important objectives being sought by Afghans for goodwill everywhere.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, there is an old African saying that women hold up half of the sky. We must do our utmost, therefore, to ensure that the women of Afghanistan resume their part of this equation and help hold up half of the sky. To do less would imperil all of us in the pursuit of democratic governance and the well-being of a global community. Helping Afghan women to regain their rightful place of national life is one of the best ways I know to combat terrorism in Afghanistan, and on behalf of the American women and people of America, let us begin the rebuilding today.

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

(Mr. LATOURETTE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE PLIGHT OF AFGHANISTAN WOMEN AND CHILDREN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE. Mr. Speaker, first, I would like to say to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILENDER-MCDONALD) and the co-chair of the Women's Caucus, let me thank her for her leadership and for her outstanding commitment, on behalf of the women, to the women of Afghanistan. I would like to associate myself with her remarks, in particular to acknowledge the Women's Caucus, and to make note of the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SOLIS) who I joined just about 2 weeks ago on a briefing on Afghanistan women and children. So I rise today to add to that discussion.

I will need to also assess the status of children of Afghanistan and to be able to lift up the women, so as we lift the women, we lift the children. We are finding that the children of Afghanistan are working at ages 7 and 8, providing for their families, making 50 cents a day building bricks. Those children do not have an opportunity to go to school, and obviously, under the Taliban regime, the girls were particularly discriminated against, but the boys and the girls found themselves building bricks every day to help support their family. The incomes of the families is so far below poverty of any kind that we would ever recognize. The Afghan children are put to work at a very early age, some 4 and 5, 6 and 7 and 8 years old.

I look forward in the future weeks to hold a briefing on the treatment of the children in Afghanistan. It is particularly important as we face a very troubling scenario on the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan; millions of refugees with no place to go; United Nations fighting to provide food and, as well, comfort to those families who are displaced.

It is now time, I believe, for the United States Government in its victory to now begin to establish an exit strategy, an exit strategy out of Afghanistan, but also a response to how we bring back to life this country that is so destroyed. How do we restore the rights of families, of women, of children? How do we restore the economy? How do we find a place for refugees who are now caught between two borders? How do we find relief and harmony between the governments or at least the to-be-established government of Afghanistan and as well Pakistan?

It is extremely important that as we look to rebuild that we look to the children and we look to the families. It is also extremely important that rather than look to Iraq as the next stop of

our efforts, we should look to an exit strategy and peace.

As we relate to unfinished business, let me briefly say, Mr. Speaker, there is work that this Congress still needs to do. I participated, as many did, in the debate on the floor of the House today in the defense appropriations and the emergency supplemental bill, and I just want to again restate that, until we become proactive, we are not truly fighting terrorism at home.

I am very disappointed that the Obey amendment did not pass, and I emphasize two particular aspects of that, that is, our public health system. Shortly after the September 11 attack, I went home to Houston and met with our emergency responders, the first responders, but particularly our hospitals and public clinics and particularly our public hospital system, already, if you will, bending under the pressure. More importantly, a system that already needed funding; without funding, without funding to address any kind of mass attack that requires the health system to rise to the occasion. No funds were given to that system today.

Not enough funds were given to secure our border, the Canadian border, one of the largest borders, and the southern border. No funds were given to provide enough support for customs inspectors, more border patrol agents. An issue that I am particularly concerned about, the ability of individuals to come across the border with infectious diseases like smallpox, no sufficient number of health inspectors to assist us in that effort. Our work is not done.

Tomorrow, it is proposed that we will be dealing with or we were supposed to be dealing with the Anti-Terrorism Risk Act. Here we are looking again to help industry, and yet we still are not helping the unemployed. Unemployed individuals are growing in numbers. We are in a recession, and yet this Congress has refused to pass legislation to help those unemployed individuals.

Again, in my hometown we are fighting a very difficult and very challenging economic time, and that is, the situation occurring with Enron in the 18th Congressional District. There are many issues dealing with Enron I realize, and I hope that we can retain that company in our community, but the most important issue are the numbers of laid-off employees that we may be facing. We have got to address the unemployment and the recession as it impacts the unemployed in this Nation.

This Congress has unfinished business. It is time for us again to act. It is time for us now, if we want to use the terminology, let us bail out the working men and women of America. Let us finish our unfinished work.

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

(Mr. DEUTSCH 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 Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BLUMENAUER 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 Texas (Mr. BENTSEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BENTSEN 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 New York (Mr. TOWNS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. TOWNS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ECONOMIC STIMULUS

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

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, the 8 million unemployed in this country must be watching the debate on economic stimulus in this House and in the other body with amazement and sadness. They are hardworking families who have struggled to pay their bills, and they now find themselves without work. They have worked hard, played by the rules, trying to build a better future for themselves and their families, and then have been laid off, both before and after September 11.

