

Opportunity, landed on Mars. Both have proven to be work horses on the planet's unforgiving surface, and both have made fascinating discoveries. Spirit found evidence that early Martian history was wet and violently explosive, and Opportunity found evidence of a shallow ancient sea.

There are also tangible scientific and technological results from JPL and NASA's successes. For example, the work of scientists and engineers at JPL has resulted in medical imaging technology used in brain surgery, the detection of breast cancer and detection of skin cancer, and in computer chips that have been used to reduce engine emissions in automobiles. These and other breakthroughs play a critical role in ensuring America keeps its technological and scientific edge.

I congratulate JPL and NASA on their many decades of exploration and discovery.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHAW). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. BAKER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 68, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING THAT THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES WILL FOCUS ON REMOVING BARRIERS TO COMPETITIVENESS OF THE UNITED STATES ECONOMY

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 352) providing that the House of Representatives will focus on removing barriers to competitiveness of the United States economy.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 352

Whereas the economy of the United States is part of a global economy in which domestic industries face ever stronger competition from foreign industries;

Whereas growth in exports accounts for one-sixth of all growth in the United States economy;

Whereas approximately 1 in 5 factory jobs in the United States depends directly on international trade;

Whereas American farmers export 1 in 3 acres of their crops, and exports generate nearly 25 percent of farmers' gross sales;

Whereas the estimated total regulatory burden on United States business is more than \$850 billion per year;

Whereas, according to a study sponsored by the Office of Advocacy of the Small Business Administration, government regulations cost firms with fewer than 20 employees 60 percent more per employee than the cost to firms with more than 500 employees;

Whereas the Office of Management and Budget recently found that for every dollar of direct budget expenditure devoted to regulatory activity, the private sector spends \$45 to comply with regulations;

Whereas high-technology industries are driving economic growth around the world, as shown by the fact that the global market for high-technology goods is growing at a faster rate than the rate for other manufactured goods;

Whereas more than 1 million American jobs are dependant upon research and development spending in the United States;

Whereas the cost of medical care in the United States regularly outpaces general inflation;

Whereas 90 percent of Americans who are under age 65 and covered by health insurance currently obtain that insurance through employers;

Whereas 85 percent of jobs in the United States today are classified as skilled jobs and in 1950, only 20 percent of jobs were so classified;

Whereas 80 percent of the 50 fastest growing occupations require education beyond high school;

Whereas, despite spending \$60 billion per year on training, 60 percent of United States companies are prevented from upgrading technologically by the low educational and technical skill levels of their workforce;

Whereas, in 2003, American taxpayers spent an estimated \$203.5 billion to comply with the Federal income tax code, enough to buy more than 5 million new luxury 4-door sedans at retail price and by 2007, annual compliance costs are projected to rise to \$244 billion;

Whereas the tax compliance burden is twice as much for businesses with fewer than 20 employees as it is for businesses with more than 500 employees;

Whereas the cost of frivolous litigation in the United States exceeds \$230 billion per year, an amount equal to more than \$2,000 per American household;

Whereas the cost of liability defense is approximately \$150,000 per year for each small business, money that could be spent to hire additional employees, expand operations, or improve health care coverage;

Whereas, in 2002, trial lawyers received approximately \$40 billion from litigation, more than the annual revenues of Microsoft and Intel, and twice the revenue of Coca-Cola;

Whereas total energy consumption in the United States is expected to increase more rapidly than domestic energy supply through at least 2025;

Whereas the Energy Information Administration projects that net imports will constitute 36 percent of total United States energy consumption in 2025, as compared with only 26 percent in 2002; and

Whereas, according to a study sponsored by the National Association of Manufacturers and American Council for Capital Formation, consumers will face a 61 percent increase in gasoline prices unless the United States implements a policy to increase the supply of affordable energy: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved,

SECTION 1. RECOGNITION OF EXISTING BARRIERS TO KEEPING AND CREATING JOBS.

The House of Representatives recognizes that there are existing barriers to keeping and creating jobs in the United States, particularly in the following areas:

- (1) Trade restrictions and inequality.
- (2) Bureaucratic red tape.
- (3) Innovation and investment.
- (4) Health care security.
- (5) Lifelong learning.
- (6) Tax burden and complexity.
- (7) Lawsuit abuse and litigation management.
- (8) Energy self-sufficiency and security.

SEC. 2. NEED FOR CONGRESSIONAL ACTION.

The House of Representatives recognizes that improving the competitiveness of the United States economy depends on congressional action to remove barriers in the areas referred to in section 1.

SEC. 3. FEDERAL AGENCY REVIEW OF RULES AND POLICIES.

The House of Representatives expresses the sense that every Federal agency should review its rules and policies regarding the competitiveness of the United States economy.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. BOUSTANY) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. BOUSTANY).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BOUSTANY. 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 H. Res. 352.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. TIAHRT).

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, the United States has the number one economy in the world. For almost two centuries, we have been the envy of the world: a dynamic economy; a hard-working, motivated workforce; truly the land of opportunity where innovation has thrived. The status is changing, though. We are running a \$670 billion annual trade deficit which is contributing to our Federal budget deficit and slowed economy over the past few years.

