

So along with the Physicians for Social Responsibility, Friends for Peace, and WAND, I have developed a plan called SMART Security. SMART stands for sensible, multilateral, American response to terrorism, which seeks peaceful and diplomatic solutions to international conflict. SMART addresses a range of issues including energy independence, democracy building, and global poverty. But at its core is a renewed commitment to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.

SMART calls on the United States to stop the spread of weapons of mass destruction and to do it with strong diplomacy, with enhanced weapons regimes and regional security arrangements. Under SMART, we would set an example for the rest of the world by renouncing nuclear testing and development of new nuclear weapons. SMART would redouble our commitment to the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program which has been successful in reducing nuclear stockpiles and securing nuclear materials in the former Soviet Union.

□ 1945

SMART would stop the sale and transfer of weapons to regimes involved in human rights abuses, and it would ensure that highly enriched uranium is stored only in secure locations.

Mr. Speaker, at just the moment that we need to be vigilant about nuclear proliferation, the Bush administration is asking Congress to give its approval to his dangerous and misguided nuclear energy deal with India. Here he is agreeing to share sensitive nuclear technologies with a nation that was testing nuclear weapons as recently as 1998. He would essentially reward India for its refusal to sign the nonproliferation treaty, feeding the nuclear appetite of a nation that has failed to show the responsibility expected of a nuclear state.

What message does the India pact send to Iran and North Korea? What leverage do we have with these countries to give up their nuclear ambitions, especially since, despite the threats they represent, they have done actually nothing to violate their treaty obligations?

If this India agreement were ratified, how would we deal with India's neighbor and rival Pakistan, which is likely to demand the same nuclear concessions from the United States and which has a dishonorable history of sharing nuclear technology with rogue actors?

Mr. Speaker, there is a cruel irony to the U.S. nuclear policy. While we happily share nuclear technology with countries that have not always handled it responsibly, and while we continue to pursue a large and expensive nuclear arsenal of our own, we are fighting a bloody and expensive war over a nuclear weapon that never even existed. Remember, we are only in Iraq because our so-called leaders looked us in the eye and said there would be a mushroom cloud over American cities unless we sent our troops off to die.

It is time for a 180-day degree turn in our thinking about these issues. It is time we stopped equating security with aggression. It is time we rejected the doctrine of preemption, instead of reaffirming it as the Bush administration did recently. It is time we got SMART about national security.

It is time we protected America, not by invading other nations, but by relying on the very best of American values: our desire for peace, our capacity for global leadership, and our compassion for the people of the world.

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

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

CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE ON-PREMISE SIGN INDUSTRY

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

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the contributions of the on-premise sign industry to our economy and our country. From April 5 to April 8, the International Sign Association, which represents thousands of manufacturers, users and suppliers of on-premise signs and sign products, will be having its 60th Annual International Expo in Orlando, Florida.

At that expo, there will be 550 companies displaying nearly 1,700 booths of the most advanced and innovative sign products the industry has to offer. Nearly 25,000 people are expected to attend this event. This includes businesses from across the country and around the world. The expo will feature custom, architectural, digital and national sign companies and their products, giving sign enthusiasts and small businesses a prime opportunity to learn more about this ever-changing industry.

I sit on two committees that deal extensively with sign-related issues, so I am familiar with the issues that concern the industry. For example, on the Committee on Small Business, we are all aware of how important small businesses are to our economy. We know that 90 percent of American businesses are small business, and we know that they create the lion's share of new jobs. And we know that these small businesses thrive in an environment with as little government regulation as possible.

But what many people may not know is that the Small Business Administration, over which our committee has jurisdiction, officially recognizes that effective on-premise signage is a critical component of a business' success and can contribute to the success of all businesses. In fact, as SBA Bulletin No.

101 on signage for businesses states: "Signs are the most effective, yet least expensive form of advertising for the small business." Obviously, the \$12 billion on-premise sign industry plays a critical role in the success of small businesses and our economic growth.

Unfortunately, the on-premise sign industry still, like most small businesses, faces a flood of government regulations and needs our support. We need to enact extensive and permanent tax cuts, so that small business owners can keep more of their own money and use it to grow their businesses. We need to give small businesses the freedom to choose to participate in association health care plans, so that employers can give their businesses solid health care coverage. We need to pass serious tort reform, so that small businesses are not bogged down in legal costs and red tape. In other words, Mr. Speaker, the Federal Government needs to get out of the way.

As a member of the Judiciary Committee, I understand that the Federal Government has a role to play in protecting the constitutional rights of on-premise signage, specifically, that the commercial speech represented in on-premise signage has certain guaranteed protections under the first amendment. It is vitally important that small businesses be allowed to communicate their business messages to American consumers, and one of the best ways to do this is with on-premise signage.

