

that APAs have had in my district. I want to salute the achievements of these two organizations tonight.

I believe that it is also very important to celebrate the accomplishments of a hero for many of us, someone who has tirelessly devoted her life to make our Nation better, Lillian Galedo. Ms. Galedo is the Executive Director for Filipinos for Affirmative Action (FAA). This year she will be celebrating her "Silver Anniversary" with the organization, having served 25 years with FAA.

During her tenure, Ms. Galedo has spearheaded several initiatives to advocate on behalf of the Filipino American community, especially in the East Bay. Today, Filipinos continue to be among the top three groups immigrating to the U.S., constituting one of the largest Asian populations in California. FAA runs several youth programs, offers services to new immigrants and engages in several community campaigns, working for the rights of immigrants, Filipino-American airport screeners and WWII veterans. FAA is truly an exemplary grassroots organization, and Ms. Galedo has been at the forefront of encouraging civic participation and fighting for the civil rights of the community. Ms. Galedo is a woman warrior—passionate and articulate—and an inspiration for many Asian Americans.

I also want to recognize the contributions of those who have left us, but who have left an indelible mark in our Nation's history.

Tonight I honor the memory and the legacy of a very good friend, my dear colleague Congressman Robert Matsui. He made such a great impact in this body, and tonight as we celebrate APA Heritage Month, I want to remind everyone of Bob's great legacy. Bob's passing is a bitter blow to all of us. But his life and the things he achieved for all of us will live forever as a testament to a life well-lived. I also want to recognize his wife, DORIS, who has done an incredible job in the past few months, in carrying on his legacy and reflecting the view and the future that Bob would have for the country.

I also want to highlight the achievements of Fred Korematsu, a courageous champion of the civil rights movement and a role model for Asian Americans. During his life, Mr. Korematsu touched the lives of countless people, shedding light on a past injustice that was forgotten and ignored. Mr. Korematsu was a central figure within the controversy of Japanese internment during World War II, during which he was arrested for demanding no more than what every American is entitled to—his basic human rights. Mr. Korematsu defied the order to go to the Japanese-American internment camps because he believed it wasn't right. His case changed legal history and resulted in an apology by the U.S. for its wrongdoings, as well as reparations to 120,000 living Japanese-Americans.

Mr. Speaker, as a Nation, we must embrace the cultures that have worked to advance the needs of all Americans and have helped to define what it means to be American. So as a proud member of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, I am privileged to join the gentleman from California tonight to make sure that our entire country understands why we are celebrating APA Heritage Month. Let us make sure that we represent Asian Pacific Americans every month, each and every day as we develop our policies and our legislation that ensure liberty and justice for all.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE 109TH CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KUHLMANN of New York). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of this special order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to take what will be a brief look back at the first 100 or so days of activity in this House of Representatives. While each new session of Congress holds great promise, it is the actions that that Congress takes that determine whether or not that Congress has been successful. Our success has been as a result, in my mind, of the leadership of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. TOM DELAY), the majority leader, whose responsibility it is to shepherd legislation through this body.

In a community and a town where exaggeration and hyperbole, overreaching and puffery has been elevated to a state of art, you have to be very careful to not indulge in those tendencies, although some in this Chamber have on occasion, rare occasions, I suspect, done that. But if you are looking at facts, if you are talking about things that have been accomplished, then you are less likely to be accused of puffing and of exaggeration.

So during this next 60 minutes, my colleagues and I who have joined me tonight will spend this hour talking about things that we have accomplished, the things that we have done, the good we have done, how it will impact America and Americans, if the bulk of this legislation does, in fact, reach the President's desk. So to start us off tonight, I have asked my good colleague and fellow freshman, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX), to share with us what is on her mind. So I yield to the gentlewoman.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding to me. It is a real honor to be a Member of this freshman class. Folks keep telling us we are a good group, and we know that from ourselves.

I rise this evening to support our majority leader, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY). Congressman DELAY has done a remarkable job in providing strong leadership and guiding the Congress to make many positive changes for our country. It is a shame that Democratic party leaders are playing partisan games in order to distract the American people from what is important, all of the progress that is being made in this session of

Congress. But rest assured, they will not distract my colleagues and me from getting the job done. It is time for the Democratic leaders to put partisan politics aside and work together on the issues that really matter to the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to report that the first 100 days of the 109th Congress have been a tremendous success. We have been working hard in a bipartisan fashion to make many positive changes for America.

Mr. Speaker, I get up lots of mornings 5 o'clock, 6 o'clock and leave home, and I am always astonished at how many people there are on the highways of western North Carolina going out to do their jobs, and I think those people expect us to do the same thing, I say to the gentleman. That is what they want us to be doing, and that is what we are doing.

□ 2200

I am proud of that. In the past 4 months, we have fought to reduce taxes and the burdensome rules and regulations that plague hard-working Americans. When those people get up every morning and go to work, they do not want to be burdened with taxes and rules and regulations.

And just last week, the House passed a budget resolution conference report that will implement \$106 billion in tax cuts over the next 5 years. Our fiscally responsible budget funds our top priorities, such as national security and defense, while stimulating our economy and creating jobs.

