

spirit of winning basketball and epitomizes the ideals of teamwork, cooperation, and the axiom that the whole is more than the sum of the parts. It is a style that demands sharing the ball, team defense, relentless effort and, above all, selfless play.

Moreover, the international composition of the team reflects the increasingly diversified, more tightly knit world in which we live. General Manager, R.C. Buford, spends a great deal of his time in gyms all over the world looking for the next Manu Ginobili, the Argentine swingman whose acrobatic drives into the lane electrified fans and dazzled the opposition. Given the range of languages and cultures of the Spurs, Coach Popovich has done an amazing job of integrating his players into a formidable and cohesive whole.

Mr. Speaker, I agree with San Antonio native Dean Aguilan, a die-hard Spurs fan and one of my constituents, when he says that "The greatness of the Spurs players who hail from Argentina, the Virgin Islands, France, Slovenia, New Zealand, and from across the U.S. have made San Antonio the capital of the international basketball world."

Naturally, the city of San Antonio has longed embraced the Spurs and considers them family. Spurs basketball suits the Alamo City as a place where substance matters much more than style and people hold others to their words. When the Spurs say they will give their all, they do. So, it is never a surprise when the colors of silver and black sweep the city come springtime as the Spurs work deeper and deeper into the playoffs.

So, I would like to honor Tim Duncan, Tony Parker, Manu Ginobili, Bruce Bowen, Nazr Mohammed, Rasho Nesterovic, Robert Horry, Devin Brown, Beno Udrih, Brent Barry, and Tony Massenburg. I would also like to recognize Greg Popovich who has now moved into elite coaching company with his third title.

The Spurs truly embody our national motto, *e pluribus unum*, which of course means out of the many come one. All of San Antonio is very proud of the Spurs and of this momentous accomplishment.

Mr. BONILLA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding achievement of the San Antonio Spurs and congratulate them for winning the 2005 National Basketball Association Championship on June 23. This is the third time in the past five years that National Championship trophy has come home to San Antonio. This was a dramatic seven game series against the Detroit Pistons, and hard fought at every step along the way. Under the guidance of Coach Greg Popovich, the Spurs' Tim Duncan, Manu Ginobili, Tony Parker, Robert Horry, Bruce Bowen, Nazr Mohammed, Brent Barry, Beno Udrih, Rasho Nesterovic, Glenn Robinson, Devin Brown, and Tony Massenburg played valiantly to bring the NBA trophy back home to the fans of San Antonio. In fact, Tim Duncan earned recognition as the final's most valuable player for the third time due to his performance, leadership and character. In life it's not just whether you win, it's how you play the game. America has seen how the Spurs are a true team of character, no ball hogs, no billboard tattoos, no nose rings. It is a team that worked like a well oiled machine. No longer can anyone in the NBA say "nice guys finish last".

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Monahan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed with amendments in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 2985. An act making appropriations for the Legislative Branch for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2006, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate insists upon its amendments to the bill (H.R. 2985) "An act making appropriations for the Legislative Branch for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2006, and for other purposes." requests a conference with the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon, and appoints Mr. ALLARD, Mr. DEWINE, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. JOHNSON and Mr. BYRD, to be the conferees on the part of the Senate.

The message announced that the Senate has passed without amendment bills of the House of the following titles:

H.R. 3104. An act 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.

H.R. 3021. An act to reauthorize the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families block grant program through September 30, 2005, and for other purposes.

THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE 109TH CONGRESS

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

Mr. HASTERT. Mr. Speaker, this week marks a significant time in the history of the House of Representatives, and in the future of the American people.

Just 6 months into the 109th Congress, we have made some great strides. And this week we mark a milestone.

You see, by the end of today, for the first time in nearly 20 years, the House of Representatives will have completed all of its appropriations bills before the July 4th holiday. It is an unprecedented success, and I want to thank and congratulate the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS), chairman; the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY); and the Committee on Appropriations for all their hard work and long hours.

