some in the southeast, but our major attractions are open. All of our interstates and our roads, I have reports back as a member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, are open. And we want people to do us a favor by not canceling their plans to visit Florida. We will dust ourselves off. We will clean up a bit. But people can help Florida by not canceling their plans, but coming to Florida. We are open for business, and we will prevail.

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

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

First let me say that I am so proud to be a part of this Florida delegation that has come together so strongly as we do when matters affect our State. All of our Members on both sides of the aisle have just been dynamic in supporting each other in the problems that we might experience in our districts because of this one tropical storm and two hurricanes.

I want to especially thank the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) for working with me as we moved ahead with this bill to decide how we are going to do it, what the bill was going to look like, and the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) was very supportive, and I have to say I just really appreciate the support that he gave us.

After Hurricane Charley, I went to south Florida with President Bush, where he announced that he would be asking for this supplemental to make sure that the cash flow continued, and I was there to assure him that we would move this bill as expeditiously as we could. The House convened at 2 o'clock today after the summer district work period, and at 2 o'clock I introduced this supplemental appropriations bill. And thanks to the support of the gentleman from Illinois (Speaker HASTERT) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), our majority leader, and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), our majority whip, everyone came together to help us move this legislation that is so important.

I want to thank the President of the United States for recognizing the needs of Florida. I want to thank Governor Bush, who has done really a dynamic job in helping to manage not only as we led up to the hurricanes, but during the hurricanes and following the hurricanes for recovery. He has just been an amazing manager, and he has worked with everyone at the State and local level just to do the very best we could to help the people of our State that were hurt so bad.

FEMA, we have talked about FEMA this afternoon, and FEMA has done an outstanding job. There are numerous other Federal agencies that have also been involved, and they have all just really turned to and helped our State as we recover from these disasters. The Florida National Guard, I talked to General Burnett early as Charley was approaching, and General Burnett had mobilized the Guard, ready to move in to protect property, to protect lives, to do whatever was necessary; and they just deserve a tremendous vote of confidence and vote of gratitude from Florida.

All in all, as one of my colleagues from Florida said, this has been a great experience of coming together when people need help. As I said earlier in my remarks, all of Florida was affected one way or another, which was very unusual. We have an earthquake or a fire or a flood or whatever that might be, we respond quickly, and usually it is in a part of a State or a community, but in this case the entire State of Florida was affected. So as chairman of this committee and as the introducer of this bill, I appreciate the way that the House is moving to move this bill over to the Senate, which I believe will deem it passed tonight and get it to the President.

Mr. KELLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this emergency supplemental appropriations bill to provide $2 billion to FEMA to help the citizens of Florida recover from Hurricanes Charley and Frances.

I am sensitive to the fact that these two hurricanes have had a devastating impact on the lives of several hundred thousand Central Floridians. My own mom, Lora Keller, completely lost her home in Hurricane Charley.

Despite these temporary heartaches, I am optimistic about Florida's future. Congress, especially those of us from Florida, will work very closely with President Bush and Governor Bush over the next few days to help rebuild Florida quickly, and even stronger than before.

This $2 billion will be able to help Central Florida families with things like temporary lodging, food and water supplies, medical care and will allow roofs to be repaired.

I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on this important legislation.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5005.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5006, DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2005

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio (during consideration of H.R. 5005) from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 108–66) on the resolution (H. Res. 754) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5006) making appropriations for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2005, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

□ 2000

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KLINE). 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.

SAUDI ARABIA AND TERRORISM: THE PAINFUL TRUTH

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. Mr. Speaker, a tragedy occurred in Russia this past week. Thirty Chechen rebels took control of a schoolhouse on the first day of school, and they killed at least 338 people, half of them children who were going to school for their first day. According to the reports, 10 of those people who were terrorists were Arabs; and we believe that they were probably from Saudi Arabia.

One of the problems that we have had in the past is a lot of the terrorist activity has been emanating and originating from Saudi Arabia, ostensibly friends of the United States of America. Osama bin Laden is a Saudi. Fifteen of the 19 terrorists that flew the planes into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon and the plane that went down in Pennsylvania were Saudi Arabians.

The Saudis have been funding for many, many years madrassas where Wahhabism is taught. Wahhabism is a radical fundamentalist Muslim religion that is being taught in the schools that teaches the children to hate Christians and Jews and teaches them to perpetrate violent acts.

Well, the Saudis today said that they are going to try to change the educational system over there so no radical fundamentalism can be taught that would lead to this kind of terrorist activity.

I would just like to say tonight, Mr. Speaker, that it is high time, high time, that the Saudis, whom we have been supporting with our dollars, buying our oil from them, for many, many years, it is high time that they stopped this terrorist activity which has been originating in their country.

The Saudi royal family has been giving money to radical organizations. They have been giving money to families of people whose children blew themselves up while killing people in Israel and the West Bank and in what is called Palestine. The Saudi Government has been giving money to al-Qaeda in the past.

Mr. Speaker, all I can say tonight is that the Saudis continue to tell us that they are our friends. They tell us they

want to stop terrorism. Yet, time after time after time, we see terrorist activity taking place, and who has been involved? It is the Saudi people, and it is people who have been taught in the madrassas, who have been taught that radical fundamentalism that is called Wahhabism.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say to my colleagues tonight that this government, the Government of the United States through the State Department, must continue to tell the Saudis that they must take these people on, they have to stop this terrorist activity emanating and originating in their country, and they have to stop this type of teaching of the children. They have been allowing this teaching to go on for 25 to 30 years now.