It also reins in spending and reduces the Federal deficit. You know, with the loss of sense of history and civics, many people have forgotten that the number one role of Federal Government is to provide for the defense of our Nation. If we do not provide for the defense of our Nation, nobody else can or will, no other level of government can. So that has got to be our top priority.

We have also acted to repeal permanently the death tax, which is an unfair burden on thousands of American families, small businesses, and family farms. The death tax has caused many of these small businesses and farms to go out of business. I am happy that we have acted to bury this unreasonable burden.

We have strengthened our national security by passing the REAL ID Act. This bill will require rigorous proof of identity and strong security requirements for all applicants for driver's licenses and State-issued identity cards. The vast majority of the States have recognized the privilege that a driver's license brings.

However, 10 States, and regrettably including my home State of North Carolina, issue valid driver's licenses and identification cards without requiring proof of legal status. And according to the 9/11 Commission report, these travel documents are just as important as weapons are to terrorists. I

am pleased that the REAL ID Act will help solve this problem.

We have passed an \$81.4 billion war-time supplemental bill that provides the funds necessary to continue fighting the war on terror, while providing our men and women in uniform with vital equipment and training. I am proud we are supporting our troops who are performing magnificently under difficult conditions.

Just last week, a young man who was injured in Iraq came to see me. He lost both of his legs above the knees. He has the most wonderful spirit and most wonderful attitude about this country, and about keeping the faith that this country has given him. And it is an inspiration to me to meet people like him.

I am proud that we are supporting him and others. They are helping to spread freedom and democracy throughout the Middle East and the rest of the world. Without their sacrifice, Americans would not be able to continue to enjoy the freedom we cherish. We have hosted Ukrainian President Victor Yushchenko who has become a leading symbol for the promotion of democracy in his part of the world. How wonderful it is that the values of freedom are being adopted across the world.

We fought to support the Boy Scouts of America, by encouraging the Department of Defense to stand up to the liberal extremists and continue to permit the Scouts to use their facilities. The Boy Scouts is an outstanding organization that teaches young boys time-honored values such as loyalty, preparedness, citizenship, and character. We must do everything we can to support them.

We voted for a responsible transportation bill that will improve our roads, increase driver safety, and create many new jobs. We have passed the Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act of 2005, which will encourage personal responsibility and ensure that bankruptcy in America is available for all who truly need it and not abused by those looking to game the system.

We have all been affected by high gas prices. To forge a long-term solution, we have passed a comprehensive energy bill that will lower energy prices, strengthen the economy, generate hundreds of thousands of new jobs, and encourage greater energy conservation and efficiency. This bill will also reduce our dependency on foreign oil and encourage investment in alternative energy sources.

These are just a few of the many positive changes that we have made. We have seen changes in vocational education. We are going to be dealing with more of that in the next few days. But rest assured we are going to continue to work very hard, and we have a lot left to do.

I look forward to working with my colleagues in a bipartisan way to make more positive changes in the next quarter of the 109th Congress.

Mr. CONAWAY. I want to thank the gentlewoman for her comments tonight. She has done an excellent job of reviewing many of the terrific accomplishments that this 109th Congress has done so far.

Accomplishments are gauged by the legislation that is passed and sent to the Senate, or that comes from the Senate and is passed and sent on to the President of the United States. Much of that success ought to be bipartisan.

This may sound a bit heretical to some of my Republican colleagues, but we Republicans do not necessarily have all of the good answers, all the right answers; and by the same token, the Democrats do not have all of the right answers as well. So what we ought to be about crafting are those solutions and those answers to the problems that face Americans that do have bipartisan support.

And later on this evening, I will run throw a litany of the legislation that has been passed through this body, which from 41 to 122 Democrats have joined their Republican colleagues in the passage of this legislation, clear evidence that the work coming out of this body can be bipartisan and that we can have a meeting of the minds among folks with different philosophies.

I have also been joined tonight by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY). I find a great pleasure to yield to him as much time as he may consume to continue this discussion.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding the time, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY), and of course before him the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX).

The gentleman mentioned the spirit of bipartisanship. In that vein, let me just commend our colleagues on the other side of the aisle, the gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA) and the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WU), who in the previous hour talked about the contribution of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, people like themselves who have contributed so much to this country. And I commend them for that. I found it to be a very interesting and compelling hour.

And we, Mr. Speaker, can be bipartisan and need to be. We need to take every opportunity. There are so many issues, as my colleague from Texas just mentioned, that, I mean, things like health care and public education. These should not be partisan issues. Social Security modernization and saving that program for our children and grandchildren. It does not make sense that that will get involved in partisan bickering, but it does.

But I think we need to understand and make sure that, as our colleagues know, that we can still make progress despite the fact that we have to run every 2 years and everybody is always kind of thinking about the next election and who is in control. Well, that is what a lot of this partisanship is about. But the way, Mr. Speaker and my fel-

low colleagues, that we make progress despite that tension is with great leadership, with great leadership.

And I can think of none greater than the Speaker of this House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTER), and our great majority leader, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) who is a colleague from Texas of my friend, Representative CONAWAY.

We have done so much, as he pointed out, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) also, in discussing the progress that we have made in these first 100 days of this 109th Congress. It is truly amazing. And I think a lot of these things have already been mentioned, that we have accomplished, despite the fact that our leader, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), has struggled because of unrelenting attacks from the other side, mainly for political reasons, quite frankly.

