

America can make our communities healthier, cycling can be a dramatic opportunity for economic development for thousands of small businesses, and it is, after all, the most efficient form of urban transportation ever devised.

It is an opportunity for us, in a small but important way, to reduce our energy dependence on foreign oil from unstable regions, to improve air quality, and to reduce the traffic congestion that is costing American families dozens of extra hours that they cannot afford every month.

I urge my colleagues to join our bipartisan Bicycle Caucus; to support robust transportation funding that includes things like safe routes to school and enhancements; and integrate cycling into your life and your community. We will be healthier, happier and the country will be better off.

BROADCAST INDECENCY

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, families are tired of having to cover their children's eyes and ears every time they turn on the television. Many parents' standards of common decency are repeatedly offended and their parenting is undermined by the onslaught of indecent material on television and radio. Frankly they have been outraged recently by the examples of filth permitted on the airwaves by the FCC. Just as the majority leader said yesterday, if the industry cannot police itself, Congress must step in.

The FCC has been entrusted with enforcing our Federal decency laws and should be expected to do so. There are plenty of laws on the books regarding this matter and the FCC just needs to enforce them. Today the Committee on Energy and Commerce will mark up a bill which allows the FCC to enforce tougher penalties on broadcasters for violations of the law. The privilege of conducting business over the airwaves should always be conditional on their willingness to adhere to standards of common decency.

Broadcast airwaves belong to the American people, not to the networks. It is time for Congress to defend and protect America's parents and children and pass a tough bill to ensure decency on the airwaves.

THE PRESIDENT'S CREDIBILITY DEFICIT

(Mr. EMANUEL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, President Bush has decided to make credibility an election year issue. Yesterday the Vice President announced if the Democratic policies had been pursued over the last 2 or 3 years, we would not have had the kind of job growth that this economy experienced.

Really? What a fascinating take. In the last 3 years, \$3 trillion have been added to the Nation's debt and 3 million Americans have lost their jobs. And they want to make credibility an issue. Since 5 months when he announced the creation of a manufacturing czar, which has not been appointed, 250,000 additional manufacturing jobs have been lost. And they want to make credibility an issue.

They have an economic report that says outsourcing is good for American workers. And they want to make credibility an issue. It is a fascinating take on the economy. Today we have a jobless economy with a wage recession in America. In fact, flipping hamburgers is now a manufacturing job in America. And they want to make credibility an issue.

Mr. Speaker, the President and the Vice President think everything is just fine in America. What we need is a new direction to put American workers, American families and their values at the center of our agenda and for somebody to wake up every morning thinking about their jobs, their children and their future.

EXPRESSING OUTRAGE AT CALIFORNIA COURT RULING REQUIRING CATHOLIC CHARITY TO COVER BIRTH CONTROL IN EMPLOYEE HEALTH INSURANCE PLANS

(Mr. MURPHY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my outrage at a recent decision by the California Supreme Court. This decision requires a Catholic charity to cover birth control in its employees' health insurance plans despite the church's position on contraception. This decision infringes on the principles of any faith-based charity choosing to help all the needy and not just those of a similar faith. As a result of this decision, society as a whole suffers. Faith-affiliated charities frequently provide help and hope to the least among us without religious discrimination, but this decision is a step backward. We are left to wonder what effect it will have on the social ministry of these organizations. Some may be forced to choose between adhering to their beliefs and serving those in need.

This decision represents an intentional, purposeful intrusion into a religious organization's practice of its religious tenets and sense of mission and it could reach far beyond Catholic charities and affect other faith-based hospitals and charities throughout the country.

PRESIDENT BUSH'S POLICIES ARE CREATING JOBS AND SPURRING THE ECONOMY

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to ad-

dress the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, President Bush took office 3 years ago facing the challenge of managing a recession that began under the prior administration. Soon other factors bogged down our economy, including the attacks of September 11, corporate scandals and the ensuing stock market decline. Despite all of these negative events, President Bush and the Republican Congress have worked together to strengthen the economy in America. Due to the President's policies of tax relief, we have seen an increase of 366,000 jobs. And, according to the American Shareholders Association, the stock market is on pace to generate an astonishing \$6.3 trillion of new resources since October 2002 for America's families. Additionally, unemployment has fallen below the average of each of the last three decades.

However, more work is needed which the President has outlined. We must make tax relief for all taxpayers permanent, reduce regulation, ensure affordable health care for families and small businesses, and enact a sound national energy policy.

In conclusion, may God bless our troops and we will never forget September 11.

THE NOBLE MISSION OF THE 39TH BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM

(Mr. BOOZMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support for the brave men and women of the 39th Brigade combat team as they deploy to Iraq. The 39th Brigade includes National Guardsmen from 10 States but is mostly made up of Arkansas National Guardsmen, including the Russellville-based 206th Field Artillery Unit.

Last weekend I had an opportunity to visit with many of the soldiers of the 39th Brigade during their colors casing ceremony at Fort Polk. They are some of America's finest. They are a diverse group, including doctors, teachers, lawyers, people from all walks of life, men and women who are ready to put their Guard training and professional skills to work establishing democracy in a country where oppression was once the norm.

Mr. Speaker, their mission is noble and of great importance. I ask my colleagues to remember them and their families in their thoughts and prayers as we continue to support our troops and their efforts to fight terror and bring back democracy to Iraq.

