

enroll, prohibited, or similar public service announcements. In other words, the policy of the VA is to withhold information from veterans regarding the services that they are legally entitled to.

Now, I call this the new "if they do not ask, we will not tell" policy. If the veterans do not ask what services they are entitled to under the law, the VA policy is that we will not tell them. And, furthermore, we will prohibit our health care providers from reaching out to sick or disabled veterans and telling them what this body has provided under the law for them. This is shameful. I ask how the American people can tolerate and why the administration would institute such a policy that says to America's veterans that they may be entitled to certain services legally, health services, but we are prohibiting. Think of that, we are prohibiting our network providers from giving veterans information that they deserve, that they need to know in order to get the services that they are legally entitled to receive. This is shameful.

I call upon the administration and I call upon those of us who are Members of this body to hold this administration accountable for this shameful act. I wonder how many veterans who have served this country and paid with their health and their bodies understand what this administration is doing to them.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO CERTAIN STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Democratic Caucus, I offer a privileged resolution (H. Res. 22) and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 22

Resolved, That the following named Members be, and are hereby, elected to the following committees:

Committee on Agriculture: Mr. Stenholm of Texas.

Committee on Appropriations: Mr. Obey of Wisconsin.

Committee on Armed Services: Mr. Skelton of Missouri.

Committee on the Budget: Mr. Spratt of South Carolina.

Committee on Education and the Workforce: Mr. George Miller of California.

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Mr. Dingell of Michigan.

Committee on Financial Services: Mr. Frank of Massachusetts.

Committee on Government Reform: Mr. Waxman of California.

Committee on International Relations: Mr. Lantos of California.

Committee on the Judiciary: Mr. Conyers of Michigan.

Committee on Resources: Mr. Rahall of West Virginia.

Committee on Science: Mr. Hall of Texas.

Committee on Small Business: Ms. Velazquez of New York.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Mr. Oberstar of Minnesota.

Committee on Veterans Affairs: Mr. Evans of Illinois.

Committee on Ways and Means: Mr. Rangel of New York.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ELECTION OF MEMBER TO COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS OF OFFICIAL CONDUCT

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Democratic Caucus, I offer a privileged resolution (H. Res. 23) and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 23

Resolved, That the following Member be, and is hereby, elected to the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct:

Mr. BERMAN of California.

The resolution was agreed to.

The motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

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

Mr. TANCREDO. Mr. Speaker, today we have successfully debated and passed a bill to provide an extension of unemployment benefits to millions of Americans who find themselves out of work. This is a laudable activity for us to be involved with and I was proud to be able to support that particular piece of legislation.

I find, however, that we are soon going to be debating another piece of legislation that is referred to as an economic stimulus package, and during the course of that debate we will undoubtedly be talking about the number of jobs that need to be created in the United States in order for our economy to get moving again. All of these things I support and I believe need to be done, but I also believe that there is something which has been left out of the equation and left out of the discussion when it comes to jobs and providing economic benefits for American citizens. I underline the word "citizens" because what has happened over the course of the last decade is that we have allowed into this country, illegally we have allowed into this country between 8 and 13 million people. We do not know for sure, of course, because they came without our permission. They came across the borders. We are told that they are here working and taking jobs no other Americans would take.

Mr. Speaker, I get many, many letters from people in my district who are out of work and they tell me that they would take any job available to them. There are steelworkers out of work, factory workers up and down the East Coast, all across the rust belt, these people are willing to take any job

available; but, of course, other people have gotten there before them. But, who are these people? Up to 13 million of them are people who are not citizens of this country.

□ 2200

We import them. Of course it is true that many businesses hire people who are here illegally, even knowingly hire people who are here illegally because they believe they will work for less, they will work under conditions that perhaps other people would not. We take advantage of many people. They are oftentimes manipulated by unscrupulous employers once they get here.

This is all bad, it is all illegal, but we ignore it and we suggest that we have to do something else to provide jobs for people who are here. But why do we not look at the fact that if we secure our own borders, if we ask people who are here illegally to return to their country of origin, that we would immediately provide millions of jobs for American citizens? Only we would not have to spend another dollar; we would not have to appropriate any more money.

Today it was 7 or \$8 billion for the extension of unemployment benefits, but doing what I ask, and that is to secure our borders, to identify people who are here illegally and deport them. This does not really cost all that much. That is what the Federal Government should be doing. That is our role and responsibility, to secure the border, to know who is coming into this country, for how long and for what purpose. We choose not to do that. We choose not to do that because there are political implications there, and there are political ramifications of such a decision. If we were to actually defend our own borders and control the process so that people coming into this country would do so in a legal process, we would, of course, diminish the flow of illegal immigrants. That would upset the Democrats because they would say that this would impede their ability to gain potential voters, knowing that many immigrants, especially illegal immigrants, would flock to the Democratic Party.

On the other hand, we have the Republican Party which says that if we were to secure our own borders, if we were to stop the flow of illegal immigrants into the country, that would impede the ability of businesses to hire cheap labor. Both of these reasons are, I think, bogus. They do not reflect what we should be doing in this body and, that is, to uphold the law. We should be demanding that the INS, we should be demanding that this administration uphold the law and that we address the issue of border patrol, increasing border patrol and also putting the military on the border which is absolutely necessary in order for us to achieve any degree of security on our borders and on our coastline. That is imperative. But we refuse to do it. We are fearful of doing it.

At the same time, there have been attempts on this floor, there have been attempts in this body to provide amnesty for people who are here illegally, to reward people who have come here illegally and give them the opportunities that are usually provided for people who have gone through the process, who have spent the time, who have spent the money, who have had the brain damage of having to go through sometimes years of bureaucratic wrangling to come into the country legally. They have waited in line. They have done it the right way. But we keep proposing to give people who have broken the law, who have snuck into the country, we keep proposing to give them amnesty. What does that concept tell everybody who has done it the right way? It tells them that they were essentially suckers and that they should have simply snuck into the country, we would eventually give them amnesty and they would get all the benefits that anyone here legally would enjoy.