This development is not a temporary blip on the radar screen. It is the culmination of a generation of increased regulation, unsound tax policies, languishing emphasis on math and science education, unchecked health care costs, rampant lawsuit abuse, unfocused research and development funds and a weak trade policy enforcement. In short, our government has made it difficult and undesirable to do business in the United States. We have put roadblocks to keeping and creating jobs in America, and we have done this to ourselves.

If these current trends continue, our economy will continue to lag and we will no longer remain the most dynamic economy in the world. Meanwhile, China, India and other nations are preparing for the future. They are educating their students in math, science and technology, and pumping out record numbers of engineers. They are reducing tax rates and other economic barriers to entice investments in their nations. They are pursuing aggressive trade policies to reduce America's dominance in world trade.

Without attention to these matters, the United States is headed towards a third-rate economy; 5, 10, 20 years down the road, we will no longer be the world's leader or even second place. We will become a third-rate economy. That is why we need to take this issue seriously.

Last year, we began the competitiveness legislative agenda on the floor, and over a period of 8 weeks, we discussed and voted on issues related to keeping and creating keeping jobs in America. Later this summer, the Jobs Action Team will again bring legislation to the floor to combat this problem. We need to take a longer-term vision.

For this reason, I am initiating the House Economic Competitiveness Caucus. The caucus will carefully examine the issues facing our ability to compete economically over the coming years. We will work to focus congressional efforts to removing the barriers to American economic competitiveness and develop economic goals for the future and find paths to get there.

I encourage my colleagues to join me in finding ways to guarantee a vibrant, internationally competitive American economy now, 5, 10, 15 and 20 years down the road. Our goal is to ensure high-quality and high-paying jobs for all Americans today and in the future.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 5 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, none of us could be against removing barriers. However, the definition of barriers allows room for a lot of disagreement. It is very interesting that the thrust of this resolution is that regulations in the United States are barriers to competitiveness, and yet our economy is linked to a nation which has the maximum number of barriers in terms of regulatory procedures, the economy of China.

China is still a communist government. China is still an economy ruled by a communist government, which means they can set up regulations as they see fit and change the rules as they see fit, and yet we are linking our economic fate to China. Our industries have moved on a wholesale basis to China. Obviously, regulation is not ruining the situation in the Chinese economy, and our propensity for dealing with this communist/capitalist country, this mongrel, whatever economy we want to call it, our greedy manufacturing industry has gone there. Retail and wholesale industries are bringing back the consumer goods. We just love China. Wall Street loves China, and China is a very tightly regulated economy. The greatest barrier one can imagine is there, and yet they thrive.

I want to run through a few of the whereases in this very interesting resolution which covers a lot of territory. One cannot disagree with some of the whereases: Whereas our technology is driving economic growth around the world, as shown by the fact that the global market for high-technology goods is growing at a faster rate than the rate for other manufactured goods. I agree with that whereas.

Whereas more than 1 million American jobs are dependent upon research and development; whereas the cost of medical care in the United States regularly outpaces general inflation. How can I disagree with that? That is a fact.

Whereas 90 percent of Americans who are under age 65 and covered by health insurance currently obtain that insurance through employers. Maybe that is a barrier we want to remove by having a national health care plan which takes some of the burden off employers. I would be in favor of that, certainly.

Whereas 85 percent of the jobs are classified as skilled jobs, and in 1950, only 20 percent were so classified. That is a fact.

Whereas 80 percent of the 50 fastest-growing occupations require education beyond high school. Let us pause there. Is that fact going to lead to a recommendation that we expend more money to improve our education system, that we catch up with some of the nations in the world? Do Members know that the richest nation in Europe now is Ireland? Ireland. Ireland is the richest nation in Europe. In terms of per capita income, Ireland has the highest per capita income. Why, because the Irish decided a couple of decades ago to invest wholeheartedly into a state-of-the-art public school system. Now they have moved beyond that, and they are providing free higher education. So an Irish youngster can develop in the free system right up to the end of his higher education.

So that is a barrier that we would like to remove. So we agree that this is significant, that 80 percent of the 50 fastest-growing occupations require higher education beyond high school, and yet we are shortchanging our education. No Child Left Behind has been shortchanged by \$20-some billion over the last few years.

Whereas, despite spending \$60 billion per year on training, 60 percent of the United States companies are prevented from upgrading technologically by the low education and technical skills level of their workforce. That is a fact. We can agree with that. Our public school system ought to be doing a better job.

Whereas, in 2002, trial lawyers received approximately \$40 billion from litigation, more than the annual revenues of Microsoft and Intel, and twice the revenue of Coca-Cola. What does that have to do with anything? Why did they take a swipe at the trial lawyers in the midst of the whereases? The money received by the trial lawyers was money used to defend ordinary Americans. How about the corporate lawyers? You do not have a whereas about the corporate lawyers, or a whereas about the tremendous amount of corruption in corporate America that the Republican Party refuses to even hold hearings about. Enron, WorldCom, a whole series of criminal activities that have been unveiled by the attorney general of New York State, nobody wants to deal with that corruption. That is a barrier to our success and our competitiveness.

I hope that you will address some of these whereases that I have just mentioned in terms of some answers as to why we do not pursue the obvious, commonsense solutions.

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to respond to the gentleman with regard to Ireland. Surely they have improved their public education system. And, furthermore, they have lowered their regulatory burden and cut taxes. I think those two areas are largely responsible for their growing economy and the increased opportunity in Ireland.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER).

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, in America, the road to opportunity is a fast-moving highway. Any American with creativity and simply a desire to work hard can achieve their dreams. Anyone can succeed. Anyone can start a business. Our road to opportunity has been an open road.

But unfortunately, our government, sometimes with very noble intentions, is putting up red lights, stoplights and dead ends on the road to opportunity. The heavy burden of needless governmental regulation is slowing down hard-driving Americans, Americans whose diligence and hard work is needed to secure our Nation's economic future.

Let us consider a few numbers for a moment. The regulatory burden on United States businesses is more than \$850 billion each and every year. The Small Business Administration says that complying with all of the government's rules and regulations costs small businesses a staggering \$7,000 per employee. American taxpayers spend an estimated \$250 billion a year every year just trying to comply with the American Federal income tax code. This crippling over-regulation can destroy the entrepreneurial spirit. It is a hidden tax on our businesses and on our citizens.

Simply put, the cost of doing business in America is quickly rising. And make no mistake, our foreign competitors are capitalizing on it. Our trade deficit is now an unbelievable \$670 billion and growing. It is time for America to reopen the road to opportunity, and it is imperative that this Congress and this Nation enact a competitiveness agenda.

It is unacceptable that the cost of frivolous litigation now exceeds \$230 billion a year. That interpolates to \$2,000 for every American household. Our citizens, business owners and entrepreneurs face enough hurdles as it is. Our government does not need to raise new ones. We need to focus on eliminating some of the ones we have.

We must and will make America more competitive in the global marketplace. I know by working together we can do the right thing for the American people, for American business and for America's future.

□ 1130

Let us remove the red lights, remove the stop signs and the dead ends and reopen the road to opportunity.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER).

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman very much for yielding me this time.

And I must say that never have I seen a resolution that demonstrates so completely the lack of understanding by the other side of what is necessary to maintain and improve America's competitiveness in the world economy.

They go through all of their whereases, but when they get to the therefores, this resolution does nothing, does nothing. They ignore what those people who are on the cutting edge of trying to improve America's competitiveness, those companies that are on the cutting edge of competing in a world economy, their recommendations, one of the first of which is to fully fund No Child Left Behind. They are \$40 billion behind the curve. But that is what the American Electronics Association says should be done first and foremost in education.

Improve math and science teaching, you do nothing to improve math and science teaching.

They go on to say support research and development. The permanent, the permanent R&D tax credit, not the year-to-year funding that you provide, but the permanent, so companies can count on this, can make their economic decisions, can make their financial decisions. Improve the business climate, the stock options, which your side failed to provide for. Stop having the raids on the patent and trademark offices of the United States Government to fund the general fund.

The fact of the matter is that this provides nothing, provides nothing that the industries that are on the cutting edge identify as their most important objectives, their most important priorities, and that is to provide for a dramatic and sustained improved investment in education; a dramatic and sustained improvement in the R&D of this country, nondefense related, basic R&D on a permanent basis, something you have not done in 6 years.

And also they recommend, after doubling the National Science Foundation, a sustained effort at doubling the National Science Foundation. You thought it was a one-time target, and now you are cutting. You thought sequencing the human genome was a one-time event. That is the beginning, not the end of the story. That is the beginning, is the doubling of the National Science Foundation, then maintaining it. What we are talking about and what the companies have constantly recommended to us is a sustained effort and investment in education, in innovation, in health care. Universal access to health care, universal access to affordable health care, something not discussed in this resolution, something not done in the 6 years. More people are without health care now than in

the 5 years that this administration has been in office.

This resolution so completely misses the mark that we wonder why we would spend an hour of our time on the floor dealing with this when there are such important items. The problem is that the other side of the aisle already voted for a budget that does not make the R&D tax credit permanent, voted for a budget that cuts higher education, voted for a budget that cuts elementary secondary education. A budget that does not even get close to funding No Child Left Behind, as, again, the companies who are out there competing, not the political rhetoric on the floor, but what they have made after years of discussion.

It does not even get close to an immigration policy that allows our universities to continue to attract the highly skilled students that we were before 9/11. That is not working. Those young people now are going to India. They are going to China. They are going to France. They are going to Germany. They are going to England, and they are not coming to the United States because this administration failed to take that action.

Finally, the protection of our intellectual properties. The protection of our intellectual properties is so terribly important. We continue to see them hijacked on a daily basis from the automotive industry, to the film industry, to the music industry, to the computer industry, and the effort has not yet been made.

That is the report on what has happened over the last 4 or 5 years in this country. That is the report of what this Republican-led Congress has done. And what does the Republican-led Congress do? They give us a resolution with a lot of "whereases," a lot of "whereases." No action, just "whereases."

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. TIAHRT).

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Louisiana for yielding me this time.

I welcome the comments from the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER). He talks about a lot of issues that are more important to making America more competitive. We may disagree on the track, but I think it is important that we do move forward with an R&D tax credit that is permanent. I think it is important that we do move forward to protect intellectual property rights. But he does make an additional point, and that it is always easy to be against something instead of for something. If we are going to make progress, we need to work together; so I would welcome him to join the Economic Competitive Caucus because I think together we could find ways to fund technology grants and technology schools. And I would like to point out that we have doubled the funding for the National Science Foundation, and we continue the strong funding of that.

The gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) also mentioned a couple of things that I think are important to be addressed in this debate. One is the effect that China is having on our economy, and I think the point was made by the gentleman from New York that regulation is not holding them back. But let me tell the Members what is happening in China. They have focused on technology. They graduated 350,000 engineers last year. They graduated more English-speaking electrical engineers than America did, and they have done that because they want to target certain areas. In Kansas they have targeted several industries: the hand truck industry, the auto lift industry. They are trying to run American businesses out of business so that they can have a corner on the market, and that is why we need to have enforceable trade policy, which is part of this resolution.

The gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) addressed education. That is why education and lifelong learning is part of this resolution.

But let me just tell the Members what China is doing that I think is important to the debate and why I think they should understand why we need to address these issues today instead of putting them off. The regulation barriers that we have are keeping us from doing wonderful things that could help create and start jobs. In China they are trying to create a Silicon Valley. They have set up a top-notch university. They have given venture capital to the area. They have office space available. They have property management for anybody who has a good idea. They have legal advice, patent advice. They even allow professors and students to start businesses on their own.

The way to address that is by changing our system and removing the barriers. The gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) mentions the trial lawyers, the \$40 billion that came out of our economy for trial lawyers. Just think, if we apply some commonsense reforms, we can make jobs in America. One example is in 1995 when the Statute of Repose was passed, which put commonsense limits on the manufacture of airplanes, and the following year 4,000 jobs were created in Kansas alone, plus additional jobs all across the United States.

All we are saying in this resolution is let us step back from what we are doing today and say if we were going to start this system tomorrow, would we do the same thing? Will it impact jobs? Can we work together to create and keep jobs in America instead of seeing them slide off to other countries?

So I think this is a good resolution, and I would welcome the suggestions from the other side, and I think together we can help bring jobs back to America.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ZOE LOFGREN).

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, when I looked at today's floor

schedule, I was pleasantly surprised to see an item addressing the issue of declining United States competitiveness in the world.

The fact is the issue of competitiveness has not been a priority for Republican leaders in this Congress or in any preceding one in the last 10 years, and I thought perhaps finally the Republicans had woken up. Unfortunately, I was very disappointed when I read the text of the proposal because this plan is nonbinding; it has really nothing that will make the United States more competitive. That is what I have come to expect in this Congress, this Republican-led Congress: more talk and no action. And once again this resolution has failed to propose specific policies that would actually boost technological innovation or our commitment to education.

As many know, I represent Silicon Valley, along with the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ESHOO) and the gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA), the most creative and innovative place on Earth; and if I were to bring your resolution back to the leaders of the Silicon Valley, the engineers, the techies, Ph.D.s, venture capitalists, educators, CEOs, I think I would be laughed all the way back to D.C. I suspect that you did not consult with any of the people in the tech industry because, if you did, we would have had something with a little meat on it that meant something.

We need a sustained commitment to Federal funding of R&D. The 2006 budget proposed by President Bush continues to cut R&D. It underfunds the National Science Foundation by billions of dollars; and the fact is if we do not count weapons research, this administration has sharply reduced federally funded scientific research, and this nonbinding resolution will not do a darn thing to change it.

We need to dramatically improve our math and science education in our country. We know that we are falling short, and meanwhile we are continuing to fail in our funding promises to No Child Left Behind. We need to reform our immigration policies so that the best and brightest students can come and study in the United States and not be poached by universities who are benefiting in Australia and England and elsewhere through our shortsighted and bureaucratic policies; and we need a sustained commitment to science research and education. We cannot afford to sit back and pass nonbinding resolutions that do nothing. We could at least enact the gentlewoman from California's (Ms. ESHOO) bill for stock options.

With an exploding deficit, reduced support for education of Americans, a door shutting on Nobel-level scientists from abroad, no energy policy that will lead to energy independence, this proposal is worse than nothing because the right wing will not take action on competitiveness and will probably say they did something if this stupid and

meaningless resolution is permitted to pass.

Republicans are like the guy in court who killed his parents and now pleads for mercy as an orphan. They have controlled the House of Representatives for 10 years. Their policies for the last 10 years have shorted education. They have shorted science. They have eliminated protection for tech innovation. These words do not change those failed policies, and I hope that we turn down this resolution and tell the truth that our policies are threatening the competitiveness of our United States, and this mere meaningless resolution will do nothing, nothing, to solve that.

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

First I want to respond to a few comments made by the opposition here. There is a lot of talk about a nonbinding resolution, but this House today is going to take up four bills to reform OSHA that will help small businesses and their enterprises be more competitive and their employees be more competitive in the global economy. Health care, the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) brought up health care, and he very well knows that the Committee on Education and the Workforce that he sits on as the ranking member is addressing health care. We recognize that health care is a problem. We recognize that the plight of the uninsured is a problem. And yet I will say as a physician, as someone who has dealt with health care on a daily basis, universal government-run health care is not the answer.

We need to continue to address this problem and support solutions like association health plans, something that we have already taken up in committee and will be coming to the floor soon. This will help get people who are uninsured back on to the rolls of being insured. This will help small businesses provide insurance for those who lack insurance today.

We need to continue to expand health savings accounts. These have already begun to help many Americans, but we need to continue to work on this. This is the future of health care. This is how we are going to create a competitive health care environment that will bring down the cost and make it affordable for all Americans.

And we need medical liability reform. We need medical liability reform. No question about it. And this Congress will address these issues.

So to say this is a nonbinding resolution, surely it makes a statement about some of the needs that we need to work on, but at the same time this Congress is addressing all of those issues; and we ask our colleagues across the aisle to join us to pass these bills so that we can help those Americans in need and we can increase our competitiveness on the global market.

I support this resolution, and I want to thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) and the gentleman from

Kansas (Mr. TIAHRT) for their tireless work to remove barriers on U.S. companies, to ensure that America can be competitive in the global economy.

American businessmen and -women are second to none in resourcefulness, entrepreneurial spirit, business ingenuity; and the government should foster, not stifle, these qualities.

I mentioned, as a member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce, that we are going to work on OSHA reform and AHPs. These are commonsense good measures that will improve our competitiveness.

Frivolous lawsuits, costly health insurance, an overly complicated Tax Code, skyrocketing energy costs, compliance with innumerable Federal and State regulations result in small businesses spending more time just trying to comply with government and government laws and regulations than growing their businesses, creating jobs, and generating revenue. Yet because of the entrepreneurial spirit of these Americans and many small businesses that we have out there, they do survive and even thrive despite all these adversities.

□ 1145

Let me talk about my district in southwest Louisiana for a moment, which has been known for its entrepreneurial spirit. Today, it is a spirit that continues to grow our agricultural influence, despite many adversities, and build small businesses that are grabbing the eye of the global market. We have a port, the 11th largest port in the country, the Port of Lake Charles. Once known as a regional provider, it has grown into an economic engine for our State and our Nation. And as it continues to increase in size, it is moving larger numbers of products into the United States and out into the world.

Our economic developers are finding ways to attract businesses that have never before known the advantages of doing business in Louisiana. Let me give an example. Lafayette Economic Development Authority is a prime example of showcasing the educational and technological benefits of Louisiana's Seventh Congressional District to attract companies to our area. Gregg Gothreaux heads up this organization and has strived to capitalize on an outstanding workforce to make Lafayette a competitive force in the business world. In fact, in the year 2004, Inc. Magazine named Lafayette, Louisiana, one of the best places to do business. And 3 months ago, Entrepreneur Magazine named Lafayette one of the top technology centers in the South, based on its appeal and ability to attract high-tech companies.

Another great example from my district is a small business with 15 employees headed up by Rick Broussard, and he has been able to attract the United States Marine Corps with a service by building these drone airplanes. And he is hoping to build his business, employing hopefully in the

near future 100 employees, so that he can improve his competitiveness and raise his revenue and contribute to the competitiveness of our country and our defense initiatives.

He is not an isolated example. There are many examples in Louisiana and around this country that are competing, despite the regulatory burden, the tax burden and other added costs of doing business.

Mr. Speaker, it is our job, it is our job as elected officials to ensure that our businesses have the necessary tools to compete in this global economy, and this Congress will address these issues.

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

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH).

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York for his leadership in defense of our economy, workers' rights, and our desire to build on an American economy that can provide opportunity for all.

Mr. Speaker, if the Congress were to take up legislation for the purpose of removing barriers to the competitiveness of the U.S. economy, I do not believe, respectfully, it would read like H. Res. 352.

But, it might read something like this: Whereas, U.S. trade with foreign countries is so imbalanced that the U.S. has a trade deficit with every continent in the world except Australia and with nearly every country in the world;

Whereas, before NAFTA, the U.S. exported about an equivalent amount to Mexico as it imported to Mexico. But, after NAFTA, imports from Mexico increased 195 percent, more than double the increase in exports. NAFTA caused a balanced trade scenario with Mexico to become unbalanced, to the disadvantage of the U.S.;

Whereas, exports create jobs; imports destroy jobs. And when imports outpace exports, more jobs are destroyed than created. So while increased exports after NAFTA may have created almost 800,000 jobs, according to the Economic Policy Institute in 2003, increased imports due to NAFTA destroyed almost 1.7 million jobs. Every State in the Nation lost jobs due to NAFTA;

Whereas, Congress will soon be compounding the damage with consideration of CAFTA, which is modeled on NAFTA;

Whereas, China's seemingly endless supply of dollars to acquire IBM, Maytag, and now UNOCAL is supplied by America's huge trade deficit with China. In fact, since Congress agreed to admit China to the WTO, granting it permanent Most Favored Nation status, the U.S. trade deficit with China grew by 50 percent in only 2 years.

Now, if Congress was to take up legislation for the purpose of removing barriers to the competitiveness of the U.S. economy, it might read like this: Whereas, America needs a new trade

policy based on the principle that what the U.S. buys from a country should roughly match what it sells to that country;

Whereas, the cost of private, for-profit health care is a serious impediment to competitiveness;

Whereas, the U.S. paid \$5,270 per capita for health care in 2002, and two countries with the closest level of spending were Germany at \$2,820 and Canada \$2,930, both of which provided universal health care;

Whereas, the CEOs of Ford Motor Company of Canada, GM Canada, DaimlerChrysler Canada wrote in a 2002 letter that "publicly-funded health care thus accounts for a significant portion of Canada's overall labor cost advantage in auto assembly versus the U.S. which in turn has been a significant factor in maintaining and attracting new auto investment to Canada."

The resolution that we need to hear would say: Whereas, H.R. 676, the U.S. National Health Insurance Act, which has 50 cosponsors, would provide less expensive, high-quality, single-payer health care systems like many U.S. competitors;

Whereas, the current course of U.S. economic and health policy is unsustainable, and a day of reckoning could involve the bursting of the housing price bubble, rise of interest rates, budget austerity and the shredding of the social safety net, mass unemployment, and a loss of economic sovereignty.

Therefore, be it resolved, Congress has once again lost the opportunity to change the course, correct the trade imbalance, lift up living standards in the U.S. and the world, and set the country on a more sustainable economic course. The coming readjustment will be painful indeed while this administration and Congress drive the U.S. economy over a cliff.

Vote "no" on H. Res. 352.

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the distinguished Majority Leader, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY).

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, the resolution before us represents a promise, a promise by the House of Representatives to the American people that not only are we aware of the hindrances to prosperity now existing in the national economy but that we are committed to removing them as soon as possible.

We are aware that compliance with Federal regulation costs American companies \$850 billion a year. We are aware those costs are passed along from American businesses to American consumers in higher prices to the tune of \$8,000 per family per year.

We are aware that exports account for one-sixth of our economic growth, and that one in five American factory jobs and one in three American crop acres depend on customers in foreign markets and that many markets are still closed to our goods.

We are aware that 1 million American jobs rely on research and development conducted by private businesses and through our world-class university system.

We are aware that 60 percent of American businesses are impeded in their growth by the lack of advanced training in the workplace. We are also aware that health care is too expensive, coverage too limited, and that small businesses are at a disadvantage in covering their employees.

We are aware that our tax system is unfair and inefficient, and that it costs families and businesses billions of dollars and hours every year.

We are aware that our economy is dangerously dependent on foreign sources of oil, and that it is overrun with frivolous lawsuits that abuse our legal system.

And, starting this week, Mr. Speaker, the House is going to do something about it. We are going to take up major legislation addressing these eight sources of economic friction and tear down these eight walls now surrounding the American dream.

The debate about these eight issues: trade freedom and fairness; bureaucratic red tape; innovation and investment; health care security; lifelong learning; tax relief and simplification; lawsuit abuse reform; and energy independence are over. We all know these impediments to prosperity need reform, and we know what we have to do to reform them.

With this resolution, Mr. Speaker, the House will take a first step toward enacting these needed economic reforms to help small businesses create not just jobs but long-term, rewarding careers for the American people.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, there is really nothing terribly, terribly wrong with this resolution. Talking about a need to invest in greater innovation, research and education, certainly makes sense. The vexing thing for me is this Republican Congress and White House has systematically unfunded almost all of those items. We heard the numbers from my colleagues, and I will not go back over them, except to remind folks of the recent debate we had over the appropriations bills.

Repeatedly, throughout the debate, as Democrats talked about spending more money on a variety of different items, the Republican appropriators said, You know, this is the money we have, this is the best we can do with what we have.

Well, let us look at the decisions that left us in the position where "this is what we have." One of the consequences of those decisions is we do not have enough money to fund the research, education and innovation that is necessary. All of the items that are ticked off, the National Science Foundation, the National Institutes of

Health, No Child Left Behind, we all know what they are. We know how important in the global economy innovation, research, education and skills training is. Yet the programs that fund those vital needs, vital needs particularly for blue-collar, middle-class and lower-class workers, are consistently cut, reduced, not funded like they should be because of the budget decisions of this Congress.

Part of it certainly is the tax cut. That has been the decision of this Congress; supply-side tax cuts for people making a lot of money at the expense of all of these programs we are talking about today. It is incredibly vexing to hear the Republican majority stand up and talk about how much they care about these programs.

At a minimum, I wish they would make a choice, they would say: Supply-side tax cuts for people making a lot of money, that is what we support; that is what we are going to do. That being done, we cannot afford to do these other things, and that is okay. But to stand up today and say that you care about them when you have created a budget environment where they cannot be funded is disingenuous, to say the least. If these are priorities, then let us change the budget. And it is not just tax cuts. We can look at the spending decisions of the last 6 years that have seen massive increases in overall Federal spending while, at the same time, underfunding these critical items.

The budget priorities of the Republican Congress are responsible, and an empty "Sense of Congress" resolution is not going to fix that.

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds to respond.

I would remind the gentleman that these tax cuts have led to an economic growth of 3.8 percent and significant job growth, so I would remind him that these are pro-economic growth policies.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Kansas (Mr. TIAHRT).

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Louisiana for yielding me this time.

The gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH) did talk about some issues that I think are very important, especially when he talked about education. I think education is very important for the future of this economy. If we look at education spending over the last 5 years, we have had dramatic increases in education, as far as the spending is concerned.

What we need to do now is focus on math, science, engineering and technology. We know this is the direction the future economy is going. The world is getting more technically complex, not less technically complex. Yet we have fewer people going into engineering. We have fewer young women going into science. We have fewer people going into the technologies, the maths and the sciences. It should be concerning to us, and we need to take

steps today. I would welcome their support as to how we do that.

National Science Foundation money, the NSF has come up several times here. We increased the NSF again this year, again. Over \$5.6 billion will go into NSF this fiscal year and we have plans to increase that funding in the future, too.

Innovative research is very important. We need help from the other side of the aisle to get research and development tax relief permanent, and I think we can do that. I just want to mention the supply-side tax cut did stimulate the economy. We have more people working today than ever before in the history of our Nation. The average wage is higher than it has ever been in the history of this Nation. We have more people owning their own homes today than ever before in the history of this Nation, and we have done it because we cut taxes. More money got into the economy, and jobs started increasing. But does that mean we should be satisfied? No. We have barriers that need to be removed so that we can increase the number of jobs and the number of opportunities in America in the future.

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I think it is important that we work together. I look forward to working with the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) on issues like we addressed with Sarbanes-Oxley, corporate corruption, we had hearings. We had hearings; we had legislation on the floor. We made progress. We passed Sarbanes-Oxley. And now there are white collar criminals in jail today.

Corporate corruption was addressed and needs to be addressed in the future. But certainly we made some movement. But I welcome them. I know we can agree on creating more jobs. I think it is important that we work together to do that.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I certainly look forward to working with the gentleman also.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to just cite a few examples of how Republican policies have shortchanged the initiatives which they talked about today. Instead of having an aggressive policy on math and science education, the Bush administration has underinvested in proven math and science instruction.

Today, China graduates four times as many engineers as the United States. And South Korea, which has one-sixth of the population of the United States, graduates the same number of engineers as the United States. Instead of keeping the Republican promise on education, President Bush has already underfunded No Child Left Behind, his own legislation, his own innovation, he has underfunded by more than \$40 billion.

Instead of investing in research and development to keep the U.S. on the cutting edge of technological advance-

ment, Republicans have cut \$877 million in Federal science and technology funding. Instead of having a national broadband policy, the Bush administration has allowed access to broadband to lag.

Instead of passing the 21st century bill to increase energy independence through advances in cutting-edge technology, the Republicans have failed to enact any energy bill at all. This resolution before us is a mulligan stew that has been allowed to spoil; it is a spoiled mulligan stew. It is not serious. We have 40 minutes to discuss items which would require really 40 days.

If we were serious, we would have a long discussion of these items before we move on and prepare some real legislation to deal with the shortcomings.

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

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. TIAHRT), who has worked so hard to ensure the competitiveness of this country.

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. BOUSTANY) for his leadership on the floor today and his help in these very important issues of making America more competitive tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, you know, when I listened to the debate today, I find that there are areas both Republicans and Democrats can agree on. And there are ways that we can work together to make a more solid economy in the future so that we can retain our number one status in the future instead of falling into a second or third-rate economy.

The danger is out there. We heard talk from the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) that it is all because of NAFTA. That we have lost all jobs to NAFTA. Yet we have more jobs than ever before in the history of our Nation. We have heard that we do not spend enough money on R&D, that the tax credits are not permanent.

We need your help in making them permanent. We need to make these tax credits permanent. There are eight issues that we have confined the problems that we are facing tomorrow in, and these eight issues are health care, security, bureaucratic red tape termination, lifelong learning, energy self-sufficiency and security, spurring innovation, trade fairness and opportunity, tax relief and simplification, and ending lawsuit abuse.

Today we are going to take a giant step forward in dealing with regulation. The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. NORWOOD) is going to lead the effort to reform OSHA.

And let me just tell you a little bit about why it is important that we take on these agencies and try to change the environment. In the past we have had this adversarial relationship between the government and the private sector. There are fines, there are citations, there are unannounced intrusions into companies.

Employers are unable to deal with this without high expenses, without high cost, without hiring individuals to take care and track what the increasing regulation burden is.

Today we are going to start with OSHA, and we are going to deal with that today. We are going to try to create an environment where we work together. You know, we could work together. In fact this happened in Wichita, Kansas, where OSHA targeted Sedgwick County, and said we are going to go to the homebuilders and we are going to make it a safe place. They stood off. They took pictures. They fined, they created citations, and the housing industry shut down.

We got the Wichita Builders Association together with OSHA and we said, why do we not work together? Why do you not come in on an announced basis, make a list of the violations, let the company have time to make the safe environment at the work area, and then come back and see how they are doing? Well, they did that. The housing industry went back to work. And they created a safe work environment by working together, working together instead of against each other in an adversarial relationship.

That is what we are talking about in changing the environment in America so that we can create and keep jobs in the future, working together and not against each other. Now, this environment here on the floor of the House is an adversarial environment. But yet we can work together. That is what we are advocating here, the government working with private sector to make more jobs in the future.

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, the issue of competition is one that is lived out and dealt with daily in my congressional district, Silicon Valley.

As this resolution states, high-tech industries drive economic growth around the world. Every day my constituents tell me that the United States is falling behind our competitors in Europe and Asia.

This resolution identifies some of the challenges for U.S. competitiveness. But this is not enough. The resolution is not binding. It does not set into motion any legislative action to address the key issues relative to competition.

One of the top issues in Silicon Valley today is stock options. Broad-based employee stock options plans drive innovation and competitiveness.

The House overwhelmingly passed legislation I authored with Rep. BAKER to protect employee stock options almost a year ago, but the Administration has refused to lift a finger to get this bill through the Senate and to the President's desk.

For many, many years the high-tech industry has begged Congress to make the R&D tax credit permanent. It hasn't happened. What has happened is a decline in investment and a diminishment of innovation.

The President has said that the U.S. should have universal broadband access by 2007. We've yet to see the Administration's plan for achieving this. Today the United States has fallen to 16th in broadband penetration, down from 4th in 2001.

This resolution correctly points to education as a critical issue of competitiveness, but once again this Administration and the congressional majority have underfunded critical education programs. No Child Left Behind is funded \$39 billion below its promised level. Pell grants will be eliminated for 90,000 college students, and an additional 1.3 million students will have their scholarships reduced this year. These figures do not meet the standards of a great nation serious about her technological and competitive future.

The resolution states that energy is a major problem, yet the Department of Energy's independent analysts have said that the provisions in the House energy bill will have a "negligible" impact on prices, production, consumption, and imports of energy.

The Administration continues to underfund critical Federal research programs, flat-funding civilian research and development and reducing total Federal research by \$400 million. This underfunds our collective future.

What is missing in the Congress is the commitment to reshape the critical policies which will renew our Nation's competitiveness in the 21st Century.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I am not voting for this resolution, because I think it does not make a constructive contribution to the problems facing our country and the national economy.

The resolution says that trade restrictions and inequality are barriers to keeping and creating jobs in the United States—but it does nothing about them, just as it does nothing to make it easier for Americans looking for work to find good jobs.

The resolution says that bureaucratic red tape is a barrier to economic progress, but it does nothing to reduce that barrier or to require the Bush Administration to exercise leadership in reducing red tape.

The resolution says there is need for more innovation and investment, but it offers nothing substantive to promote innovation or to encourage more productive investment.

The resolution correctly says there is a need to overcome barriers to health care security, but it does nothing to help the millions of Americans who lack health insurance or to make good health care more affordable.

The resolution says we need to promote lifelong learning, but is silent as to how to go about achieving that desirable result.

The resolution mentions taxes and the complexity of the tax laws, but provides no useful suggestions as to how to reduce that complexity or to promote tax fairness.

The resolution complains about "lawsuit abuse" and seems to support "litigation management," but says nothing about the extent to which the courts can protect individual rights and the essential role of law in our society.

And while the resolution correctly says there is a need for greater energy self-sufficiency and security, it does nothing about it. While that actually is an improvement over the energy-policy bill the House passed earlier this year, with its many wrong-headed provisions, it falls far short of what is needed.

In short, this resolution is not serious. It deserves neither the time consumed in debating it nor approval by the House. I will not vote for it.

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, I voted for H. Res. 352 because I agree that there are bar-

riers to keeping and creating jobs within the United States and that Federal agencies ought to review their rules and policies to improve the competitiveness of our economy. But I do not associate myself with the sense of the "Whereas" clauses that America must adopt foreign values and standards in order to compete economically. I also note that the "Whereas" clauses include partisan distortions and falsehoods that are an ill-considered disservice to the cause of American competitiveness.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. BOUSTANY) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, House Resolution 352.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 739, OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH SMALL BUSINESS DAY IN COURT ACT OF 2005; H.R. 740, OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH REVIEW COMMISSION EFFICIENCY ACT OF 2005; H.R. 741, OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF OSHA CITATIONS ACT OF 2005; H.R. 742, OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH SMALL EMPLOYER ACCESS TO JUSTICE ACT OF 2005

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 351 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. Res. 351

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. 739) to amend the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 to provide for adjudicative flexibility with regard to the filing of a notice of contest by an employer following the issuance of a citation or proposed assessment of a penalty by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. The bill shall be considered as read. 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 minority member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce; and (2) one motion to recommit.

SEC. 2. 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. 740) to amend the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 to provide for greater efficiency at the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission. The bill