THANKING THE PRESIDENT FOR IDENTIFYING AMERICA'S PRIORITIES IN HIS BUDGET

(Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank the President for clearly identifying America's priorities in his fiscal year 2005 budget. There is no doubt that we are in a time of war and I am pleased President Bush's budget sent a clear signal that our Nation's defense and homeland security must remain the top priority of the Federal Government. However, I believe we can and must do more.

That is why last week I introduced an updated version of legislation that I introduced last year, the Common Sense Spending Act. This legislation will continue to fund nondefense, non-homeland security and hold discretionary spending at fiscal year 2004 levels for the next year, then increase at the rate of inflation over the next 4 years. It is all common sense. The spending act will slow the growth of mandatory spending by 1 percent, holding Social Security harmless, and reauthorizes PAYGO requiring offsets for direct spending. It also tightens the definition of emergency spending. Again, it is all common sense.

Mr. Speaker, if Members are serious about getting control of Federal spending, then I ask them to join me in support of the Common Sense Spending Act. It is time to limit our spending to reflect the priorities we have set.

HONORING COLONEL JESSE THOMAS, COMMANDER, 167TH AIRLIFT WING, WEST VIRGINIA AIR NATIONAL GUARD, ON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE MILITARY

(Mrs. CAPITO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Colonel Jesse A. Thomas, the Commander of the 167th Airlift Wing of the West Virginia Air National Guard based in Martinsburg, West Virginia.

□ 1015

Colonel Thomas is retiring after 33 years in our Armed Forces. Colonel Thomas began his military service as a T-37 instructor pilot in 1971. He then joined the West Virginia Air National Guard when he became a C-130 aircraft commander. Colonel Thomas has logged approximately 11,000 flight hours as a command pilot, including 5,000 hours as an instructor.

During Operation Desert Shield, Thomas deployed to Europe as an aircrew member and unit commander. He also flew airdrop and air defense missions in Yugoslavia and Central America and Southwest Asia.

Mr. Speaker, in our current war on terror, the National Guard has been called upon to fight in Iraq and Afghanistan, and thousands of brave men and women have answered that call. I thank all of the men and women of the National Guard who give so much in service to our Nation. Colonel Jesse

Thomas, who has dedicated 34 years to the defense of freedom, deserves the respect of all of us in the House, and I thank him for his devoted service to the people of West Virginia and his country.

THE PROSPECT OF PEACE IN CYPRUS

(Mr. KIRK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, after decades of intercommunal violence between Turkey and Greece, there is now hope for peace on Cyprus.

On February 3, President Bush met with U.N. Secretary-General Annan to restart the peace process. Following talks between the Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders on February 13, Annan announced the resumption of negotiations, saying, "I really believe that, after 40 years, a settlement is at last in reach."

Since February 19, the two sides have been discussing a U.N. peace plan in Cyprus. Despite predictably difficult negotiations, the Annan blueprint is secure. If there is no agreement by the two parties by March 22, Turkey and Greece will join the negotiations to broker a deal. If there is still no agreement by March 29, Annan will "fill in the blanks," and Greek and Turkish Cypriots will then vote on this plan in separate referenda in April. If all goes well, a reunited Cyprus will enter the European Union on May 1.

Having long supported peace efforts in Cyprus, the United States must now extend a helping hand to the Cypriots as they confront the difficulties of implementing an agreement. In 1984, Congress authorized President Reagan's \$250 million Cyprus Peace and Reconstruction Fund. The money was not provided because we did not reach a settlement. Europe is home to the last "Berlin-style" wall in Cyprus. Let us make this the year that it comes down forever.

THE "H.L. HUNLEY"

(Mr. BROWN of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BROWN of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, this year marks the 140th anniversary of the final voyage of the *H.L. Hunley*. On February 17, 1864, the *Hunley* embarked on a dangerous mission when Lieutenant George Dixon led his crew to do what no other submarine had ever done before, successfully sink another ship in combat. That night in Charleston Harbor, the *Hunley* rammed her spar torpedo into the hull of the USS *Housatonic*. The ship sunk shortly thereafter, forever securing the *Hunley's* place in history.

The crew, however, never returned and vanished into the harbor. The location of the crew and ship remained a

mystery for over 130 years until 1995 when the submarine was found. It was placed under the care of the Warren Lasch Conservation Center in North Charleston in my district. Through the efforts of the Hunley Commission and the Friends of the Hunley, the vessel will be preserved for generations to come. All eight crew members' bodies have been recovered and will receive a military burial on April 17, 2004, at Magnolia Cemetery in Charleston. I welcome all Americans to take the opportunity to marvel at this archeological wonder.

HAITI

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, yesterday was Texas Independence Day, March 2. This Nation and our people value both independence and democracy. But it is sad to note that a small nation by the name of Haiti has not received the same amount of respect, collegiality, and assistance that this country could be called to do. It is shameful that we have in the dark of night the question of whether or not a duly elected democratic President, President Aristide, was taken away from his home without his free will.

People are dying in the streets of Haiti. The question becomes what happened to President Aristide and why he was removed against his will. The question becomes whether or not this Nation will engage with insurgents and thugs and drug dealers, as the opposition represents; whether or not we will tolerate the continued pillaging and the loss of life; whether or not we will grant temporary protective status for Haitians who are here in fear of their life; and whether or not we respect those who are fleeing from persecution by granting individual asylum hearings.

Mr. Speaker, this Nation can do better. We can do better with our allies and friends. Why are we not doing better for Haiti?

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHAW). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later today.

CHARLES "PETE" CONRAD ASTRONOMY AWARDS ACT

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the