

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, a historic meeting took place this past Friday in New York City between Indian Prime Minister Singh and Pakistani President Musharraf. This was an important step toward bringing about a peaceful ending to disputes over Kashmir and fears of nuclear conflict in the region.

Both India and Pakistan have been strong allies of the United States in the war on terror and Secretary of State Colin Powell should be thanked for playing a significant role in bringing these leaders together. This is the latest example of positive progress in South Asia and the Middle East, thanks to the leadership and support of President George W. Bush and his administration.

This month the world's largest Muslim nation, Indonesia, had its first direct democratic election of a president, and earlier this year Libya voluntarily gave up its program to develop weapons of mass destruction. Additionally, millions of Muslims have been liberated by coalition forces from brutal regimes in Afghanistan and Iraq and now will build a civil society which protects American families.

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

TONIGHT'S PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE

(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, I briefly rise, as well, to join my colleague in acknowledging the meeting between the Prime Minister of India and, of course, the President of Pakistan asking for their fellow countrymen and -women to understand the importance of aspiring for peace for their people.

But I rise today, Mr. Speaker, to really ask my colleagues and the American people what tonight's debate should really be about. This debate has been almost poised as a contest between two warriors. In fact, I believe this is a debate for the American people. The question should be asked, why were the American people told that we needed to go to war for the weapons of mass destruction that did not exist? Why have some thousand-plus of our young men and women and family members died in Iraq when there was no basis for this war? Why did the President not seek a constitutional vote for this war? Why are there thousands of wounded lying in our hospitals and we do not even know if the veterans hospitals will remain open?

The question is, who can lead us forward, and the answer is JOHN KERRY. That is what this debate is about, what will the American people want for their future and I can assure you it is not and should not be a litany of untruths from their national government; they simply want the truth.

DROUGHT RELIEF

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

Mrs. MUSGRAVE. Mr. Speaker, as we approach the end of this legislative session and I near the end of my freshman term, I am amazed by the power this body has when it wants to act quickly. The speed at which recent emergency funding for hurricane victims passed just goes to show what can be accomplished in Congress and how quickly.

Serving my rural district in Colorado, I come to the floor this morning to urge action on funding for victims of another major natural disaster, our 6-year drought, which has devastated farmers and ranchers throughout the West. This is a matter of importance that is not being reported on the 24-hour cable news networks or capturing front-page headlines across the Nation because it is not a sudden, horrific force like hurricanes; but it is very critical nonetheless.

When I am at home on the weekends, I see the devastation firsthand. I see the worry and the anxiety. I see the detriment this natural disaster is imposing on the local small town economies. Recently, the other body included \$3 billion for drought relief in the Department of Homeland Security bill.

To my colleagues here in the House, I urge support of this funding for drought relief. Floridians boarded up before their natural disasters. Let us make sure rural Colorado does not after theirs.

IRAQ

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, today's Washington Post tells us that the administration recently curtailed the distribution of reports by contractor Kroll Security International that show increasing violence in Iraq. The article goes on to say that the Pentagon is sponsoring a group of Iraqi Americans to speak at military bases throughout the United States to provide "a firsthand account of events in Iraq." That is to say, the administration is sending Iraqi exiles, mostly people who may not have been to the country in years, to tell our troops just back from Iraq the "good news" about how things are going there.

I imagine some of these exiles are the same people who told Deputy Defense Secretary Wolfowitz that we would be greeted as liberators upon arriving in Iraq. These are two more examples of an administration in denial of what is actually going on in Iraq, an administration unhinged from reality. If these emissaries of the administration were going to tell our troops the truth about Iraq, they would say that the inter-

national coalition is getting smaller, that our burden is getting larger, and our casualties are rising at an alarming rate.

That is the reality in Iraq, the reality that our dedicated troops deserve to be told by those sending them into harm's way. The American public needs to know what is happening in Iraq. This administration is failing to do that.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

The Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MILLER of Florida) laid before the House the following privileged message from the Senate:

In the Senate of the United States, September 20, 2004.

Ordered, That the Secretary be directed to request the return of (H.R. 4567) entitled "An Act making appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2005, and for other purposes," in compliance with a request of the Senate for the return thereof.

Attest:

EMILY J. REYNOLDS,
Secretary.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the request of the Senate is agreed to, and H.R. 4567 will be returned to the Senate.