I am especially proud of Members under the House Republican leadership for their input and support for our overall agenda.

Just like families must live within their budgets, the Federal Government must live within its means. We have passed appropriations bills that have been fiscally responsible while recognizing our national priorities.

We set out important goals in our budget: to provide overall increases only to defend America at home and abroad. We have kept that promise.

Earlier this spring, we passed a war-time supplemental that gives our troops the tools they need to fight the war on terror. That same legislation, which is now law, includes provisions to protect our borders from terrorists by establishing Federal driver's license guidelines and beefing up our deportation laws.

We passed a budget that continues to cut the deficit. It also requires us to slow the growth of entitlement programs for the first time since 1997. For the first time, we are going to reform these programs and we are going to save our taxpayers more money by eliminating waste and fraud and abuse.

By restraining spending and by cutting the deficit, Republican policies are helping to keep our economy strong.

Currently, our Nation's unemployment stands at 5.1 percent. That is the lowest it has been since before the September 11 attacks. More Americans, especially minorities, own homes now than ever before. Federal revenues are coming in well above estimates, which means the deficit will be lower than expected.

And just yesterday we learned that overall economic growth was 3.8 percent for the first quarter of 2005, higher than expected.

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America's economy has now had 14 straight quarters of growth.

On the domestic front, we passed legislation that will maintain our status as the world leader. We have passed legislation which the President signed into law which would curb class action lawsuits. This is a problem that has been devastating to our small businesses across this country. Many of them spend on average \$150,000 per year on litigation expenses. Our legislation will bring relief to those mom and pop small businesses.

We passed a bankruptcy bill that will help curb the number of abusive and frivolous bankruptcy filings. That bill is now law. While the bill allows relief to those who truly need it, it is going to rein in those fraudulent bankruptcies that drive up the cost of credit to hard-working Americans who pay their bills.

We have moved to ease America's energy crisis. I am sure you have all heard from constituents upset about raising gas prices. In the long term, the comprehensive energy bill passed in this House will ease our dependence on foreign oil and curb high gas prices. It would also create nearly half a million jobs. I am pleased that the Senate this week passed their version of the bill, and I urge the Senate to quickly appoint conferees so that House and Senate negotiators can develop a compromise and send it to the President for his signature.

We have passed and are now awaiting Senate action on legislation that permanently ends the death tax. Many of our small businesses are wrapped up in a loved one's estate. Figures show that

70 percent of family businesses do not survive a second generation. Ending the death tax penalty will do much to keep our economy moving.

House and Senate negotiators have been working on a compromise for a transportation bill that would make much-needed improvements to Federal highways. Tonight they came to an agreement, both on a bipartisan and bicameral agreement, to move that bill forward. Economists estimate that for every \$1 billion spent to improve our highways, 40,000 jobs will be created.

On all of these accomplishments, I want to thank those Members on the other side of the aisle who chose to work together to get good things done for the American people.

Our work is far from done. Next month we should complete work on conference reports, on job creation bills like the highway bill and the energy bill, as well as legislation dealing with CAFTA. We also plan to take up the PATRIOT Act, reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act and the taking of people's private property by the government. And soon we will begin the steps of reforming Social Security for coming generations.

I am proud that this House under Republican leadership has stayed focused on a real agenda. We are doing what we can to improve conditions for America's families and to foster job creation, economic growth and innovation. We are getting the work done.

One of my heroes, Ronald Reagan, once said, "Government can and must provide opportunity, not smother it; foster productivity, not stifle it." That has been the goal of our Republican Conference each time the American people have sent us back into leadership.

In the end, I really do believe that we will be judged by our work and our accomplishments for the American people. The partisan sniping that has become the mainstay of Washington does nothing for the farmer back home in the cornfields of Illinois, the housewife in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania or the struggling family in Greenville, Mississippi. We help the American people most by showing leadership, by taking action, by keeping our promises.

This 109th Congress is off to an unprecedented start, and I thank our Members for their perseverance, their dedication and their commitment to the people of the United States of America. God bless you all.

