

rush through my comments, and to the chairman of the committee.

I, too, just want to associate myself with the remarks of the earlier debate, but I do want to express the fact that the running of government impacts on the lives of individuals, particularly those who are facing stress, economic stress, and we dealt with this in the unemployment legislation that we passed, but here is my concern as it relates to my particular congressional district.

My concern is public hospitals and the lack of increased funding for Medicaid. I believe it is important to put on the RECORD that we are seeing increased numbers of individuals going to our public hospitals because they have no insurance, they have no alternatives. They are utilizing Medicaid. Some of that obviously has an enormous shortfall, and so the burden is falling upon my local county government.

The longer we stay in this condition, without the actual passing of appropriations bills, the longer we put the burden on the States, the longer we put the burden on local government.

So I just argue that we can pass this CR to the 31st, we passed the other one to the 31st, but all the issues we are concerned about, funding for HIV-AIDS, increased funding for Medicaid, funding Leave No Child Behind, all of that falls, if you will, around our feet and people are suffering. I am just hoping that we will have an opportunity to work in a bipartisan manner on the crisis that is going on in our districts, and we will come to a point where we recognize that we have got to address the needs of working people, but we have also got to address the needs of uninsured and impoverished who need this government to work on their behalf.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) very kindly for his time.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I just ask for a yes vote on this resolution, and I yield back my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

The joint resolution is considered read for amendment, and pursuant to House Resolution 15, the previous question is ordered.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the joint resolution.

The joint resolution was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain requests for special orders without prejudice to regular business.

GRANTING MEMBERS OF HOUSE PRIVILEGE TO EXTEND RE- MARKS AND INCLUDE EXTRA- NEOUS MATERIAL IN CONGRES- SIONAL RECORD FOR FIRST SES- SION OF 108TH CONGRESS

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that for the first session of the 108th Congress all Members be permitted to extend their remarks and to include extraneous material within the permitted limit in that section of the RECORD entitled "Extensions of Remarks."

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

There was no objection.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

ENERGY INDEPENDENCE ACT

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, of course our Nation is on the verge of war, a war against what is called terrorism. It is interesting to think about that word. It is kind of a nebulous term. The enemy moves around the world. I think it is important to take a look at what is happening here at home and to think about who it was that crashed into those trade towers and where they originated from and what might have propelled the hatred that was directed against the people of our country on our home soil.

It is very interesting that the majority of hijackers came from the nation of Saudi Arabia. We look at where they came from, where they were educated and what their motives really were. It is interesting that Saudi Arabia remains the country from which the United States is importing the greatest share of petroleum, and if we look at the balance of accounts today, the primary area in which we have yielded a trade deficit with the world is in imported petroleum.

Oil prices are going up over \$33 a barrel. Every time we go to the gas pump and we buy a gallon, over half of what we spend goes to countries like Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iraq, Venezuela, Nigeria. It is very clear what has been happening. In fact, the current recession we are in, starting in March 2001, was triggered by rising oil prices, and in fact, rising prices at the pump are driving us into deeper recession every day.

When will America see who is controlling the innards of this economy and how where we are importing this oil from is affecting the politics of the world?

□ 2130

Today, I have introduced a bill that will create a biofuels independence initiative for our country. It is time for America to erase our key strategic vulnerability, and that is to imported petroleum and the evil politics that it yields globally.

America has not been serious. Over the decade of the 1980s and 1990s, in spite of four recessions and major oil embargoes, we have continued to import more and more petroleum, which by the year 2050 will indeed be a scarce world resource. Armed forces from throughout the United States have been building air fields in the Middle East. We are being asked to appropriate over \$100 billion to defend the Occidental pipeline in the nation of Colombia. And Venezuela teeters as we sit here this evening.

It is time to pay attention to where the oil comes from, and it is time to do something here at home to revive the sagging and critical state of rural America and, at the same time, create jobs from coast to coast.

One of the most important and neglected areas that we can do something about, if we are serious, is to create the kind of umbrella across our country, as we did with the National Rural Electrification Administration and the National Telephone Administration. We can do the same with the National Biofuels Corporation, so that from coast to coast, where acres can be turned to productive use and move farmers from farming for a government check by going to their mailbox, to farming the marketplace and producing new, renewable clean fuels for America, we will have a win-win-win across every State in this Union.

There are other answers to our energy crisis: cleaning up coal in the Coal Belt that lies between Pennsylvania and Illinois, which has more Btus under the ground than the entire Middle East. Why can we not see it? Why can we not, a Nation that can clean up chemical weapons in Pine Bluff, not find a way to clean up coal? We are not serious.

The bill that we are introducing today says America is long overdue from sending her Marines around the world in special forces to protect the oil highways over the seas. It is time to produce our way to energy independence and create real growth inside this economy.

It should be interesting also for people to know that with every billion dollars of trade deficit that we rack up, that we cannot pay for here at home because of our imports, we have to bond our indebtedness. Today, the United States of America is in hock to about 12 nations around the world, including those very same oil kingdoms, but also nations like China. Not exactly a democratic state.

So I say, think about it, America. Take a look at our Energy Independence Act, H.R. 103. Think about making America energy independent in 10

years. It is time. And it is time to bring our troops home, not conducting any wars for oil on any continent.

HONORING NEW CONSTRUCTION OF JOHN H. STROGER, JR. HOSPITAL OF COOK COUNTY

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, a few days ago the Cook County Board of Commissioners opened a brand new public hospital in Chicago, the John H. Stroger Cook County Hospital. I rise to congratulate and commend President Stroger, the Cook County Board of Commissioners, Ms. Ruth Rothstein, director of the Bureau of Health Services for the county, Mr. Lacy Clay, director of the hospital, and all of the staff for making this milestone possible.