It is a situation where if you go after the leader, if you are able to shoot the leader, then the rest of the troops might cower down a little bit. Thank God that has not happened. We have a very strong caucus on our side of the aisle. And, you know, we may have a Member or two that gets a little squishy and nervous, and that is regrettable.

But I think the important thing is that the vast majority of us are very supportive, we are team players. When the going gets tough, as they know in Texas and as they know in my great home State of Georgia, the tough get going. That is what we have seen from our leader.

There is a country song, if you want to play in Texas you got to have a fiddle in the band. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) has a fiddle in the band; and not just in Texas but in this great country of ours, he is the straw that stirs the drink.

And the courage that he has shown, the leadership, that is the reason why in these first 100 days of the 109th Congress that we have been able to accomplish so much. As has already been mentioned by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY) and the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX), we have passed the emergency supplemental, \$81 billion, to support our troops in Iraq as they continue this battle to democratize the Middle East.

And we are succeeding. We had great bipartisan support on that bill. Just last week, we passed the House budget resolution, which for the first time in, I think, over 10 or 12 years, we actually cut discretionary spending by a full percentage point; and we limited the growth of mandatory spending.

It has been mentioned, of course, the permanent elimination of the death tax, which just passed this Chamber a couple of weeks ago. Class action reform, bankruptcy reform, the energy bill just last week, and all of these really remarkable pieces of legislation.

There was an article, I think, Mr. Speaker, in the Hill or Roll Call this week talking about the 20 most important pieces of legislation that have

come through this Congress in the last 40 or 50 years. I think they are going to need to revise that list, because quite honestly in these first 100 days we are beginning to do some historic things, and hopefully the other body will follow suit.

But it is because of the leadership of people like the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT), the Speaker of this great House; and our majority leader. And I really commend him. He is a strong Christian man who has committed his life to family values. You know, Mr. Speaker, he was attacked relentlessly, and this quote may not be exact, but in regard to the Terri Schiavo case, and not just that case but a lot of decisions that are made, particularly coming from Federal Courts in the 9th Circuit out on the left coast, when they wanted to take God out of the pledge of allegiance, and make sure that the 10 Commandments are never shown in any public places, and that you cannot celebrate Christmas any more, it has to be winter holidays. And our leader said, the time will come for the men responsible for this to answer for their behavior. Now, a lot of people, Mr. Speaker, want to say, well, Mr. DELAY is threatening our Federal judiciary. I do not think so. I do not think that is at all what he meant.

TOM DELAY is a well-known born-again Christian. When he made that comment, I assumed he was referring to God, that that is who men and women of the Federal judiciary will have to answer to when they forget from whence we came. And I commend him for that. It was no threat, no personal threat on the part of our leader.

So to have an opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to be here tonight, to join with my colleagues, with the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY) who is managing the time tonight, I commend him for that. And I just want to tell you how much confidence I have in leader TOM DELAY. He is someone that has the courage of his convictions, and they are not going to bring him down.

They, those on the other side who want to get overly partisan and forget about what the people in this country really want, they want bipartisanship, they want good laws passed, they want tax relief, they want regulatory relief, they want good health care and good public education, and they want a balanced budget.

And these are the kind of things that we are working toward under the leadership of the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY).

Mr. CONAWAY. I appreciate and thank the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) for coming over tonight and spending his time with us to point out to us, Mr. Speaker, that some of the great things that we have, in fact, accomplished during this first 100 days, as I mentioned, if it is a fact, it is not over-reaching, it is not puffing, it is not exaggerating. And these are facts

that we lay on the record, facts that most often have wide Democratic support for the initiatives that have been brought forward on the Republican side.

For that I am thankful for my colleagues on the other side of the aisle who have looked at the issues, looked at what is best for America, looked at the solutions that are being presented and voted their conscience as opposed to being obstructionist or just simply taking the party line on issues that are of importance to our great country.

□ 2215

Mr. Speaker, I have also been joined tonight by another colleague, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON) and I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY) and I would like to make a few remarks on Social Security. Before doing so I wanted to thank the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY), the doctor, I should say, for the good work he is doing on health care reform, making health care more affordable and accessible to the American people and working through the private sector rather than going through a Canadian or English style of government-sponsored health care. We do have a great health care system but also one that needs improvement.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Members of Congress who are working on immigration reform. We have 8 million illegal aliens in the United States of America. That is about the size of the State of Georgia which is about 8 million people. A big issue.

I am very pleased that the gentleman from Wisconsin's (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) language will be in the supplemental appropriations bill which we will vote on on Thursday. It is a major victory for those of us who are pushing for immigration reform.

Mr. Speaker, I will speak on Social Security reform as well. The last time Social Security was taken up by this Congress was in 1983. At that time, the Members of Congress thought that they had fixed Social Security for another 75 years, but unfortunately that is not the case.

In less than a decade, Social Security will begin to spend out more money than it brings in. Insolvency is not the only issue, although it is a major one. We know that in the year 2018, when the baby boomers start to retire, more money will go out than is coming in. And we know by 2041, if we do not cut benefits by 27 percent, Social Security will be bankrupt. The math is simple to follow.

