

particular type of gambling activity has escaped the ability of States to regulate it. For over 100 years, Congress has acted to assist States in enforcing their respective policies on gambling when developments in technology of an interstate nature, such as the Internet, have compromised the effectiveness of State gambling laws.

The negative consequences of online gambling can be as detrimental to the families and communities of addictive gamblers as if a bricks and mortar casino was built right next door. Online gambling can result in addiction, bankruptcy, divorce, crime, and moral decline just as with traditional forms of gambling, the costs of which must ultimately be borne by society.

Gambling on the Internet is especially enticing to youth, pathological gamblers, and criminals. There are currently no mechanisms in place to prevent youths—who make up the largest percentage of Internet users—from using their parents' credit card numbers to register and set up accounts for use at Internet gambling sites. In addition, pathological gamblers may become easily addicted to online gambling because of the Internet's easy access, anonymity and instant results. Finally, Internet gambling can provide a nearly undetectable harbor for criminal enterprises. The anonymity associated with the Internet makes online gambling more susceptible to crime.

I have long been an advocate of the Internet and of limited government regulation of this new medium. However, that does not mean that the Internet should be a regulatory free zone or that our existing laws should not apply to the Internet. I think we can all agree that it would be very bad public policy to allow offline activity deemed criminal by States to be freely committed online and to go unpunished simply because we are reluctant to apply our laws to the Internet.

Gambling on the Internet has become an extremely lucrative business. Numerous studies have charted the explosive growth of this industry, both by the increases in gambling websites available, and via industry revenues. Some estimates show that it is now a \$12 billion a year industry.

Most Internet gambling sites are offshore. Virtual betting parlors accepting bets from individuals in the United States have attempted to avoid the application of United States law by locating themselves offshore and out of our jurisdictional reach. These offshore, fly-by-night Internet gambling operators are unlicensed, untaxed and unregulated and are sucking billions of dollars out of the United States. In addition, the FBI and the Department of Justice has testified that Internet gambling serves as a vehicle for money laundering activities and can be exploited by terrorists to launder money.

Current law already prohibits gambling over telephone wires. However, because the Internet does not always travel over telephone wires, these laws, which were written before the invention of the World Wide Web, have become outdated. My legislation simply clarifies the state of the law by bringing the current prohibition against wire line interstate gambling up to speed with the development of new technology. It also makes clear once and for all that the prohibition is not limited to sports-related bets and wagers.

In addition, my legislation will add a new provision to the law that would prohibit a gam-

bling business from accepting certain forms of non-cash payment, including credit cards and electronic transfers, for the transmission of illegal bets and wagers. This provision provides an enforcement mechanism to address the situation where the gambling business is located offshore but the gambling business used bank accounts in the United States. The bill also provides an additional tool to fight illegal gambling by giving Federal, State, local and tribal law enforcement new injunctive authority to prevent and restrain violations of the law.

The legislation I am introducing will return control to the States by protecting the right of citizens in each State to decide through their State legislatures if they want to allow gambling within their borders and not have that right taken away by offshore, fly-by-night operators. The regulation of intrastate gambling is within the jurisdiction of the States, so the bill leaves the regulation of wholly intrastate betting or wagering to the States with tight controls to be sure that such betting or wagering does not extend beyond their borders or to minors.

Internet gambling is a serious problem that must be stopped. The Internet Gambling Prohibition Act will help eliminate this harmful activity before it spreads further. I urge my colleagues to support this very important legislation.

STATEMENT ON THE PRESIDENT'S FY 2007 BUDGET

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 16, 2006

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in opposition to President Bush's proposed budget for fiscal year 2007. Once again, the President claims he can have it both ways by making permanent tax cuts while halving the deficit by 2009. However, the numbers tell a different story. This year's budget proposal, if enacted by Congress, would result in a budget deficit of \$423 billion, the largest in our Nation's history, and this amount would increase dramatically once the tax cuts take effect in 2011. Every American family knows that you cannot continue to spend more money than you take in, and the President must acknowledge this fact before it is too late.

To reduce this record deficit, we must make difficult choices, and both spending and taxes need to be on the table. The President has not made these difficult choices, and should Congress follow this budget, working families will be left on their own as the Government again favors only the wealthiest Americans.