There was no objection.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5183, SURFACE TRANSPORTATION EXTENSION ACT OF 2004, PART V

Mr. REYNOLDS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 108-710) on the resolution (H. Res. 811) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5183) to provide an extension of highway, highway safety, motor carrier safety, transit, and other programs funded out of the Highway Trust Fund pending enactment of a law reauthorizing the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

WAIVING REQUIREMENT OF CLAUSE 6(a) OF RULE XIII WITH RESPECT TO CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 807 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 807

Resolved, That the requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII for a two-thirds vote to consider a report from the Committee on Rules on the same day it is presented to the House is waived with respect to any resolution reported on the legislative day of September 30, 2004, providing for consideration of a bill to provide an extension of highway, highway safety, motor carrier safety, transit, and other programs funded out of the Highway

Trust Fund pending enactment of a law reauthorizing the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York (Mr. REYNOLDS) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

(Mr. REYNOLDS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 807 is a same-day rule that provides for consideration of the rule to accompany H.R. 5183, the Surface Transportation Extension Act of 2004. The rule waives clause 6(a) of rule XIII requiring a two-thirds vote to consider a rule on the same day it is reported from the Committee on Rules.

Mr. Speaker, the current extension of the highway bill ends at midnight tonight. The Congress must therefore act immediately to ensure that there is no termination in projects or jobs while we continue to formulate the package that will reauthorize the Transportation Equity Act for another 6 years. The legislation must be moved forward today in order to continue funding for highway, highway safety, motor carrier safety, transit and other programs at the levels approved in the fiscal year 2004 budget resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this rule.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the transportation bill is one of the most strongly supported, popular, and bipartisan measures to be considered in the House. The programs authorized in this bill touch every American and affect their lives every single day. There are probably only a handful of Members who do not want to see the transportation bill reauthorized for another 6 years.

But it appears that the Republican leadership and the administration are stonewalling this process by their refusal to work in good faith with the other body. Let us look at the facts. Republicans are in charge of the White House, the Senate, and the House of Representatives. But, instead of providing real leadership, the Republican leadership and the President have let the conferees dangle in the wind while we continue to pass short-term extension after short-term extension of these important programs.

By my count, Mr. Speaker, this is the sixth temporary extension to be considered and sent to the President. Do not get me wrong. I strongly support these programs. I understand that the

gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG), the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR), the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI) and others are doing their best given the draconian allocation set by the Republican leadership. I support these extensions because we cannot afford to let these programs expire. But it is important to know that the Republican leadership and the Bush administration have not done all they can to ensure that the full reauthorization is completed and signed before the programs expire.

Mr. Speaker, the President is the leader of his party. Yet the President has shown a lack of leadership on this issue. The transportation bill will provide every American with roads and bridges that they need. It will provide economic stimulus across the country with the various projects that are written into it. Most importantly, this bill will create new jobs at a time when the new jobs are desperately needed. But instead of looking out for the American public, the President and the Republican leadership in this body have held onto their ideology to the detriment of this country.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say again that I support this extension. While I am concerned anytime the Republican leadership proposes a martial law rule, I also want to express my support for this particular rule that will allow us to consider this sixth extension and send it to the President before these programs expire. But I am disappointed and discouraged by the way the President and the Republican leadership have mismanaged this process, and I hope we can do better next year.

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

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION EXTENSION ACT OF 2004, PART V

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 811 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 811

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order without intervention of any point of order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 5183) to provide an extension of highway, safety, motor carrier safety, transit, and other programs funded out of the Highway Trust Fund pending enactment of a law reauthorizing the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century. The bill shall be considered as read for amendment. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate on the bill equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking mi-

nority member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure; and (2) one motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York (Mr. REYNOLDS) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

(Mr. REYNOLDS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 811 is a closed rule that provides for consideration of H.R. 5183, the Surface Transportation Act of 2004. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill and provides 1 hour of debate in the House equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. The rule further provides one motion to recommit.

Mr. Speaker, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure currently has under its consideration the multiyear reauthorization of the Transportation Equity Act. The current authorization expires at midnight tonight and the bill before us today provides funding for essential programs for an additional 8 months, through May 31, 2005. This extension is necessary to give the authorizing conferees additional time to agree on a larger reauthorization bill.

□ 1030

This Congress recognizes the many needs of our Nation and is answering the call by diligently working through its process to produce a bill that deals with the Nation's priorities in a whole host of areas.

The final authorization bill will ensure that we have a reliable and stable transportation infrastructure from Federal highways and highway safety to public transportation and motor-carrier safety programs.

In the meantime, the extension before us today authorizes \$24.5 billion for the Federal Aid Highway program for highway and bridge construction and safety-related infrastructure improvements. Mr. Speaker, \$5.2 billion is authorized for the Federal Transit Administration for grants to State and local transit agencies to reduce congestion and ensure mobility for all Americans in urban and rural areas.

Additionally, the bill authorizes \$200 million for highway safety programs, including programs to encourage seat-belt use and prevent drunk driving. The \$287 million is authorized for the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration for truck and bus-related safety programs.

Mr. Speaker, the underlying bill also releases the final portion of contract authority and obligation authority for