

The draft eliminated references to many studies, concluding that warming is at least partly caused by rising concentrations of smokestack and tailpipe emissions and could threaten health and ecological systems.

The White House deleted a National Research Council finding that various studies have suggested that recent warmings were unusual and likely due to human activities, although the same 2001 NRC report had been commissioned by the White House and endorsed by President Bush previously.

This is the second time in the past year that the Bush administration has censored information on global warming. Last September, an annual EPA report on air pollution that for 6 years had contained a section on climate was released without one. Administrator Whitman told the New York Times she was perfectly comfortable with the edited version.

However, the seriousness of climate change cannot be understated. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, a group of hundreds of scientists established by the United Nations in 1988 to assess global warming, concluded that global warming is real and will have serious consequences.

Their report, released in January, 2001, states that the Earth has warmed in the last century and that the majority of the observed warming is attributable to human activities, including fossil fuel-generated carbon dioxide emissions.

In late 2001, the National Academy of Sciences confirmed those findings.

This just shows that the administration is manipulating the EPA's formerly unbiased science for its political agenda in an effort to mislead the public.

We have spoken on this floor about the way in which the administration has manipulated data with regard to weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, how the administration has put pressure on the intelligence agencies to manipulate their objectively drawn and realized information in order to make it more accurately fit the administration's political agenda; and here we have an example of how the administration is doing the same thing with regard to important scientific considerations on the single most important global issue of our lives, the warming of the Earth's temperature and the ecological consequences, as well as the consequences on the health and safety of people in this country and around the world. It is time for this administration to be honest in its science and in its reporting to the American people.

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.)

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to go out of order and claim the time allocated to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON).

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

There was no objection.

PASS TRANSPORTATION EQUITY ACT FOR 21ST CENTURY

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

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to discuss the importance of passing the reauthorization of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st century.

Our transportation system has a direct and significant impact on the daily lives of all Americans. While the United States has benefited greatly from having a strong transportation network on which we can move our people and goods, we are approaching a crossroads.

My district in North Texas has experienced an increase in traffic over the last 3 decades. This is the direct result of unprecedented population growth, unprecedented employment growth, and underinvestment of Federal funds to this area. In many ways, this is a silent crisis, rarely recognized by residents until they find themselves in an unbearable commute to work or unable to make necessary connections between home, work and countless other activities that our busy lives demand.

In Texas, our identified transportation needs outstrip available funding three to one. Texas has several specific transportation needs such as seeking opportunities for increased funding, supporting international trade transportation and a more efficient environmental process, and expanding innovative financing techniques. I believe we must make the necessary investment to support our transportation future in Texas or we will sit in traffic and literally watch our transportation infrastructure deteriorate before our eyes to the point that it further impedes growth and economic development.

As a member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, I am working with the committee's bipartisan leadership and my other committee colleagues on the 6-year, \$375 billion TEA-21 reauthorization proposal to fund highway and transit programs. Under the committee's proposal, Texas would receive an estimated \$20.8 billion in highway funding over 6 years, which is an estimated \$7.59 billion increase for Texas highway funding compared to current funding levels.

Furthermore, this proposal would stimulate job and economic growth throughout our great State, creating

an estimated 93,000 new jobs in Texas over the next 6 years.

I believe Texas needs increased funding for its highway and transit programs. I have requested funding assistance to expedite the planning and construction of specific highways and transit projects to improve the lives of citizens, business owners and those transporting goods through Texas and throughout my congressional district. More funding will equate to better roads, better bridges and better transit facilities, less congestion and improved safety and infrastructure for commercial transportation.

I am committed to working with Federal, State and local officials during the TEA-21 reauthorization this year to address Texas' long-term needs. The House Committee on Transportation and the Infrastructure members and other interested parties will continue to work to produce a bill which adequately provides for our economic security, creates and sustains jobs, enhances safety, and continues to improve mobility for our Nation's citizens, especially those in Texas.

INDEPENDENT COMMISSION TO INVESTIGATE DISTORTION OF EVIDENCE

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

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, beginning tonight and for the rest of the evenings until we recess for our summer break, a number of us will be coming to the floor to read letters that have been written by ordinary Americans, letters that were sent to our districts and others in our States, letters and comments that were in response to an online petition by moveon.org which is a grassroots organization with more than 1.4 million members.

Here is the petition which moveon.org has online: "Congress should support an independent commission to investigate the Bush administration's distortion of evidence of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction program."

Over 320,000 people signed this online petition, and many of them wrote comments. In Illinois, 3,621 people wrote comments, and I have copies of those. I am going to read some of them.

All of the people who wrote comments are supporting H.R. 2625 which was introduced by the gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN) to establish an independent commission to investigate intelligence claims that were made to the public by the administration to justify a preemptive war against Iraq.

All of the ones I am going to read tonight were written by either people in the service or service related or veterans of U.S. wars. This is the first I will read.

"My wife is with Freeport's 333rd MP Company. She has been overseas since

late April. She has been on active duty since February 9. She has not slept in her own bed next to her own husband in 4 months and 6 days. We still have no idea when this nightmare can be over for us. We understand a call to duty for our Nation. We truly do. However, she did not join the National Guard with an open-ended deployment and a war zone in mind. None of them did. We always thought the Guard was for short deployments and emergencies only. She tells me that morale with her soldiers is extremely low. There are short tempers, long days, fear, crying soldiers, and no idea when it can be over for them. That is the root of our anguish. These people have been uprooted from their lives and jobs, and they answered that call, yet no one can answer their most-asked question: When can I go home?