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They are 137,000 workers in the transportation industry, 136,000 in the hospitality industry, 57,000 in the communications industry, 226,000 in manufacturing, 14,000 in retail, 44,000 in the service sector, 30,000 people in my district at the Boeing company, and in finance and real estate, another 24,000.

The overall jobless rate in this country shot up from 4.9 percent in September to 5.4 percent in October. In Washington State, it went from 5.1 percent to 6.1 percent. That is a 20 percent increase in a month. Now, this does not reflect everything, because there are many families who are denied benefits because the rules have been changed over the last few years. And they, although they contributed, do not have access to these benefits, or they find it virtually impossible to find employment under the present economic conditions.

This week, with several of my colleagues, we introduced H.R. 3741, the Putting Americans First Act, which will at once provide a short-term en-

hanced safety net for those who lost their jobs. This bill empowers the States to expand unemployment coverage for 26 weeks, provide COBRA coverage, that is to cover premiums for health care and also to aid the State Medicaid benefit programs. It also addresses the needs of States whose welfare loads are increasing. Because every time we have a 1 percent increase in unemployment, the welfare load goes up between 5 and 15 percent.

I urge my colleagues to go home to their States, talk to their people, and they will find out that these are the problems that are bothering them. People in this country are hurting and they are mourning. They are having trouble paying their rent, they are having trouble paying their heating bills, they are having trouble putting clothes on their kids and paying for schools, and certainly they are not ready for a medical emergency.

Many States, however, are finding their own budgets in shambles because of the recession and because of tax bills that we passed in this House which took away some of their revenue. We have a situation, as described in The New York Times today, where 30 States are considering tax hikes or wide-spread cuts in benefits. Connecticut, this week, is \$300 million in debt, and they are working in their legislature. Our legislature is working on a \$1.2 billion cut. Infusing Federal money into these State programs through unemployment insurance and Medicaid will help the States continue some of the most important programs.

Now, if we look at it, some States, Illinois, New York, North Dakota, West Virginia, Texas, do not even have enough money for 6 months of unemployment benefits, not even in their local funds. If we do not put some money in from the Federal Government, they are going to have to cut lots of people off. There are an additional 17 States that have less than a year.

Now, crafting an economic stimulus package has been exceedingly difficult because it cuts to the heart of the difference between the Democrat and Republican core values. Here is the Republican argument: Corporations and entrepreneurs are the driving force in this country. They create the jobs. Tax incentives and cuts and rebates will directly help those groups, who will stimulate the economy.

However, the reason corporations are not investing right now to create more jobs is not because they do not have enough cash on hand. Let us not kid ourselves. Lots of large companies have cash. The reason they are not investing right now is because there is a lack of demand. If these companies manufacture products, not enough people buy them. The best way to create jobs is to provide unemployment insurance to laid-off workers so that they can buy the necessities of their life.

Why is it we are told by our colleagues on the other side of the aisle

that we do not have the money for these benefits for people? They say, well, we are just out of luck. But when we passed the budget here and we passed a stimulus package out of the House of Representatives, we could find \$25 billion to give back taxes to the major corporations of this country, who have been paying them since 1986. We had the money.

We should pass this bill and help these people at Christmas time. It is the American way.

COMMEMORATING THE LIVES OF HEROES OF SEPTEMBER 11

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JEFF MILLER of Florida). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WATT) is recognized for half of the remaining time until midnight tonight as the designee of the minority leader, approximately 42 minutes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WATT of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject matter of this special order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WATT of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, several weeks ago my colleague, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. MYRICK), who represents the Congressional District in North Carolina which adjoins my Congressional District, and I got together and decided to try to make an effort to commemorate some of the lives of some of the people who were lost in the events of September 11. This was out of a sense of our own grief and loss, and the feeling that we should try to do something to honor the memory of these heroes.

We have been trying to do 1-minute speeches on several occasions, but that did not work out too well. So we reserved this time this evening to do a more extended special order in memory of some of the heroes who died in the events of September 11.

I am delighted to share this idea and effort with my colleague, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. MYRICK), and I will now yield to her for her opening statement, and then we will go into it.

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding to me.

Very simply, this is just a time for us to say that we appreciated these people. Some of them were heroes to their families, some were heroes to their country, and I have one gentleman in my district whose father was a victim in New York, and I wanted to say just a word about him.

His name was William Wren. My constituent's name is Christopher Wren. William grew up in Brooklyn and