

Congratulations to general manager John Schuerholz and to manager Bobby Cox for their remarkable leadership through thick and thin. Congratulations to the players, from seasoned veterans to rookie contributors. All of them have given Atlanta, Georgia, and America, the thrill and privilege of witnessing their wondrous exploits.

You have blessed us all with your skill and passion. Congratulations to the Atlanta Braves.

EXIT STRATEGY

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, whether or not Iraq soon votes for a constitution, whether or not the Sunnis and the Shiites soon achieve peace, we in this Congress must soon take action for our Nation, for our troops, for our national interests to plan an exit strategy from Iraq and to commence it by October of 2006.

That is the purpose of House Joint Resolution 55, a bipartisan resolution which requires the administration to create an exit strategy so we are not going to be in Iraq forever, so we do not put our sons' and daughters' lives on the line forever, so we have a defined strategy to get out.

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It is time for us to take whatever bipartisan energy there is in this Chamber and direct it towards a new direction in Iraq, to bring our troops home, to involve the world community, to put an end to this sorry chapter of U.S. occupation.

ACROSS-THE-BOARD SPENDING REDUCTIONS

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, last week I received a call from a constituent, and she said, As you are looking at Hurricane Katrina, I want you to remember something. My grandmother used to say, Mind your pennies and your dollars will take care of themselves.

How very true, and in that regard, I filed three bills yesterday, one I think every Member of the House can decide they can support, H.R. 3903, H.R. 3904 and H.R. 3906. Each calls for across-the-board spending reductions in non-defense, non-homeland security discretionary spending.

H.R. 3903 is a 1 percent reduction which would be a \$4 billion savings for the year. Two percent is the H.R. 3904 bill. That is an \$8 billion savings. \$21.5 billion could be saved with H.R. 3906, which is a 5 percent reduction.

One of the things we know, Mr. Speaker, is that across-the-board reductions work. The bureaucrats in

buildings are called upon to be responsive to the taxpayers to account for how they are spending every single penny that they are being appropriated.

So I encourage all the Members of the body to join me in cosponsoring H.R. 3903, H.R. 3904 and H.R. 3906 and reduce our Federal outlays.

VAWA REAUTHORIZATION

(Ms. SOLIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate Domestic Violence Awareness Month in October, I rise today to highlight the issue as it affects minority communities.

Although domestic violence is blind to race and ethnicity, racial and ethnic minority women, immigrant women, face unique challenges to reporting and getting help for domestic violence.

Just this morning, I learned that the manager's amendment to today's VAWA reauthorization bill strikes the language "racial and ethnic minorities" from the definition of underserved communities.

After all the bipartisan work that we have been conducting for the past year on this particular reauthorization, I am outraged that at the last minute, Republican leadership is shortchanging women of color who are victims of domestic violence.

We must acknowledge the devastating effect that domestic violence has on all communities, community of colors. That means African Americans, Latinos and Asians and all other ethnic groups.

Our efforts to educate the public about domestic violence must directly address factors like cultural differences, linguistic differences and immigration status. By removing this language, we are exacerbating the problem of domestic violence in communities of color.

My hope is that the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act is comprehensive and meets all the needs of all women in our country.

BUSINESS ACTIVITY TAX SIMPLIFICATION ACT

(Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Bo Horne lives with his wife in Seneca, South Carolina, where they operate a small business from their home. It is their piece of the American dream.

In 1997, they sold a computer software license to a customer in New Jersey for \$695, and even though Mr. Horne has no employees or no real property in New Jersey, this one-time sale triggers a New Jersey State law requiring Mr. Horne to pay \$600 in taxes and fees every year on the software as long as it remains in use. This tax is stifling to

small business investments and entrepreneurs across the country.

Mr. Horne stated yesterday in his testimony before the House Committee on the Judiciary that he is speaking up because of thousands of small businesses that are totally unaware of the risks. Mr. Horne also highlighted a commonsense bill that I am a proud cosponsor of, H.R. 1956, the Business Activity Tax Simplification Act, as introduced by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE). It protects small businesses by requiring them to be physically present in the State before they are subject to taxes by the State.

I urge my colleagues to stand up for small businesses by supporting this important legislation, and I thank Mr. Horne for his hard work.

POLITICAL HACKS

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. The Bush-Rove administration has delivered cronyism, incompetence and corruption in spades. Mike "you're-doing-a-heck-of-a-job-Brownie" Brown is the poster child for the hundreds of unqualified, often incompetent, political hacks chosen to head, to demean, demoralize and dismantle critical Federal agencies like FEMA.

Then there is the corruption side. Mr. Brown, as he was resigning, at the same time one of his buddies, David Safarian, the head of Federal procurement for the entire government of the United States, \$300 billion a year, is being led out of the White House in handcuffs for perjury, influence peddling and bribery, but he did his job till the end as a Bush political appointee. Before they drug him out in handcuffs, he let billions of dollars in no-bid contracts, awarded to Halliburton and other favorites of this administration.

Good job, Mr. Safarian. I hope prison is a good reward for you.

U.S. TROOPS DELIVER VICTORY AGAINST AL QAEDA

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, Iraqi security forces and coalition soldiers this week delivered a striking blow to al Qaeda terrorists in Iraq. By killing Abu Azzam, a top aide to Abu al-Zarqawi, our troops have achieved yet another critical victory in the war on terrorism.