In 1937, when Social Security was started, we had 60 workers for every one retiree. And by 1950, it was 16 workers to every retiree, and today it is 3.3 to 1. And during that period-of-time life span, life expectancy has increased. In 1937 folks lived to be 59 year old. Today they live to be 77 years old. The math is even easy for a Democrat

to follow, Mr. Speaker. You can see why we are having solvency problems.

There is also an issue of generational fairness. As my friends know, if you retired in the year 1980, you got all your money out of Social Security in 12.8 years. But if you retire in 2003, it will take you 17 years to get your money out. Most Americans do not mind. They do not need to have every dime accounted for, every penny accounted for, but generally people expect to get at least the money they put into the system out of it. But that is not going to be the case for today's 20- and 30-year-olds who, in addition to having to live longer, past the retirement to get their money back, they are also going to have this great benefit cut. So we have a great challenge. And to the Republican party, the choice is simple.

We need to do it together. We need Democrats and Republicans to come to the House Chamber with the best of their ideas, put them on the table and let us cobble out something that does not focus on the next election, but on the next generation. Something that is fair at the kitchen table where mom and dad and the kids and the grandparents can sit down and agree on it. Because if we can get the agreement square on the kitchen table, it will not be any problem to get it passed in the House Chamber.

Last week under the gentleman from Texas' (Mr. CONAWAY) leadership a number of House Republicans and Democrats sat down together with Bill Novelli, the chairman and CEO of the AARP which is the largest older Americans advocacy group in the United States of America. We sat down, Democrats and Republicans, together with the AARP, to talk about core principles, talk about what could be a solution and what could not. And we knew at the time we were not going to walk out of the room with hands held and all kinds of bipartisan unity. We knew that this was just the first step.

I have got to say that I have a lot of appreciation for those Members who showed up from the Democrat side. But unfortunately, the Democrat leader, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI) decided that this meeting for some reason was off limits, for some reason it is a bad thing for Democrats to sit down with Republicans. And yet publicly she calls for bipartisanship, but here in the House Chamber when the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY) tried to get this meeting together, of the five original Members only two actually came. The other three were intimidated by Democrat leadership. Do not come because we can talk publicly about bipartisanship but behind lines, behind the scene we really do not want this.

It is further revealed this week, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), the Democrat leader was on the ABC "This Week" show with George Stephanopoulos, actually one of her fellow Democrats, a former Clinton advisor. And yet in this role he was

being an interviewer, and he asked the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI) why the Democrats have not put forth their plan. And he asked her a number of times and she would not say. And finally he got so tired of it he said, Why should the American people trust the Democrats if they do not have a specific plan of their own on Social Security? To which the Democrat leader said, "The American people should trust the Democrats because we originated Social Security."

I guess the Democrats have gone from the Franklin Roosevelt New Deal to the Pelosi No Deal. Because if we need to go back to 1937 to be the last time we could trust a Democrat, then maybe Ronald Reagan was right. The party left him, he did not leave the party. And I guess that is true with many of us. Because I know in the great State of Texas and in the State of Georgia, they were majority Democrat States until recent years, when the Democrat party refused to come to the table with mainstream ideas and to put politics aside and say, let us sit down and come up with some solutions.

I strongly believe that there are a lot of good Democrats across this country. There are a lot of good Democrats in this House Chamber. I am sad to see so many following lockstep with the radical fringe leadership of their party.

I am sad to see that they are intimidated to the extent they do not even offer a plan. But I would also call on them and their Democrat constituents back home to say, you know what, I am 23 years old; and I know I am faced with a benefit cut; and I know the President has offered me an opportunity to voluntarily enroll in a personal savings account in which I will have a lot more money than I will if I pay 40 years into Social Security. I am interested. At 23 years old I have got a lot at stake.

And I might say, I do not know if I like what the President has offered, and I am hearing a lot of bad things about it from the Democrats, but what is it that they are offering to me as a 23-year-old new worker into this system?

And I look and I search the papers and I turn the pages and I look at the bloggers and I look on the Internet and I check my emails, and I find out the only things the Democrats are offering is that there is no problem with Social Security. Tell that to the 23-year-old new worker because they are not buying it.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I found it very interesting that the Pelosi No Deal, my colleague, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) mentioned and I watched a little press conference that they had over the weekend or yesterday in regard to what the President had to say at his press conference Thursday night talking about progressive indexing. And the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) the minority whip at that press conference said, "Other than individual personal ac-

count options, there are at least a dozen other things that we can do to save Social Security."

I would challenge him to name four. Name two. Give us one rather than this "no deal" that my colleague from Georgia was talking about because they do not want to talk about any of these dozen other approaches to solving the solvency problem of Social Security. Because some of those could be raising payroll taxes, cutting benefits, raising the age at full retirement. I could go on, but I think that is the reason, and I think my colleague from Georgia would agree, that they basically have a no deal and a hokey pokey plan, if you will, to save Social Security.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for pointing it out. But again, I want to emphasize, we have a lot of solutions that Members of Congress are promoting. And they are doing this on their own. They have not officially trolling out in the name of the Republican public. The gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE) being one, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SAM JOHNSON) being one, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN), the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW). They are coming up with solutions.

But to my knowledge, there is not one Democrat who has offered a Social Security plan since I have been a Member of Congress over 10 years, except for Mr. Charlie Stenholm, who is now on the President's bipartisan commission to save Social Security, and Patrick Moynihan, who many years ago as a liberal Democrat from New York, a Senator, said that we have got to act to protect and preserve Social Security because it is going bankrupt.