In order to partially pay for the irresponsible tax policies, the President attempts to cut spending in several areas, notably health care and education. Medicare would be reduced by \$36 billion over 5 years by reducing already low payments to health care providers, who would be less willing to accept Medicare patients. The National Institutes of Health, which researches life-saving cures for numerous diseases such as cancer and Parkinson's Disease, would in effect receive a cut outside of funds earmarked for biodefense. While I support measures to increase our preparedness for outbreaks such as a potential pandemic flu, these funds should not come at the ex-

pense of research to cure ailments like heart disease.

In December, I distributed surveys to every school and district in my congressional district to determine the level of emergency preparedness. Most respondents indicated they had not properly rehearsed their emergency plans, and nearly a quarter of the schools and districts did not even know whom to ask for help. Fortunately, the Department of Education's Safe and Drug-free Schools and Communities program provides grants to help schools develop and implement emergency plans. However, President Bush proposes eliminating this program that has helped so many schools across our country. There are countless examples of these misguided priorities in the budget.

In 2004, Congress nearly unanimously passed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act to put the program on track to full funding, but this budget includes only \$10.7 million for State grants. This means that once again, the Federal Government will only provide less than half of the amount promised to States to educate children with special needs. The budget also zeros out the TRIO programs—Gear Up, Talent Search and Upward Bound—which encourage economically disadvantaged Rhode Island students to seek higher education.

Even though energy independence was a major theme of the President's State of the Union Address, he is not funding his own proposals. After announcing America is "addicted to oil," the President has increased Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy programs by a paltry 0.2 percent. In addition, programs to increase energy efficiency and research hydro-power and geothermal energy are cut. We need real leadership on this issue. The brightest minds in America put a man on the moon, and we need a similar effort to develop clean and renewable energy sources. A 0.2 percent increase will not accomplish that goal.

If the President truly wanted to make our country more competitive, he would not have avoided funding the Small Business 7(a) loan guarantee program and reduced Trade Adjustment Assistance, which retraining workers who lose their jobs because of foreign trade.

If the President wanted to enrich our communities, he would not have reduced funding for the community development block grants, COPS program, or Weatherization Assistance for energy efficient homes.

If the President wanted to make health care more accessible, he would not have increased fees for groups such as military retirees and Medicare beneficiaries. On top of all these cuts and fee increases, we still have the highest deficit in history as a result of the irresponsible tax policies the President seeks to continue. This is not the direction America should be moving.

The President had a tremendous opportunity to reflect the values and priorities of the American people. He could have asked for shared sacrifice and inspired us to achieve new heights. Instead, he has given us more of the same: tax cuts for the wealthiest, program cuts for the most vulnerable, and the middle class is left on their own. America deserves better.

TRIBUTE TO CYNTHIA MATHEWS

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 16, 2006

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I have the privilege of rising this evening to honor Cynthia Mathews, a dedicated member of our community who recently retired after 40 years of service with Planned Parenthood Mar Monte organization. I have had the pleasure of working with Cynthia for many of those years and I can attest to her commitment to our community as well as her steadfast support of civil liberties that will continue to protect women's health.

In 1965, Cynthia began her involvement with Planned Parenthood as a volunteer in San Diego County. She later served as both staff and board member of the organization. She was instrumental in ensuring the well-being of young mothers by organizing an abortion referral service to Mexico prior to the Therapeutic Abortion Act of 1967.

After moving to Santa Cruz in 1970, Cynthia was instrumental in forming Planned Parenthood of Santa Cruz County, where she served as the agency's first executive director. After a brief absence during which she gave birth to her second child, she rejoined the organization in 1979. Cynthia guided the growing affiliate to eventually become part of Planned Parenthood Mar Monte, a network that includes much of California and Nevada. Officially, she was a part-time public affairs staff member, however, all who know her were aware that she worked well beyond her outlined duties. Cynthia actively built coalitions, engaged volunteers, sustained Planned Parenthood's community presence, and protected the civil liberties and health of her community.

Beyond Planned Parenthood, Cynthia's outstanding reputation as a public figure and liberal activist is strengthened by her tireless dedication to the City of Santa Cruz. Ms. Mathews has served as a city council member, a founding member of the Downtown Neighbors Association, a member of the Planning Commission and Zoning Board, a participant in Vision Santa Cruz, a cochair of the Santa Cruz High Centennial Campaign, and a volunteer on four successful election campaigns for schools and municipal revenues. She now holds the seat of Mayor of Santa Cruz. Through her involvement in these organizations she has positively affected the quality of life for many residents in our community. She is an ideal role model for those who seek to create change through activism and I am honored to have worked with her throughout the many positions she has held. Though Cynthia has retired from her official position with Planned Parenthood Mar Monte, her position as Mayor will allow me to continue to work with her to support and strengthen our community and ensure that women have safe access to quality reproductive healthcare.