Speaking of those benefits, Mr. Speaker, let me tell you about another phenomenon that is going on throughout the country. There is a process, something called the matricula consular. This is a card, an identification card that is being handed out by the Mexican Government to Mexican nationals in the United States.

THE ECONOMY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. REHBERG). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to follow up to some extent on the comments made by my Republican colleague from Colorado. I know he mentioned that today the House passed a Republican-sponsored bill that would provide an additional 13 weeks of extended unemployment benefits to workers who had exhausted their benefits. But I have to say that this proposal did not go far enough. We know that the economy is in a significant downturn, there are many people who have exhausted their unemployment benefits, who would not be able to continue to receive benefits under the Republican proposal, and also the Republican proposal is for a relatively short period of time, 13 weeks, as opposed to the 26 weeks that had been proposed by the Democrats.

Basically what they agreed to today, the Republicans, was to pass a bill that would provide 13 weeks of extended unemployment benefits in every State during the first 5 months of 2003. However, even now the Republicans still refuse to provide any additional assistance to the 1 million workers who exhausted their 13 weeks of extended benefits last year but who remain unemployed.

During the last recession in the early 1990s, these workers were provided 26

weeks of benefits; but this time they only received 13 weeks. Furthermore, there is \$25 billion in the Federal unemployment trust funds, more than enough to both continue the extended benefits program this year and help exhaustees from the last year. Unemployment compensation goes to the families who must spend it very quickly, meaning it acts as an economic stimulus. Economists have estimated that each dollar of unemployment benefits leads to \$2.15 in economic growth.

I mention this because I think that to some extent people are going to read now that the Republicans passed this bill and say, that is great, we are going to have some more extended weeks of unemployment benefits, but the fact of the matter is a lot of people will not receive the benefits who really need it and it is for a relatively short period of time. The Democrats have said, of course, that we would go 26 weeks, to the end of June, and we would include all of those who have exhausted their benefits, the 1 million or so from last year who would get an additional 13 weeks under the Democratic proposal.

The other thing, though, that was very upsetting to me today was not only that we did not go far enough in terms of unemployment benefits in what we finally passed here in the House but also even as President Bush announced his economic stimulus plan, which I do not think is an economic stimulus plan at all and I will go into that a little bit, it was announced as part of it that the effect on the deficit over the next 10 years would be about 674, \$675 billion.

We know that we are already back into a serious deficit problem this year, about \$150 billion. After having several years under President Clinton when we actually had a surplus, now we are back into a deficit situation. And what President Bush proposes in his economic package will cost a tremendous amount of money and not necessarily put anybody back to work, not create the very stimulus that he claims to be talking about. But an important part of that is that it is going to put us so much further into debt, to the tune of something like \$674 billion.

But what did I hear? Instead of reacting the way the Democrats said and saying let us have a real economic stimulus plan that actually does something and does not cost that much because the Democrats are at just a little over \$100 billion, what we are hearing from the Republican side of the aisle is that this economic plan of the President's is not big enough, is not going to put us enough in deficit. In fact, we have the majority leader, the Republican majority leader, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) saying that he wants to boost the size of the Bush tax cut package. He is actually quoted in Congress Daily saying today that the Republicans, the House Republicans would move quickly to pass most of President Bush's 10-year \$674 billion tax cut proposal, and they would likely

increase the total size of the package. This is a quote: "The House will pass a bill that will have all the tax relief that is in the President's bill and probably more," Mr. DELAY said, adding, "I see the President's package as a floor, not a ceiling."

Obviously, what the gentleman from Texas is trying to do is counteract the statements being made by the Democrats that the President's plan is not only ineffective as a stimulus but is also going to put us seriously into debt by suggesting, "Oh, don't worry about that, I'll come up with an even bigger one." It is scary to think what the Republicans are thinking about in the House. They seem to be just perfectly willing to rubber-stamp whatever the President does and then go even further in terms of putting us into debt and doing something that is not going to be very effective for the American people.

Why do I say it is not effective? Why do I say the President's plan that was announced yesterday is not effective as a stimulus package, that it is not going to do anything to put people back to work, that it is not going to do anything to improve the economy? If you look at it, the centerpiece of the President's plan is the complete elimination of all taxes on stock dividends. If you think about it, not only is that primarily going to benefit the wealthy instead of putting back money into the hands of the average American, but what guarantee is it that if you give this windfall essentially to people who have dividends, stock dividends, that they are going to invest it back in the economy and create jobs? We have no guarantee that the stock market is going to go up because of it. We have no guarantee that whatever savings are made are going to be reinvested in new means of production or creating new jobs. This is just speculation. And to say that the centerpiece of your plan is such a speculative proposal and to put us into debt so much more over the next 10 years is just, I think, totally irresponsible.

According to a preliminary estimate by the nonpartisan Tax Policy Center, 45 percent of the benefits of the entire Bush proposal will go to the top 5 percent of taxpayers who have an average income of \$350,000. In fact, those making over \$1 million will see an average tax break of \$88,000, more than 100 times the tax cut for the vast majority of taxpayers making less than \$75,000. Let me also add, when I talk about this budget deficit that is going to be increased by 6 to \$700 billion under the Bush plan, keep in mind that the President also said when he announced his proposal that he also wanted to make the tax cuts of last year permanent, which would probably double the amount of deficit. You could probably double that 6 to \$700 billion figure and go up to, say, 1.4, \$1.5 trillion, not to count the debt service that you would have on that. By the time it is all said and done, the thing that the President