It is time to do something. Even President Clinton said that. And yet the current membership of the Democrat Senate and House are afraid to offer one plan. And doggone it, if you want to raise taxes, and that is one thing the Democrats are good at, put the plan on the table. It is okay. Let us look at it. A bad plan is better than no plan.

But if you want to be the party that used to proudly say we are the party of the new deal, to now be the party shamelessly of the no deal, then continue on the current leadership path because that is what we are getting from the Democrats.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I, too, am concerned about Social Security. Probably the single heaviest lift, as that phrase is used in these Chambers, that we have ahead of us. It will look like a walk in the park when we begin to consider Medicaid and Medicare and overall health care spending and costs in this Chamber. So we need to get it done now.

As we address the issue of Social Security we have got more options today than we will as each year passes. If we do not act, if we continue to keep our heads in the sand, which if you think about the posture that you are in with

your head in the sand it is not particularly flattering. If we continue that posture, we have add a \$600 billion increase to the unfunded liabilities that are Social Security for each year that we fail to act, for each year that we do not consider those 23-years-old as they enter the workforce.

Our oldest son is 32 years old, and he will be retiring about the point in time where benefits look like they are going to cut under current conditions, about 27 percent. And that is not something I am particularly excited about.

I am also not excited about the opportunity of taking our six wonderful grandchildren, of which we are very proud, I am not particularly interested in taking those six down to my local banker, convincing him to draw up a major huge loan packet, in which I will get the proceeds and I will make those six little critters sign on that note and they have to pay it off.

That is a plan that is not particularly attractive to this grandfather. I do not imagine it is particularly attractive to any grandfather in this body that would consider that. But that is what we are doing as we continue to delay and delay and delay and not address the bad math problem we have with Social Security.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, one of the things that I think is so important of the Republican model of sitting down at the kitchen table with you as a grandparent, with your children and with your grandchildren to work out something that is fair. That is the approach we need across America. That is the approach that we need in the United States Congress.

But the thing that is important to remember as we look at this, in 1937, the tax on Social Security was 1 percent employer, one percent employee. A 1 percent 1 percent match. In 1960 it was 3 percent and 3 percent. In 1978, 5 percent and 5 percent. Today it is 6.2 and 6.2 percent. We have raised the taxes on Social Security twenty different times since 1937.

Now, there are those on the other side, there is no bill, but they do talk a little bit around the edges, well, they just need to increase taxes.

If you increase taxes 1 percent for you, and you are under 65, I do not know how old the gentleman is. The gentleman is in great shape. I do not know the gentleman had six grandchildren. Let us say he is 45 years old. Let us say he is 50 years old. That means his taxes might go from 6.2 to 7.2 percent. One percent. But think about a 23-year-old entering the workplace, how much that 1 percent means year after year in paying into it.

□ 2230

Okay. Let us just say that is tough, that might just be the way some people think they do not have any sympathy, but one of the things that we have to understand is that if you are an employer and you have 1,000 employees, every time it gets more expensive to

hire an employee, you are going to look for ways to reduce your workforce.

So, if we decide, well, this is the only way out of here is to increase taxes on the workers, which is matched by the employer, then it is going to be a job killer. I do not know how many jobs would be reduced, but we do know from standard economics that the more expensive it gets to hire somebody, the least likely an employer is to hire somebody. They are going to look for ways to reduce the workforce, not to increase it.

One of the things this Republican party has worked very hard on is creating more jobs, and so it is counterintuitive to us to increase taxes on employers and employees.

Mr. CONAWAY. Well, I spent 30-plus years as a CPA working for a variety of clients and situations, and it has been my experience with those clients that, as Congress has reduced taxes, as tax bills have gone down, that most employers use that money to invest in new employees and invest in new equipment, in new process, to expand their businesses, and as the gentleman pointed out, when taxes go up, somebody loses a job.

I would also like to point out one other thing while we are talking about Social Security and, that is, current beneficiaries and near-term beneficiaries.

Every chance I have gotten, every chance I hear of anyone talking about a plan, it includes a clear, unequivocal statement that if you are on Social Security benefits, if you are a near-term beneficiary, those benefits will continue; you will continue to get your checks. So whatever it is, whatever solutions we come up with, I will be able to look at my mom and dad, who are current beneficiaries, and tell them that on the 3rd of every month, that direct deposit is going to hit the bank, just like it did last month and the month before that. You will not, Mom and Dad, be able to outlive your Social Security benefits because, in my mind, Social Security is a contract with ourselves.

We are not going to breach Social Security. It is a public policy issue that I think has served this country well for 75 years. It is a great concept to have a floor, a level of lifetime annuity that you know will be there for the rest of your life. We have got that for the current generation of beneficiaries. I think it is a good idea that we ought to have it for my grandchildren, that they also would have a plan in place, funded over their work life, that would allow them to have a lifetime annuity, that would provide them and their families, at a modest level, of course, because Social Security was never intended to be a robust retirement. It was always intended to be a safety net, a bare minimum, a modest lifestyle that you would lead, but nevertheless, one that would allow you to exist in your retirement age.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding.