TRIBUTE TO STEVEN FRANCIS GAUGHAN

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

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, too often today we call people "heroes" when in fact their actions do not rise to the level of the heroic. Tonight, however, I want to say a few words to honor the memory of a true hero, Prince George's

County, Maryland, police officer Steven Francis Gaughan, who was killed in the line of duty on June 21 trying to protect the community that he loved.

Officer Gaughan was a 15-year veteran of the police force, and was a member of a special unit that tracks and arrests drug dealers and violent criminals. According to all who knew him, Steven was devoted to his work, his church, sports teams and family; his wife, Donna, his son, Daniel, and his daughter, Rachel. To Donna, his children and all his family and friends, I extend on behalf of all of us our deepest sympathies.

Let me close, Mr. Speaker, by quoting the Washington Post, which stated: "Steven's exemplary courage, and his profound sacrifice, stand as painful reminders of how little is truly routine about police work, and of the debt of gratitude that officers are owed by society. His death is a blow to the community, but by his bravery he set an example and left a legacy that will not be soon forgotten."

Mr. Speaker, Steven Gaughan was a hero, and he will be deeply missed. May God bless his soul and comfort his family.

NEED TO FIX SOCIAL SECURITY NOW

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, Social Security is an issue that needs our attention now. We are dedicated to a solution. We are dedicated to securing the funds we have promised to today's seniors and securing funds for future generations.

Allowing workers to place part of their Social Security money in a personal account with their name on it ensures that Congress will have to find the money elsewhere.

It is time to stop the raid on Social Security. We are reaching out across the aisle in an attempt to address this issue in a bipartisan manner, Mr. Speaker. However, members of the minority have chosen to mislead and obstruct, rather than work together to help the American people.

Congress has been spending Social Security money on programs other than Social Security. A philosopher once said, "The ultimate test of a moral society is the kind of world it leaves to its children." How can we call ourselves moral and effective legislators if we simply deny the problem and leave the mess for future generations to clean up? But how can we do this if Congress keeps raiding the Social Security cookie jar.

On March 6, the minority leader stated on Fox News Sunday, "We must stop raiding the Social Security trust fund of its money to pay for other things." The minority leader has since changed her tune. This week she stated that "there is nothing wrong with Social

Security lending money with the prospect of returning it."

The minority should join the effort to strengthen Social Security, and help secure the retirement security of future generations.

PROVIDING FULL FUNDING FOR VETERANS HEALTH CARE

(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, for a long time I have shared the neighborhood with the Houston Veterans Hospital.

Today, Mr. Speaker, just a few minutes ago, we rose to the floor of the House to cure the unpardonable, and that is, of course, the mistaken numbers and the failure to provide the right kind of information to be able to provide the right dollars to serve America's veterans. \$1.5 billion is what the Senate passed.

Frankly, the need is \$1 billion and more, with the number of returning Iraqi veterans and Afghanistan veterans, those who have been maimed and injured on the fields of battle.

It certainly is a shame that we came to the last hours and finally were able to provide for those veterans who were willing to give the ultimate sacrifice. Right now in the Nation's hospitals, veterans are languishing all over America. Families of enlisted personnel are suffering because of the lack of funds for TRICARE. I even know today a young man who is a veteran who is suffering in one of our Nation's military hospitals because of insufficiencies in our local hospital in Houston.

Mr. Speaker, they need more resources, they need more staff, they need our commitment. I hope the majority will not have us end up in the same predicament by allowing this to happen again. I hope we will work through and provide full funding for veterans and veterans health care in America.

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SOCIAL SECURITY

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

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, the money set aside for Social Security should be spent on Social Security. Americans know this only makes sense. The money set aside for Social Security should be spent on Social Security.

Others, however, do not believe in this principle. In March of this year, the minority leader was against robbing the Social Security trust fund. On Fox News she stated it crystal-clear. She said, "We must stop robbing the Social Security trust fund of its money to pay for other things."