

As we saw the poorest in New Orleans left behind while those who were more affluent were able to escape, this Congress, frankly, is mimicking that same process, that same scenario, where we are giving tax cuts to the wealthiest citizens, while the poorest and the middle class and those who are working hard and playing by the rules and paying their taxes but who cannot afford health care, we are leaving them behind.

Our Nation's leaders must stop blaming the poor for having the same health care needs we all do. Helping the poor secure health care is not a frivolous extravagance; it is an expression of our values as a Nation. Health care is expensive. No one has figured out, especially in this institution, with the power of the drug companies and the influence of the insurance industry, no one here has been willing to find a solution to contain medical costs without stifling medical progress.

Our Nation's leaders must stop pretending that taking health care away from the poor solves that dilemma. They must stop pretending that the poor take advantage of Medicaid, as if enrollees look for excuses to take off work and see the doctor. The Nation's leaders must stop pretending that taking health care away from the poor will not hurt them. It is a convenient theory. It is also patently false.

Hurricane Katrina forced this Nation, if only for a few days, to see through the eyes of Americans living in poverty. It was a grim reminder that Americans from all walks of life can be financially independent one day and in desperate need the next. A natural disaster, a catastrophic illness, a stock market crash, an aging parent, a sick child, that is all it takes.

Katrina reminded us that when Americans witness human suffering, they do everything in their power as a great Nation, as the people, not the government, they do everything in their power to alleviate that suffering.

Medicaid is the Nation's insurer of last resort. It simply is a financing mechanism that, with modest adjustments and sufficient resources, can accommodate the health care needs of the hurricane victims without delay, without red tape. Medicaid serves people who have virtually no resources of their own. In Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama, we have seen what that kind of poverty looks like.

Some policymakers have proposed saving money by increasing the cost-sharing burden on Medicare enrollees, people who already ration every dollar to get through their daily lives, to cover their basic necessities.

Medicaid enrollees are not going to respond to increased cost-sharing by forsaking discretionary care. Other obstacles, like transportation costs and hourly wage jobs, already force those choices. Increased cost-sharing will deter timely, necessary health care. That is not right, that is not smart, that is not compassionate. Delays increase the cost of treating illnesses.

Policymakers have also proposed "tailoring" Medicaid coverage to fit the health care needs of different beneficiaries. That is not an efficient way of cutting costs; it is an efficient way of cutting care. It is the wrong decision to make, to make this \$10 billion Medicaid cut.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO SUSPEND THE RULES

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 109-217) on the resolution (H. Res. 426) providing for consideration of motions to suspend the rules, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PETERSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

MINNESOTANS SUPPORT HURRICANE SURVIVORS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. RAMSTAD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. RAMSTAD. Mr. Speaker, the Minnesota spirit is alive and well. The Minnesota spirit of compassion and help for people in need has moved countless Minnesotans to step forward to provide relief for the survivors of Hurricane Katrina.

My district office has literally been overwhelmed with calls from people offering housing, food, clothing, health care, labor, and monetary assistance. Camp Ripley, located in northern Minnesota, is presently welcoming over 3,000 survivors of Hurricane Katrina. Other Minnesota communities are similarly opening their doors.

In our suburban communities, churches and synagogues, civic and service clubs, school groups, the business community and numerous other organizations have answered the call to help disaster survivors. The Minnesota Vikings football team collected 70,000 pounds of clothing, toiletries, and other supplies for Katrina's survivors. As head coach Mike Tice said, this was an example of Americans helping Americans.

In our Lake Minnetonka community, Interfaith Outreach & Community Partners, representing 21 area churches, has a long history of helping people in need. Interfaith Outreach & Community Partners is jump-starting its annual housing fund drive to aid the housing needs of Hurricane Katrina survivors. I will be home this coming Saturday to join Interfaith Outreach &

Community Partners in kicking off a drive to raise \$1.5 million for people in the gulf States who are so devastated by Hurricane Katrina.

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John Berg, chairman of the Interfaith Outreach and Community Partners Housing Fund, put it best when he said, "It's simply the right thing to do. We can't look away from the suffering of these people. We need to leverage all the resources and partnerships available to ensure a safe place to call home for both the families and children of our community and the families and children devastated by Katrina. It's a time for faith," concluded Mr. Berg.

Interfaith Outreach and Community Partners, Mr. Speaker, which sponsors the Sleep Out annually to raise funds for homeless people in our community, will also continue to raise funds for local emergency and long-term housing initiatives. Last winter's Sleep Out raised over \$1.3 million from the generous people of our Lake Minnetonka communities to literally, literally, bring in 42 homeless families from the cold and to enable 656 other families with over 800 children to keep a roof overhead.

Mr. Speaker, the people of our communities back home have big hearts, and I know they will come through again for the Hurricane Katrina Housing Relief Fund. A special thanks to all the good people of Minnesota for opening their arms to hurricane survivors who have suffered so greatly. Once again, Mr. Speaker, the people I am proud to represent are doing the Lord's work here on Earth.

SMART SECURITY AND THE KATRINA HURRICANE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DENT). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, Katrina, the Category 4 hurricane that hit the gulf coast last week, leveled nearly everything in its path. It tore apart homes and destroyed entire coastal cities. It has taken the lives of countless hundreds, if not thousands. It will cost an estimated \$150 billion to rebuild and repair the affected region.

Sadly, the Federal Government's response to Katrina was lackluster at best and shamefully negligent at worst. Despite the public's forewarning that there was a knowledge of Katrina's severity, the Bush administration failed to provide adequate Federal aid and hands-on support for the thousands of citizens stuck in the storm's aftermath. A large part of this failure stems directly from the lack of qualified first responders, the thousands of Guardsmen and Reservists who are currently stuck fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan.

It is during wholesale natural disasters like these that Americans should be able to rely on our Nation's capable National Guard and Reserve forces.

Unfortunately, it has not worked out that way because the Bush administration has more than 50,000 National Guardsmen and Reservists stationed in Iraq. That amounts to just over 40 percent of the total U.S. military forces there.

The Army's Guard and Reserve units are supposed to be our Nation's emergency force, America's defenders of last resort. Yet the Army's Web site actually defines the Army reserve as being "like a part-time job that enables soldiers to keep their civilian careers while they continue to train near home."

But the President has 50,000 of them fighting in a war very, very far from home, shouldering a disproportionate share of the burden in Iraq. He has them suffering for a war that was supposedly about weapons of mass destruction and then about Saddam's link to al Qaeda and then about bringing democracy to Iraq. But no matter how we slice it, the war in Iraq was never a war of last resort. The emergency units should have remained here at home in case of a real emergency. In fact, all 3,700 of Louisiana's National Guardsmen are currently stationed in Iraq and will not return home to help their devastated State or their own families, for that matter, for another week. Unfortunately, it was only a matter of time before the deployment of thousands of Guardsmen and Reservists to Iraq ended up hurting Americans right here at home.

The city of New Orleans and the rest of the gulf coast has learned that lesson in a painful way, losing family members, loved ones, friends, and pets that could have been saved if their government had provided more human support and a smarter approach to dealing with Katrina's aftermath.

It is my hope that our national over-reliance on military solutions during the past 4 years, made painfully clear by the Katrina hurricane, will lead us to a smarter national security strategy in the future. That is why I have introduced SMART Security: a Sensible, Multilateral, American Response to Terrorism. SMART is based on the belief that we should pursue the military solution only in the most extreme circumstances and after every diplomatic solution has been exhausted. SMART would divert resources for military spending and foreign wars to homeland security and energy independence, from outdated weapons systems to an ambitious development plan for the troubled regions both in the United States and around the world.

Democracy-building, international aid, human rights education, small business development, these are the cures to poverty, to oppression, to hopelessness that plague both the people of Iraq and the survivors in the gulf, particularly in New Orleans. SMART projects protect America by relying on the very best of America, not violence and conquest, but our capacity for global leadership, our belief

in freedom, and our compassion for the vulnerable people here at home and around the world.

Mr. Speaker, Katrina's aftermath has given us a firsthand look at what happens when a nation's forces are stretched thin. That is why it is time for us to start bringing our troops home. The Iraqi people need the United States, they need the U.S. National Guard out of Iraq, and no less important, the American people need them here at home where they belong.

STATEMENT REQUIRED BY SECTION 402(a)(3) OF H. CON. RES. 95, THE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2006

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, the funds provided in H.R. 3673 to meet the urgent needs arising from the consequences of Hurricane Katrina are designated as emergency requirements for the purposes of section 402 of H. Con. Res. 95, 109th Congress. The requirements funded in the bill meet criteria outlined in section 402(c) since they are in response to a situation which poses a direct threat to life and property, is sudden, is urgent and compelling, is unpredictable, and is not permanent in nature. The funds are also essential to the continuing recovery effort.

The devastation that has occurred in New Orleans and around the Gulf Coast as the result of Hurricane Katrina is of monumental proportions. It already is the most costly natural disaster in the Nation's history, and most government natural disaster assistance experts anticipate recovery needs far beyond the \$62.3 billion to be provided by Congress in the first two Hurricane Katrina supplemental measures. The funds in H.R. 3673 will provide urgently needed food, shelter, security, and reconstruction. The funds will help to save lives. Clearly, the funds meet emergency needs and are consistent with the criteria outlined in the budget resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. HINCHEY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take the Special Order time of the gentleman from New York.

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

There was no objection.

PAY INEQUITY AND THE WAGE GAP IN THE UNITED STATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentle-

woman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week we observed Labor Day. We take this important opportunity every year to honor this Nation's workers.

Tonight I want to shed light on one way that this country can really honor a group of workers that make up almost half of this Nation's workforce, and those are our women.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Labor estimates that women will account for 55 percent of the increase in total labor-force growth between 2002 and 2012. However, in 2004 women made up 46 percent of the total United States workers. In that same year 68 million women were either working or looking for work.

Women work in every sector of our economy. They are professionals, managers, nurses, salespersons, factory workers, and business owners. More and more women are entering into non-traditional occupations. We are an essential component of the American workforce.

Then why is it that a full-time working woman receives only 73 cents to every dollar received by a man? That figure is worse for women of color. African American women earn 65 cents for every dollar paid to a white male. Hispanic women receive only 53 cents for each dollar earned by a white male. This means that Hispanic women are paid only slightly more than half of what white men earn. Even in jobs where women make up the majority of the workforce, and that is over 70 percent, men still earn close to 20 percent more than the women.

This trend must stop. Anyone would be hard pressed to find statistical evidence proving that women work is less arduous than their male counterparts or that they underperform comparatively. There is no logical explanation why a woman, who is often times still responsible for her children and family, in addition to working full time, should earn less than a male doing the same work.

This is not an issue that is going to go away, Mr. Speaker. Pay inequity is affecting the American family. If women earned the same amount of money as men who work the same hours doing the same job, their families' annual income would increase by \$4,000 per year. This would cut poverty rates in half. Equal pay for equal work will increase women's spending capability. Equal pay for equal work will empower women to plan for their children's education and their own retirement.

Over 40 years have passed since the enactment of the Equal Pay Act. In that time we have only closed the wage gap by one-third of 1 cent per year. Mr.