I was talking a little bit earlier, Mr. Speaker, about this press conference that the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), the minority leader, and others had today or maybe it was the end of last week. It included, of course, the minority whip, and they kept talking about the President, President Bush ought to be ashamed of himself for raiding the Social Security trust fund. Now, that is so disingenuous. The mendacity of that is appalling.

The \$1.7 trillion in the trust fund is gone and we all know, and I think the American people, Mr. Speaker, know, as we have tried to explain, the President explained, that money has been spent on other governmental functions. I am not saying that it was inappropriately spent. You spend a little bit more money on the veterans and on defense of this country. If you spend a little bit of money on agriculture, our farmers, education or K-12 and higher ed, these are legitimate costs of government. But this has been going on for 70 years, the trust fund has been raided, and during at least 50 of those 70 years, who has been in control of this Congress? I think we all know that, the Democrats.

Then, for the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), the minority leader, and the gentleman from Maryland, the minority whip, to suggest that this President has been raiding the trust fund is appalling. They know better. They know absolutely better that we have had deficit spending since 2001 and 9/11 and the dot.com bubble burst and having to stand up the Department of Homeland Security and go and fight the terrorists, not on our shores, and to prevent them from coming again and striking us here on our home land. Yeah, we have had some deficit spending. These are emergency times. We are in a shooting war, but this President has in no way, shape or form raided the trust fund.

I think the Democrats ought to apologize for their leader, to give that kind of press conference knowing that that is not truth.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I want to speak to that point, though, because I do think it is something on a bipartisan basis we could probably come up with something.

I have been working on a lock box bill which was originally the idea of the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER), a Republican Congressman, and we passed it off the floor of this House, but what a lock box really would do is take that Social Security surplus and keep Congress from spending it. The reason why it is spent now is because the surplus goes out, buys Treasury bills, pays about 4.1 percent on the average right now to the Social Security trust fund, but the revenues that come in from it, do go into general revenue, and then Congress does spend it on veterans and education and health care and so forth.

But I think it is a concept we could work on together on a bipartisan basis to come up with a lock box to discontinue that bipartisan practice which has been the practice for decades and decades.

Yet, to date, I do not have any Democrats who want to work with me on this bill, and again, I am asking the Democrats, just come down here and let us talk, let us engage. That is what they are paid to do, come up with ideas. It is not good enough to come in here and vote in and have a little whining press conference and saying we do not like this or that.

If you look at the Democratic agenda for the year, they have established two major issues. One is we do not want to do anything on Social Security, period. They have gone from New Deal to the no deal, and this is their position; they are not going to offer, they are not going to help on Social Security.

Their second issue was we hate the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY). It is not we want to punish somebody who may have an ethics issue. It is, we hate the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY). It is the politics of hatred and personal attack, and beyond that, you say to yourself, okay, all right, let us move on.

Transportation: Republicans, here; Democrats, silence in the chamber.

We go on to energy. Republicans, here; Democrats, silence in the chamber.

We go to health care, and the gentleman is chairman of the Health Care Task Force. Health care: Republicans, here; Democrats, nothing.

It goes on down the line, with Iraq and terrorism and issue after issue. Tort reform. None of the leadership have voted for civil liability reform. They have not cosponsored it. On bankruptcy reform, they have not been there. Class action reform, they have not been there. Two things on their agenda and they are both negative ones.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I thank both the gentlemen from the great State of Georgia for joining me tonight.

We have been joined in the chamber by another freshman colleague of mine from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY) and I would be pleased to yield to him.

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY) and I certainly appreciate my good friend from Texas yielding me a moment to speak about this.

It has been significant, the achievements this Republican Congress, in fact this Republican President, have had in the first 100 days of this new Congress.

It is rather significant that with narrow margins, very small margins here in the House, small margins in the Senate and with a Republican President, we have been able to pass wonderful proposals into law, and just by having a narrow margin here in the U.S. House of Representatives, with Republican

control, we have reached out to the Democrats.

Those reasonable Democrats on the other side have said we will join you, we think there is too much lawsuit abuse and we should rein in these class action lawsuits. They have said, We need to have a comprehensive energy policy for the United States, and it is a wonderful thing that so many good Democrats on the other side have joined us.

What we are beginning to see is they have complaints in the Democrat leadership. The gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) certainly are leading the Democrats with their policy proposals. I say policy proposals, but it is really process proposals. They cannot beat us when it comes to policy, and so they have to sit on the sidelines and complain about the procedures, complain about the process.

The reason why they are complaining about these things is, quite frankly, they do not have any real substantive proposals. All they can do is sit on the sidelines and complain and complain and complain.

What the Democrat leaders are seeing is that their rank-and-file Democrats see that the Republicans actually have ideas. We have proposals in order to move America forward, and it is substantial that we have had so many Democrats join with us on these bills that we have passed here in the U.S. House of Representatives.

It is a wonderful thing to see Democrats leaving their leadership behind and saying, you know what, we see you do not have any ideas, so we are going to join the party that has ideas, that is moving America forward, and we are going to vote with them.

So I encourage those on the other side of the aisle to come join us, join with the wonderful proposals that we are offering America.