Mr. Speaker, in a time where women's health and medical care is threatened by budget deficits and a conservative agenda, I am immensely thankful for Cynthia's selfless service. I am confident that her legacy will continue as the women she has mentored take up the torch and encourage a new generation of voters to honor their promise to America's women.

IN HONOR OF THE ASSOCIATED
GENERAL CONTRACTORS OF ST.
LOUIS**HON. W. TODD AKIN**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 16, 2006

Mr. AKIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and commend the Associated General Contractors (AGC) of St. Louis. In 2005 alone the AGC has been involved in more than \$52 billion worth of construction projects that employed approximately 80,000 workers. The members of the AGC provide the skill, teamwork and spirit of innovation that makes a lasting contribution to our community; building facilities that support and enhance the quality of life in the St. Louis region. Whether it is a church or school, road or utilities, these skilled craftspeople conduct themselves and their work in a safe manner so as to avoid accidents and injuries. Their commitment to exceptional standards has been recognized by both the U.S. Department of Labor and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) along with receiving the coveted first place award for safety excellence from the National AGC Safety Awards (NASA) Program for 2004 and prior years. The AGC has also created a special safety training unit, Operation Safesite, which includes two full-time construction professionals who provide on the jobsite training along with construction training school classes. I applaud the AGC's vision and commitment toward improving construction safety in the St. Louis metropolitan community. I would like to recognize February 21–February 28 as Construction Safety Week in St. Louis County.

97TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
NAACP, FEBRUARY 12, 2006**HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 16, 2006

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the 97th Anniversary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, NAACP, which was founded on February 12, 1909. Throughout its existence, the NAACP has faithfully promoted equality in all areas of American society, from suffrage and public accommodation to justice in our nation's courts and equality in employment.

For nearly a century, the NAACP has pushed for an inclusive American society, one that would grant all people the equality they deserve, regardless of the shade or color of their skin. The NAACP's principled efforts towards the advancement of people who were long denied their rightful place in the workforce, the schools, and the ballot box have continued to come to fruition with the Civil Rights Acts, the Fair Housing Act, and other breakthroughs in the establishment of justice and equality in this country.

The mission of the NAACP continues today and the Saint Paul Branch of the NAACP continues to work towards equality, education and justice for all. My local NAACP chapter is well known for its tireless work addressing the in-

justices affecting individuals and the diverse communities of Minnesota. Recently, they have worked to bring our community together to seek healing and justice after an appalling act of discrimination and intimidation was perpetrated upon a local church. In addition, Saint Paul NAACP is instilling hope through its establishment of the Help a Child to Read Project, where volunteers are connected with students to develop their reading ability.

A key component of the success of the NAACP has been the implementation of a holistic approach, through the promotion of understanding and education, to the eradication of race and other problems that have long plagued our society. This nonviolent approach has put students through college, given the vote back to the voiceless, and ensured that the American people will not continue to be divided by differences, but rather be brought together by mutual compassion and kinship.

It is with great admiration and encouragement that I commend the NAACP on this occasion of their 97th Anniversary. The necessity of the continued push for equality and justice for all citizens presents a great burden on all our shoulders, but the work of groups such as the NAACP gives our society the necessary guidance and reminder of our responsibilities towards one another.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in paying tribute to the courageous and guiding history of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People on this day of their 97th Anniversary.

WELCOMING OUR TROOPS HOME**HON. C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER**

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 16, 2006

Mr. OTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call the attention of the House to the brave men and women from my district returning home from fighting for freedom and democracy in Iraq.

During a visit to Iraq last year, I was fortunate enough to witness firsthand these patriots' dedication to their country and commitment to expanding the frontiers of freedom. I also was reminded of the great sacrifice that they and their families make to secure the blessings of liberty to all Americans, and help bring hope to people who have been oppressed for decades.

From decorated Marine Sergeant Luke B. Miller's selfless rescue of critically injured Marines in Karabillah to the opening of a medical clinic in Kikuk by the 116th Brigade Combat Team, these men and women serve as an example of our mission to fight terrorism and tyranny wherever it exists. The heroic efforts of these and many other individuals bring great and lasting credit to Idaho and all American armed forces.

I encourage my colleagues to join me, Mr. Speaker, in applauding and recognizing the exemplary individuals from Idaho who are returning home from Iraq. Their courage, dedication, and patriotism truly mark them as America's newest generation of heroes. They deserve our utmost respect and heartfelt thanks.