Mr. Speaker, Cook County Hospital is one of the finest hospitals in the Seventh Congressional District and in the nation. Since the 1800s, Cook County Hospital has delivered comprehensive primary, specialty and tertiary health care services to all residents of Cook County, despite socioeconomic status, being uninsured, or their ability to pay. With the astonishing fact that 98 percent of patients who arrive alive at the trauma center survive, this public hospital is well known nationwide.

Cook County Hospital excels in services and expertise for its level I trauma center, burn unit, the largest neonatal intensive care unit in the Midwest and its women's cancer center, which treats 30 percent of the women with breast cancer in the county. Yet Cook County Hospital could not be the model for public hospitals in our Nation if it were not for the hospital's extraordinary staff. The staff is commended for their consistent dedication and enthusiasm for giving the highest quality of care, even when they worked in a hospital constructed over 100 years ago, which made the task of serving the needs of patients much more complicated.

However, the staff has extended their participation of saving lives in the hospital to help save lives in the communities surrounding the hospital. Though half of the admissions in the trauma unit are a result of assaults, and the majority of those from gun violence, the hospital staff decided to pursue efforts to reduce violence by creating a violence prevention task force, which helped spawn the Chicago Violence Prevention Strategic Plan.

However, on Thursday, December 12, 2002, the historic beauty on West Harrison Street that inspired the hit television show "ER" stopped accepting patients. The remarkable medical staff and their patients were moved to the new modern facility, the John H. Stroger, Jr. Hospital of Cook County. The patients and staff will now be air

conditioned in the summer, have access to oxygen hookups in each room, and have a hospital-wide paging system.

And although the staff expects quality of care to improve along with efficiency, they are certain that the largest impact will be on patients, who gained private bathrooms for the first time, televisions and telephones in their rooms, and nurses stations that are in close proximity in the new hospital. This new hospital will have fewer beds and is smaller than the old, but it is a reflection of the changing times, with fewer inpatient and a growing number of outpatient procedures.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that this new development is a testament to Cook County's sensitivity and farsightedness by investing in public health care at a time when cities and counties around the country are closing public hospitals or cutting back services. I commend the Cook County Board in its efforts to make real their mission statement: to provide a comprehensive program of quality care with respect and dignity to the residents of Cook County regardless of their ability to pay.

This new hospital positions the county to do just that, and I again commend them for their farsightedness and their sensitivity in providing high-quality health care to even those with the least ability to pay.

AMERICAN DREAM TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2003

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

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, from the time I arrived in Washington, D.C., now fully more than 2 years ago, I pledged myself to my constituents in eastern Indiana to fight to renew the American Dream; that is that dream of every American, whatever their race, whatever their creed, whatever their color, that they might better themselves and better their families so that not only they but their posterity could enjoy more abundance in this country in every way, material and spiritual, as they pursue that dream.

It is about renewing and restoring the American Dream, Mr. Speaker, that I was proud today to author and to drop into the hopper the American Dream Tax Relief Act of 2003. I am proud that this bill, filed as it is on the very first legislative day of the 108th Congress, is not only my work but the work of some 33 original cosponsors, including many distinguished leaders of this institution and chairmen of major committees.

The American Dream Tax Relief Act, Mr. Speaker, is, quite simply put, an act that would dramatically reduce the taxes on capital gains in this country from their rate, which varies everywhere from 28 percent down to 8 percent, to a single flat capital gains tax rate of 10 percent. The enthusiasm with which this was greeted by my col-

leagues in just a few short hours of trafficking the idea here on Capitol Hill has greatly encouraged me that this is an idea whose time has come.

Mr. Speaker, I would offer to you that while the President of the United States, traveling as he did to the Economic Club of Chicago, did much this week to set the stage for recovery from recession, now is the time for us in this Congress to go beyond strategies for aiding those who are struggling with unemployment and layoffs, as we did earlier today, to go beyond even the President's thoughtful effort to bring the recession finally to a close. We need to begin to pursue, Mr. Speaker, economic policies that, in sum total, will explode the American Dream for an unprecedented generation of our citizens.

Only a significant reduction in taxes on capital will succeed in unleashing the entrepreneurial energy that is buried in the morass of high taxes and overregulation. Reduced taxes on capital will enable working families to save for the future or use invested funds for immediate financial obligations without fear of excessive tax penalties. American families, not the government, will have a greater power, Mr. Speaker, to decide what it is they do with their money. And for all of our great wisdom in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker, it seems like every time we give the American people more power over their own money, the Nation and even the coffers of government benefit.

Now, some will argue as we proceed forward with this tax relief measure that we cannot afford this in these times of Federal red ink and deficits and a growing national debt. But the truth is, Mr. Speaker, that the last time the capital gains tax was cut, 1997, under the Clinton administration, prior to the cut, at 28 percent, the capital gains tax generated some \$62 billion per annum to the Federal Government. Within 2 years following the 8 percent cut in the capital gains tax, it became a program that generated \$109 billion to the Federal Government.

It is one of those ironies in a dynamic model of economics that when we lower the tax rate, we actually encourage entrepreneurship, encourage investment, and encourage people to move dollars out of passive assets into productive assets. And, in so doing, not only do the American people win, but the government wins with higher revenues.

This has been the unflagging experience of the capital gains tax when President Kennedy reduced it, when President Reagan reduced it, and even when President Clinton signed a reduction in the capital gains tax. As President John F. Kennedy said, not only is it a good thing for government, but in every real sense it is great for the American people.

Some will say it benefits the rich. And to that, I confess, it will. It will benefit the wealthy in this country. It will benefit the middle class in this