Azzam led the largest group of al Qaeda in Iraq fighters in Fallujah during autumn 2004 and directed current terrorist activity and operations in Baghdad. As a leader of the Iraq terrorist network, he served as the brains behind numerous attacks on our troops and Iraqi citizens. Not anymore.

The recent victory demonstrates that American soldiers are skilled, focused

and dedicated to finding the cowards who continue to attack democracy and take the lives of innocent civilians. As co-chair of the Victory in Iraq Caucus, I am extremely proud of their success. By capturing and killing terrorists in Iraq, our troops are protecting American families from terrorists who threaten our freedoms and our way of life.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, the Violence Against Women Act has made a great difference for countless women and their families when confronting violence, and VAWA has made a significant difference in the health and happiness of hundreds of thousands of women, children and families.

With one in four women in this country experiencing domestic violence, clearly much more remains to be done. So we cannot abandon our commitment to them and to the women around the world.

Women have every right to feel safe in their own homes. They also deserve to know that law enforcement and health officials are equipped to deal with their special needs in these tragic situations, and we must include teaching young people that bullying and violence must be avoided. We must teach them how to handle situations of conflict and anger in other ways besides bullying and violence.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the reauthorization of VAWA to ensure these protections and make sure that resources are available.

HONORING DR. DAVID BUSHMAN

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, September 30, 2005, is a significant day in American higher education. This day marks Dr. David W. Bushman's inauguration as the 13th president of Lees-McRae College in Banner Elk, North Carolina.

Lees-McRae College is an institution of which the entire Nation can be proud. For 105 years, it has prepared young men and women to take their places as productive citizens. Committed to leadership and service, Lees-McRae is an integral part of the larger community, putting into practice its historic motto, "In the mountains, for the mountains."

David W. Bushman is an outstanding scholar, educator and administrator. Under his leadership, Lees-McRae College reaffirms its commitment to academic excellence in the liberal arts tradition and to the moral and civic education of its students.

As David Bushman assumes the presidency of Lees-McRae College, I extend

sincere congratulations to him and to the college. As President Bushman and Lees-McRae College begin this new chapter in their history, they do so with my best wishes for continued success.

REPUBLICANS FAKING THEIR WAY THROUGH INQUIRY

(Ms. WATSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, yesterday House Republicans convened their partisan investigation into what went wrong in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. It is clear Republicans want to fix all blame on the back of former FEMA director Michael Brown.

Republicans were willing to ask tough questions yesterday, but that is simply not enough. For 5 years now, House Republicans have ignored their oversight responsibilities of the Bush administration. Are we now supposed to believe that House Republicans will conduct an investigation that will not only determine what exactly went wrong but also how we can prevent such a slow response from ever happening again?

The New York Times said that Washington is faking a Katrina inquiry. The paper determined that a government dominated by one party should be disqualified from investigating itself. Democrats here in the House strongly agree.

We simply will not be a part of a sham investigation. The American people want real answers, not a cover-up. An overwhelming 87 percent of Americans are demanding an independent commission similar to the 9/11 Commission.

MEDICARE D

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

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in praise of a new Medicare part D prescription drug benefit that is available to all seniors beginning January 1, 2006.

This week, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid released information on organizations offering prescription drug plans in each of our 50 States, and the opportunity for sign-up begins November 15.

This announcement holds great news for seniors across America. In every State, seniors will have a choice among plan providers. In my home State of Georgia, for example, seniors will be able to choose from 18 different plans, ensuring they can find one that best suits their individual needs.

Mr. Speaker, there is more good news for our seniors. Not only will they be eligible for prescription drug coverage from a range of organizations, but they will receive this benefit for less money than previously expected, in some

cases, for a premium as low as \$20 a month. This is the power of competition, and our seniors will benefit from it. We do not need government price controls. The free market works.

Mr. Speaker, for years, our seniors have struggled with the rising cost of prescription drugs, in some cases going without medicine they need to stay healthy. With Medicare part D, seniors will be able to reap the benefits of preventive care and live longer, healthier lives.

RECOVERY FROM HURRICANES

(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, I ask my colleagues this morning to begin to look at the recovery of Hurricane Katrina, and support thereof to include Hurricane Rita. Just spending 4 days in the region, a number of them at the Transtar Hurricane Emergency Center day and night, I can tell my colleagues that the frustration that is reflected in the Houston Chronicle, FEMA faulted yet again, and of course, that in The Washington Post, evacuees urged to stay away, is only a limited story of what we have faced in that region.

Going into the region directly hit just yesterday, I can tell my colleagues, as the local officials wanted me to say, there is no food, there is no water, there is no ice. They need help—they need leadership from the Federal Government. There are trucks parked on hotel parking lots that cannot be opened to share food because the military has not yet been directed to arrive to unload the trucks.

This is not a finger pointed in the direction of local officials. It is a finger pointed with a singular question: Who is in charge? When you are ordered to evacuate and there is no order, who is in charge?

An independent inquiry, a widespread understanding of how we can secure the homeland is absolutely imperative.

OPERATION OFFSET

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

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, Katrina breaks my heart. When I consider the tragic aftermath of this extraordinary storm, now 1 month hence, I cannot help but think of that person in the Bible who speaks of how the rains came down, the winds blew and beat against the house, the floodwaters rose, and the house fell with a great crash.

Congress is now involved in a critical debate about relief and rebuilding and how we will pay for what could be hundreds of billions of dollars in recovery and reconstruction of the gulf coast.

Last week, House conservatives offered their own plan, a series of budget