It is high time that this stopped, because the children who are growing up today are going to be the terrorists of tomorrow; and if they continue to let that happen in their schools, we are going to have to face this not only now, but our children and our grandchildren are going to be facing this kind of terrorist activity down the road.

Osama bin Laden, al-Qaeda, the Taliban, all of them have to be defeated. We are in a world war against terrorism, and we need every government of the world that believes in freedom and democracy and the things we believe in to be on our side. That includes the Saudis. They are going to have to take a hard line.

MEDICARE PREMIUM INCREASE SQUEEZES SENIORS' BUDGETS

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

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, last Thursday President Bush got up on his $2.5 million podium and crowed about how his Medicare reform bill was making health care more affordable for seniors. But less than 24 hours later, this administration announced the largest increase in Medicare premiums in history.

Beginning in January, retirees and the disabled will see their Medicare premiums rise by $11.60 per month, to $78.20. That is an increase of 17 percent. It comes on the heels of last year's whopping 14 percent increase. The Bush administration deliberately tried to bury this bad news, releasing the information late on Friday in the midst of a hurricane and leading up to a long holiday weekend. They did that in the hopes that seniors would not notice.

The Social Security COLA will not be generous either. That is why the Bush administration needed to stifle news coverage about the Medicare premium increase. The Social Security trustees have predicted a 1.3 percent COLA for 2005. For a retiree receiving the average benefit of $895, that amounts to a monthly increase of $11.64.

After Medicare's premiums go up, seniors will be left with an additional 4 cents per month to handle rising expenses. Seniors have increasing housing costs, high gas prices, rising grocery bills and the prospects of record heating bills this winter, just like everyone else. Does 4 cents a month sound like enough of a cost-of-living increase to cover inflation and expenses?

The retirees I know pay very close attention to information about their health insurance costs because they need to watch every dime. But the same cannot be said of President Bush and the Republican Congress. The so-called Medicare reform bill that they are so quick to praise is largely to blame for the premium increases and Medicare's ongoing financial difficulties.

The Medicare reform bill, with a price tag of $549 billion, spends more money to pad the pockets of corporate executives than it does to pay for prescription drugs or for more comprehensive medical coverage for seniors. More than 60 percent of the bill's cost is attributable to $139 billion in overpayments to pharmaceutical companies, $70 billion in subsidies to corporations and $130 billion in overpayments to Medicare HMOs. These expenses do nothing to improve the quality of health care that seniors receive, but they certainly have a negative impact on the affordability of that care.

Today's retirees will not be the only ones to pay the price for the shortsighted, irresponsible agenda of President Bush and the Republican Congress. We all will, in today's budget deficits and tomorrow's skyrocketing Medicare costs.

None of the Medicare bill's $549 billion price tag was paid for, which means it only adds to the Federal budget deficit. The growing budget deficit in turn means that we will not be able to put any money aside to shore up Medicare's finances for the impending retirement of the baby boom generation. Under this leadership, today's seniors and tomorrow's retirees can expect many years of outrageously high increases.

This is just another example of the Bush administration and the Republican Congress saying one thing and doing another. It sounds nice to say that you have added a comprehensive, guaranteed prescription drug benefit; but you did not. It sounds nice to say that you have made seniors' health care better and more affordable, but you have not done that either. President Bush and the Republican leadership have done just the opposite.

When seniors get their Social Security checks in January and those checks are only 4 cents more than what they got last January, they will know the difference between your words and your deeds.

HONORING THE FIRST RESPONDERS OF THE ELEVENTH DISTRICT OF GEORGIA

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

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, in the short time that I have been a Member of this Congress, of this body, the House of Representatives, I have come to expect a good measure of partisanship and partisan rhetoric that occurs on the floor of the House, especially during this, a Presidential election year. I have come to expect that, but not to enjoy it.

But I want to say, Mr. Speaker, to my colleagues, that the past hour I have sat here in this Chamber and seen a great measure of bipartisanship as our chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG), and the ranking member, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY), came together to bring us this emergency supplemental appropriation to help the people in Florida who have been devastated by Hurricanes Charlie and Frances with this $2 billion stopgap measure to get money to FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Administration, to help the people of Florida in a bipartisan way, and to have us have this discussion led by the delegation from Florida, both Republicans and Democrats.

This is the kind of bipartisanship that the people of this country and the great State of Florida deserve to see more of. In fact, it reminded me that we are coming up pretty soon, this Saturday, in fact, on the third anniversary of a tragic event in this country. Of course, I am speaking of 9/11, when this body again was at its finest moment when they came together and there was not that level of partisanship, and we pulled together for the benefit of all Americans.

So, Mr. Speaker, tonight I want to rise and pay tribute to the first responders whose selfless service and hard work keep the citizens of the Nation, but particularly Georgia and my eleventh district, safe and secure each and every day.

Just as the moniker suggests, our Nation's first responders are the first to arrive at the scene and usually the last to leave. They are the brave souls risking their lives to prevent catastrophe and healing the wounded and broken when disaster strikes, just as they are doing in Florida today. They are always vigilant and ever ready, and they deserve our heartfelt thanks.

Since the tragic events of September 11, we have all learned that terrorists are not just looking at New York City and Washington, D.C. Rather, they have undertaken a vast effort to survey potential targets across this country. Should Metro Atlanta, the capital of the South, suffer an attack, you and I know that the brave first responders from West Georgia's Eleventh Congressional District will be among the many who will answer the call to duty.