It is wonderful that the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY) has had this hour to discuss our first 100 days, the enormous impact that this Congress has had on America in a short amount of time. It is a wonderful thing, as a fellow freshman lawmaker, to join the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY) in talking about our successes because, as a freshman lawmaker, we have tried very hard these first 100 days to have a significant impact not only on America but for our constituents back at home and, in my case, the people of the 10th District of North Carolina, Western North Carolina; for the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY), the people of West Texas.

We have worked very hard on policies that help our constituents and lift votes at home, lift all votes at home, while at the same time doing what is right for the people of America and, in fact, proposals that make the world a more secure place.

So I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY) for hosting this hour. I certainly appreciate him yielding me time to be here.

In fact, I just spent a few moments with one of my former colleagues in the North Carolina State House, Tim Moore, a good friend of mine when I was in the State House, and we were talking about the things that Congress has actually done to move things forward, to move a conservative agenda forward and do what is right for America. It is wonderful that I was able to come here and participate in this wonderful opportunity that we have had. I say it is wonderful for me to be able to participate. It is wonderful that the gentleman hosted this hour, and I am thankful that he opened this time for me.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from North Carolina. He also is cutting a wide swath through the activities around here, and he has done a good job for the folks of Western North Carolina.

I would like to amplify a theme that he has talked about, and that is the strong bipartisan support we have had on six major pieces of legislation. As I walk through these and explain kind of what the legislation did, I will also point out the number of Democrats who joined the Republicans in passage of these bills.

One of the early pieces of legislation was the class action lawsuit reform, the Class Action Fairness Act, in which 50 Democrats joined their Republican colleagues in passing this bill that addresses some very serious problems facing our courts with respect to the large interstate class action cases that are being heard. This legislation moves those cases into Federal courts and allows for the defendants in those cases to have a fair chance of having their rights not abused in forum shopping in State courts.

We also passed the REAL ID Border Security Act. There again 42 Democrats joined the Republican colleagues in passage of this very important first step. As my colleague, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON) mentioned about immigration reform, which is something that this body ought to be taking up in serious ways, but this is a great first step in that instance by requiring that States, if they want their citizens to use their driver's license to get on to airplanes and get into Federal facilities, that they will have to have certain standards by which they issue those driver's licenses to their citizens and to others in their State.

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It also closes some loopholes in the asylum laws as well as strengthening our deportation laws.

We have an interesting, odd fact; that if a person were on a terrorist watch list and attempted to get into this country, we have every right to not let them in. We can simply refuse to let them in. But if we come across this same person already in this country who had these terrorist ties and connections, those are not grounds for

deportation. So this REAL ID Act will address that inconsistency.

We also go about finishing an important physical border problem that we have in Southern California and about a 3-mile stretch of a long-needed fence and barrier between Mexico and Southern California.

We have also passed and sent to the Senate the death tax repeal. This is something all good Republicans, of course, have campaigned on every time they have run for office and run for election. This is an important repeal of, in my mind, a bad public policy. We tax every single thing we do in life: We tax our incomes, we tax our sales, we tax purchases, we have excise taxes on everything. We ought to be able to get out of this life tax free. Taxing death seems to me on its face a bad public policy, and this Congress in 2001 and 2003 began the process of repealing the death tax over a 10-year period so that in 2010 it goes away fully.

The bad news is that in 2011 it comes back in, fully, with a 55 percent partner in the Federal Government. The repeal of the death tax will make that repeal in 2011 permanent so that families can be about passing on their inheritances to their families and children and their heirs and their charities in ways they choose and that they are not forced to do this in ways that has Uncle Sam as a 55 percent partner in that deal.

Did I mention that 42 Democrats joined the Republicans in passing that bill and sending it to the Senate?

We also passed a bankruptcy abuse bill in this Congress, the Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act of 2005, which closed many of the loopholes being taken advantage of by folks who really should not have been taking advantage of them. The bankruptcy laws, for those truly bankrupt, are there and in place, but it provides for a review of their cases to make sure that if they can, in fact, pay something back to their creditors, that they are required to do that. We had 73 Democrats join us in the passage of that bill.

Mr. GINGREY. If the gentleman will yield for just a second, and I appreciate the gentleman yielding, because when he mentioned the Bankruptcy Reform Act and the fact that declaring bankruptcy was never meant to be part of someone's financial planning, it made me think of the gentleman's comments a little earlier in regard to the heavy lift, relatively speaking, of the Social Security modernization, but not nearly as heavy a lift as trying to do something about Medicare and Medicaid, and I just wanted to speak to that just briefly.

First of all, our friends on the other side of the aisle want to suggest to the American people, Mr. Speaker, that we, the Republican majority, have done nothing about Medicare, when in fact we passed the Medicare Modernization and Prescription Drug Act in December of 2003, and we had the interim Medicare Discount Drug Card, which for our

neediest seniors, gave a \$600 credit per year for 2 years. That is \$1,200 worth of free, much-needed prescription drugs for our neediest seniors. And the relief that we bring to them we have not yet seen but we will see it as 2006 begins, January, when part D, the Prescription Drug Act, starts.

But in regard to the Medicaid system, our colleagues on the other side of the aisle also say, well, why do we spend so much money on Social Security when what we really need to do is address the Medicaid problem. Let me just say this, Mr. Speaker. We have a Medicaid problem. There is no question about it. But that Medicaid problem is primarily because of three things: Waste, fraud, and abuse. And I can put it in one phrase: Gaming the system.

In fact, there are States in this great Nation that have figured out a way to leverage the system and draw down more Federal dollars and that sort of thing, and then use the money to cover other expenses that have nothing to do with health care, and that is gaming the system. We need to fix it, and we will.

But these seniors and our children and our grandchildren that need Social Security, that problem exists not because they have gamed the system. And I think my colleague from Texas understands that so well, Mr. Speaker. These people, through no fault of their own, are not going to have something that they have paid into with their money. They had no choice. It was almost confiscated from their paycheck. So we have to solve that first.

And I applaud the leadership for sticking to their guns on this. Not just the President, but, as I said earlier, our great majority leader, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), and our Speaker of the House. They are right, we need to address this problem, do the heavy lifting, and worry more about the next generation than the next election.

With that, I yield back to my colleague from Texas.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Georgia.

There are two other reported bills we have passed in this first hundred days of the 109th Congress that have gained broad Democratic support. The first was the Continuity of Government Act. This would provide set procedures for holding elections should 100 or more of our colleagues be killed in some sort of an event. That bill enjoyed 122 Democrats joining with their Republican colleagues in the passage of that bill.

The final one I want to talk about which the Democrats showed support for is the Energy Policy Act of 2005. We have all had, those of us who drive automobiles, have had the wonderful opportunity of pulling up to the pump and paying prices for gasoline that are the highest we have ever paid, in our minds. I am not speaking to whether that is right or wrong, but it is certainly an expensive process to drive an automobile these days.

We passed the Energy Policy Act, which, unfortunately, is not designed and does not have the capacity to have an immediate impact on gasoline prices. That is a long-term problem, it has been a long time coming, and there is no silver bullet. There is no immediate solution to that. It is simply supply and demand.

As more of us continue to drive, as China continues to go from a bicycle economy to a moped economy to a 4-cylinder engine economy, to a 6-cylinder engine economy, their demands for crude oil and gasoline continues to grow much faster than anywhere else. India, likewise, has significant growth in their demand for the use of gasoline and crude oil. So it is a supply-and-demand issue that the Energy Policy Act we have just passed and sent over to the Senate just cannot address.

However, it can address opportunities to reduce our dependency on crude oil imported and natural gas imported from other countries. Each barrel of oil and each MCF of natural gas that we need to import from other sources makes us more dependent on those sources. Now, while we will never wean ourselves, or certainly not in our lifetimes, from imported crude oil and natural gas, we can take the necessary steps and the rational well-thought-out steps to reduce our dependency on that imported crude oil and imported natural gas through a variety of opportunities.

These opportunities include encouraging renewable energy sources, like wind generation for creating electricity. We have to know how to learn to burn coal cleanly. We currently capture sulfur properly, but we do not capture the CO₂ that is emitted when coal is burned. India and China will dwarf our coal consumption in their own capacity, in their usage of coal to generate electricity. We have to develop technologies that will capture that CO₂ and dispose of it properly. Because whether you believe in greenhouse gases or global warming or not, the evidence is pretty clear there is more carbon dioxide in the air today than certainly in any of our lifetimes. So capturing that CO₂ that is created when coal is burned is an essential part of this. This energy bill would provide dollars for the research for that technology.

It also creates jobs. Because as we continue to develop new ways to provide energy for this country, jobs are created when that happens.

We have a litany of other things I want to quickly run through in the final 5 minutes I have to brag on this House for the first 109 days. We passed a Supplemental Appropriations Act that will provide for the global war on terror funding in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as some modest tsunami relief and other funding. This has gone to the Senate, is in a conference now, and will be back to us later this week.

We passed a budget resolution last week that for the first time since Ron-

ald Reagan we cut nondefense, non-Homeland Security discretionary spending, and it provides for reconciliation for the first time since 1997. This is another real accomplishment given the circumstances that we find ourselves in.

We have also passed the Transportation Equity Act of 2005. This provides for \$284 billion in transportation spending on the needed infrastructure improvements for our highways and bridges and other transportation infrastructure needs that will be spent over the next 6 years. We need that legislation to pass in the Senate so that the President can sign that bill and we can get on with the process of building a transportation infrastructure that will allow our economy to continue to grow and expand.

We have also passed the Job Training Improvement Act earlier in this session, which simplifies and combines some of the job training programs that are in our community colleges and colleges.

Mr. Speaker, we have had a terrific first hundred days. As a freshman, it is my first term here and it has been an exciting hundred days. I suspect the next hundred days will be as exciting as well, as we take up hopefully some specific plans on Social Security, and I look forward to joining with my Democrat colleagues, as we have done on six of these bills that I mentioned, in passing solutions to problems that face this country.

HEALTH INSURANCE CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DENT). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) is recognized for half the time until midnight.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my special order this evening.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, for the third consecutive year, this week our country has designated Cover the Uninsured Week. Led by former Presidents Ford and Carter, hundreds of national and local organizations, as well as thousands of Americans in all 50 States, are participating in week-long activities to highlight the national health care crisis. This is one of those annual events that I wish we did not need to observe.

Cover The Uninsured Week should be unnecessary. Moreover, millions of Americans who are underinsured should not be paying such a high price both emotionally and financially. There is simply no justifiable reason