"The average soldier is not a stupid order taker. We have a highly intelligent military, and they realize what is going on back home with the controversy around the evidence of weapons of mass destruction. I cannot speak for other soldiers, but it disturbs my wife deeply to think that she could be over there risking her life and living a daily heartbreak based on distorted testimony.

□ 2015

It makes her feel like a pawn of political agenda, not an American doing good in the world. All of this together most certainly influences her ideas of retention. We need the truth, not someone's version of the truth, not some of the truth but all of the truth. And we need to know when we can be reunited to live our lives together."

That is Ron Macek, Rockford, Illinois.

This is another letter:

"I am a veteran and a former intelligence analyst who spent 3 years in the Middle East peering over Saddam's shoulder. It is always disturbing when political leaders distort intelligence information to justify pet policies. It discredits intelligence agencies and the analysts who dedicate their time and lives to protecting America.

"Good intelligence analysts are sure to express multiple possibilities for unexplained events. They are also careful to delineate between what they know and what they think. It is a mistake to turn an assessment into policy. It is a shame that some analysts will tell the administration what they want to hear just to appease leaders. An investigation into this matter will prevent this from happening again." John Laesch, Bloomington, Illinois.

"I am a veteran of both the Korean and Vietnam Wars. I have seen firsthand the price we pay when we commit blood and treasure into a foreign land. It is a terrible price that is never replaced. If there is the slightest suspicion that the war in Iraq was promoted under false pretenses, then we should know about it. Such an occurrence would be a terrible misuse of gov-

ernment resources and the American people's trust. I request that you support an independent commission to investigate the handling of this matter." Robert P. Harrison, Arlington Heights, Illinois.

"As a former Naval officer married to a retired Navy man and with a daughter currently serving in Qatar, I'm probably one of the last people you would normally see signing a petition of this nature. Nonetheless, here I am. I question this administration's motivations and feel that our Commander in Chief has a lack of respect and regard for those he has placed in harm's way in order to further a set of goals of his own. His taunt of 'bring it on' is unsettling on its own, but coupled with the increasing evidence that our involvement was ill-advised and based on purposely unsubstantiated or twisted evidence only serves to increase my belief that the administration has an agenda wholly divorced from our national best interests." Pamela Faulkner from Illinois. More tomorrow.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BURNS). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH) is recognized for 5 minutes. (Mr. SMITH of Michigan addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

LETTERS FROM OHIO IN SUPPORT OF INDEPENDENT COMMISSION TO INVESTIGATE ALLEGED DISTORTION OF EVIDENCE OF IRAQ'S WMD PROGRAMS

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

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to be here and share the concerns in their own words from my constituents in northeast Ohio and other constituents around the rest of the great State of Ohio. As the gentlewoman from Illinois said, the previous speaker, this was a petition that was signed by literally tens of thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands of Americans. I have with me tonight letters that accompanied the signing of the petitions, almost 3,000 letters just from Ohio, just one State, almost 3,000 letters alone. The petition said Congress should support an independent commission to investigate the Bush administration's distortion of evidence of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction programs. There were hundreds of thousands of signatures and tens of thousands of letters. Let me share some of them from Ohio.

Reverend William Trego of West Jefferson, Ohio said:

"It is shameful that a Nation with the brilliant legacy of the United States would stand before the leaders of the world and present a case supported with distorted and at times out-

right false information. We were sold a bill of goods."

From Wadsworth, Ohio, Michael Kovack:

"As a mobilized reservist for Operation Iraqi Freedom, I implore you to create a committee to examine the basis for sending us into harm's way. We must ascertain how this happened and, if error is found, never allow it to happen again."

Tom Gentry Jr. of Akron, Ohio, in my district said:

"This is a scary time for our country. Never have we been in so much danger of violent attack from without and attacks on our liberty from within."

From Strongsville, Ohio, David Koch said:

"From the very beginning, the allegations about Iraq sounded too convenient and very fishy. Now it is widely coming to light that the Bush administration grossly exaggerated and fabricated many claims. When I tried to warn people at the beginning, I took the heat from friends and family who shunned me as an idiot. It is time for the truth about the Iraq war to be made known to the American public."

From Brecksville, Ohio, Aaron Clark wrote:

"The President used lies and half truths to convince the American people to go to war. This is serious and needs to be investigated without delay."

There are hundreds and hundreds, in Ohio 2,500 letters just like this; in Illinois, the gentlewoman from Illinois mentioned more than twice that number; in California and across the country, literally tens of thousands of letters like this.

From Cincinnati, Ohio, on the other end of the State, Mark Light writes:

"As an elected Representative to your constituents, it is your obligation to back any efforts that will lead our Nation to the truth regarding such important matters. The citizens of this country have every right to know the truth when their lives and resources are at stake. Any actions other than total support of an investigation are essentially efforts to hide the truth from our citizens."

George Hennigin from Akron, Ohio, in my district said:

"The philosopher Baruch Spinoza once wrote: It has been the one song of those who thirst after absolute power that the interest of the state requires that its affairs should be conducted in secret. But the more such arguments disguise themselves under the mask of public welfare, the more oppressive is the slavery to which they will lead. Better that the right counsels be known to the enemies than the evil secrets of tyrants should be concealed from the citizens. They who can treat secretly of the affairs of a nation have it absolutely under their authority; and as they plot against the enemy in time of war, so do they against the citizens in time of peace."

Roberta Hunter from Columbus, Ohio said: