

who are often burdened by substantial debt. A recent survey found that almost a third of those practicing dependency attorneys graduated law school with over \$75,000 in outstanding loans, and 44 percent of them currently owe over \$50,000.

High turnover among dependency attorneys has led to a dearth of experienced lawyers who have a comprehensive understanding of the system and can maintain valuable relationships with their young clients.

The Fostering Our Future Act responds to each of those shortcomings. My bill authorizes grants to State dependency court systems to track and analyze caseloads as well as to train court personnel. These grants are leveraged by requiring that the recipient court systems collaborate with the State's corresponding child welfare agencies and track a series of critical performance metrics.

The legislation further establishes a loan forgiveness program to attract and retain qualified child welfare attorneys. By encouraging statewide interagency collaboration and data-sharing by tracking cases and training court personnel, by ensuring that effective representation is available to children and their families, and most importantly, by focusing on child welfare outcomes, this legislation will keep the needs of children and families rather than the needs of bureaucrats front and center.

I commend the child welfare workers of America for the invaluable services they provide and for constantly struggling to get this issue the attention that it deserves. Foster care plays a crucial role in our Nation's child welfare safety net, but it is in desperate need of support and reform.

I call my colleagues to join me in working for the day when all of the Nation's children are protected, nurtured, and loved, and I invite you to join me in that quest by cosponsoring the Fostering Our Future Act of 2005.

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

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

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

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

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to speak out of order for 5 minutes.

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

There was no objection.

TIME TO LEAVE IRAQ

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, since the United States went to war in Iraq over 2 years ago, Congress has approved spending bill after spending bill to pay for military operations in Iraq. But one thing Congress has never done is provide any meaningful oversight over the war and the spending on the war.

Think about it. Congress will spend money on Iraq to the point of busting our already fragile budget, but when it comes to truly managing the war, Congress is nowhere to be found. Every single Member of Congress and the people that elected them should be utterly ashamed of this absence of Congress on this crucial issue.

With nearly 2,000 United States troops killed, another 15,000 wounded, and countless thousands of Iraqis killed, the U.S. Congress must, must exercise its oversight responsibilities to determine why things are going so drastically wrong in Iraq.

I have repeatedly asked the House Armed Services Committee and the House International Relations Committee to hold hearings on Iraq. Unfortunately, no committee has undertaken a serious and thoughtful examination of the war.

Since Congress has continually failed in that duty, I have decided to take matters into my own hands. Last Thursday I held a hearing to assess how to end the war in Iraq and start bringing our troops home.

Such luminaries as former Senator Max Cleland, four-star Marine Corps General Joseph Hoar, and former U.S. Ambassador David Mack testified at this hearing.

Thirty Members of Congress, bipartisan Members at that, all of whom are frustrated by the same tired policies when it comes to Iraq, joined me at this hearing. The purpose of this hearing was to address not the when of ending the war, but how to end the war. After all, we should all be able to agree that the United States cannot continue to fight in Iraq indefinitely.

Given that fact, we need to start thinking about how the United States can responsibly leave Iraq without making a bad situation worse. As Senator Cleland so eloquently stated, "When we talk about an exit strategy, we need to put the focus on strategy."

If the hearing demonstrated anything, it is that we need to start bringing our troops home because it is our very presence in Iraq that is encouraging and uniting Iraq's insurgency. But the sad truth is that the Bush administration is doing nothing to help end the war. They have no plan for how to conduct the war, they had no plan for securing the country once Saddam

Hussein was deposed, and now they have no plan for ending the war.

Well, if they do not, we will. That is what our hearing was about last week. We are trying to jump-start a debate in Congress that should have begun long ago.

The hearing was not about endorsing any one exit strategy, it was about putting all of them on the table and getting the discussions started. It was about encouraging the rest of the Congress to take a strong stand against permanent U.S. military bases on Iraq's soil and Iraqi control of Iraqi oil.

The American people have known for many months that the rationale for going to war in Iraq was based on fraud and lies. They have known that the war will continue to drain our resources and kill our young men and women in the military.

Now, two-thirds of Americans support a partial or complete military withdrawal from Iraq. It is time for Congress to start getting that message. And it is time for Congress to catch up with the American people and to catch up with the witnesses at Thursday's hearing.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to speak out of order for 5 minutes.

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

There was no objection.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MICHAEL J. ADANTI

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, it is with the heaviest of hearts that I rise today to join family, friends, colleagues, and community members in remembering the remarkable life of Michael J. Adanti, who was taken from us in a tragic car accident this summer.

Mike was not only an outstanding member of our community, but a dear friend whose strength, support, warmth, and kind heart I will miss.

Throughout his life, Mike demonstrated a unique commitment to public service. A teacher, administrator, mayor, and university president, Mike dedicated a lifetime to enriching the lives of others. After graduating from Southern Connecticut State University, Mike took a position with the Ansonia School District where he taught for 3 years, helping to provide our youngest children with the educational foundation they would need for future success.

He went on to serve two successful terms as the mayor of the City of Ansonia before returning to Southern Connecticut State University as the first Dean of Personnel Administration, the beginning of what would be an

extraordinary professional career at Southern.

Throughout his long association with Southern, Mike held a number of positions which gave him a unique perspective of the university's operation. After being called upon twice to temporarily lead the university through difficult times, it was no surprise when Mike was appointed president of the university, a position which he held for 19 years until his retirement just 2 years ago.

Mike was the longest serving president in the Connecticut State University System. His inauguration as president was a unique event for the Southern community, as he became the first Southern Connecticut State University graduate to be named president of his alma mater, and the first graduate to become president of any university.

Southern flourished under Mike's direction, with new academic initiatives, prestigious awards for faculty and students, and national honors for Southern's sports teams. His vision and leadership brought the university increasing regional recognition for excellence in public higher education, leaving an indelible mark not only on the university, but on the surrounding communities of Greater New Haven as well.

Mike was as much a community leader as he was a leader in education. The New Haven Symphony Orchestra, New Haven's Long Wharf Theater, and the International Festival of Arts and Ideas are just a few of the organizations that benefited from Mike's generosity and volunteer efforts.

He also served as a board member of the Naugatuck Valley's Birmingham Utilities Water Company, the Ansonia Economic Development Commission, and the Connecticut Police Foundation.

Mike was a reflection of all that a civic leader should be. His involvement in so many local organizations, in addition to his commitment to public education and his students touched the lives of thousands, making all of the difference in their lives.

When someone is taken from your life so suddenly, it is often difficult to understand why such tragedy occurs.

My deepest sympathies go to Mike's wife of 43 years, Linda, his two children Kristen and Michael, and his three grandchildren.

Though he is no longer with us, the legacy that he has left, that of his commitment to opening the doors of opportunity for young people through education, will certainly continue to live in the hearts and minds of all who knew him.

Through those special memories, Michael Adanti will continue to inspire excellence.

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The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SODREL). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana

(Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

HELPING ALL OF HURRICANE KATRINA VICTIMS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I, like many Americans, am watching and praying that Hurricane Rita does not cause the same level of death and destruction as past Category 4 and 5 hurricanes like Andrew and Katrina.

Watching the death and destruction wrought by Katrina was truly heartwrenching. What was even more unnerving was watching as many desperate victims stranded on their rooftops and surrounded by rising flood waters wrote makeshift signs begging for help. All they wanted was to be rescued and to have access to food and water. Those images have been stamped into the hearts and minds of Americans and people all over the world, and we must remind the administration that we will never forget.

How pretentious of our government to assume that everyone in the gulf coast region had the means to pick up at a moment's notice and hop in their cars and get on the highway towards safety. We must be aware of the ramifications of poverty in America and recognize that it is a real condition that many Americans face each and every day.

We cannot turn a blind eye to those trapped in a dismal socio-economic predicament that this administration's tax cuts for the wealthy and cuts in social programs have only exacerbated. Obviously, an investigation into the

slow response by FEMA is warranted, an accurate, unbiased, independent investigation, not one that will be led by the President's own domestic security advisor or a partisan committee that was formed here in this Congress.

Does that make you feel confident that the inquiry into this administration's performance in response to Katrina will be fair and accurate?

Only a fool would allow the very people who botched the rescue efforts to be the ones to go back and determine what went wrong, what went right, and what lessons we have learned from this tragedy.

People have died because of the inaction by their government. That much we certainly know is true. Now we must move forward with an investigation that is independent and one with subpoena power so that we can avoid the mistakes of Katrina. People have died, and we need to find out why. I know that if we do an investigation in name only, then people will die again, and they will continue to lack confidence in their government's ability to help them in their time of need. People will die in Florida. People will die in Texas. People will die in States throughout the hurricane region if we do not learn from the lessons of Katrina and ensure that our failures are not repeated.

I also want to remind people that people in Florida were victims of Hurricane Katrina as well. Hurricane Katrina's first victim was Florida as it struck Broward and Miami-Dade counties as a Category 1 storm on August 25, leaving hundreds of damaged or destroyed homes and nearly 11,000 individuals seeking assistance.

These are the people that FEMA has decided do not need help. This woman here is standing in water up to her knees. Her cars are damaged. They are late model cars, not fancy ones; and they are the result of Hurricane Katrina hitting Florida. This is representative of what FEMA has denied individual assistance and denied help to.

FEMA's response to this woman and to the woman standing among the remains of her house is that "you are on your own."

What was FEMA's response to all the families in Florida's requests for help? It is the same as it was to the people in New Orleans who died the first days that Katrina struck here: "you are on your own."

Last night we learned that Florida's appeal to FEMA to help our victims of Katrina in Florida was denied once again. My question for FEMA is, hurricanes do not know State boundaries, so why does FEMA?

Florida has been hit by six hurricanes over the past year and a half. Six. It is a constant plague that the residents of Florida deal with every single year, and the denial of aid to those in need is irresponsible and unconscionable. I introduced legislation this month that calls on FEMA to provide the much-needed assets to the