Similarly, the sign industry also has trademark concerns and needs protection from arbitrary government regulation that fails to acknowledge the protected status of their registered trade or service mark, slogan, motto, or other key text in their on-premise signage. And of course, small businesses can be adversely affected by the State's power of eminent domain, represented in the Kelo case most recently, especially those businesses whose on-premise signs have been taken by the government for whatever reason or excuse.

So, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate this opportunity to educate my colleagues about the value of on-premise signage and to describe the challenges they face. I congratulate ISA on 60 years of annual expos. I wish them the best of luck with their convention. I thank the thousands of on-premise signage businesses across the country, as well as the men and women who run them, for their invaluable contribution to our economy and our society.

COLLEGE ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITY ACT

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

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise to state my opposition to H.R. 609, a higher education reauthorization bill that is much more than a day late and a dollar short.

As a former college chief administrator, I am deeply proud to represent my district, my State, and the higher education community on the Education and Workforce Committee; but I am not particularly proud of the reauthorization bill we produced.

We have had the past 8 years to build on the Higher Education Act of 1998. Today, we have an opportunity in this reauthorization bill to give young Americans and aspiring students more opportunities to attain the dream of a college education.

Indeed, we have a choice to expand access and the reach of the Federal Government's helping hand to those who cannot afford skyrocketing tuition, rising fees, room and board, textbooks, and so many other soaring costs and sacrifices associated with going to college.

But the choice we made late last year to cut student loans to the tune of \$12 billion weakened our commitment to students. With those cuts in the budget reconciliation bill, we sent a message to America's students and their families that they are no longer among this Nation's top priorities.

As a consequence, the rapidly expanding gap between the amounts of available student aid compared to the cost of attaining a college education is growing out of control. And yet, while this administration's response is that colleges should simply charge less, it is not making the same demands of other industries that are equally critical to our economy's infrastructure and competitiveness.

This month, as high school seniors across the land receive their college acceptance letters, their proud parents are calculating how they can squeeze college costs into their budget. It is an uphill climb for most families that is made tougher by the President's budget cuts, which freeze Pell grants for a fifth year in a row; recalls the Federal portion of the Perkins Loan Revolving Fund that could extract another \$600 million out of the student aid system each year; and freezes funding for SEOG and work study.

If we want to maintain our edge in the global economy, we cannot afford to undercut the administration's competitiveness initiative. But the promise of a more competitive workforce is simply incompatible with budget proposals to freeze Pell grants for a fifth year in a row and recalling a portion of the Perkins Loan Revolving Fund.

This hypocrisy builds on the Republicans' record on student aid: \$12 billion in cuts to student loans; failure to extend the tuition deduction for higher education; and a 3-year long impasse over this reauthorization bill. Deep cuts in the President's budget will most likely carry over into the budget resolution we consider next week, further compounding the Republican hypocrisy. Similarly, the reauthorization bill moves America in the exact opposite direction of where our competitive workforce should be heading.

In fact, cuts to student aid threaten to return the state of higher education to the pre-World War II era, when only 5 percent of Americans had earned a college degree, compared with nearly 30 percent today. If we are to sustain our leadership and competitive edge in the global economy, we cannot afford to enact policies which will lead to only the elite being able to afford to go to college.

The so-called "education President" has put forward a woefully inadequate budget, and our leaders in this Chamber have presented a short-sighted reauthorization bill that falls short of what America's students, their parents, and our workforce deserves.

Mr. Speaker, I will be offering several amendments this week to address some of the shortfalls of H.R. 609. One bipartisan amendment, cosponsored by my colleague on the Education and Workforce Committee, Mr. SOUDER, would strike intrusive language in the bill dictating how colleges should carry out transfer credit policies.

An amendment sponsored by another colleague on the committee, Mr. HOLT, would correct a problem with the State tax allowance tables that deprive over 1 million students out of their fair share of Pell grants and reduce, if not eliminate, their eligibility for other types of need-based aid.

I will also offer amendments to preserve the Perkins Loan Revolving Fund, extend the expired tuition deduction claimed by middle-class families, and increase oversight on the administration and grading of ability to benefit exams.

Mr. Speaker, I am hopeful that the Rules Committee will make these amendments in order. They are not partisan or political but, rather, commonsense amendments, making a weak bill better and keeping America's college students a top priority for this Nation.

ENERGY

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

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, I think most Americans are pretty interested, very concerned about the high cost of energy, particularly fuel.

At the present time, we are nearly 60 percent dependent on foreign oil. OPEC provides the largest part of that oil that we are importing. We currently have a very large trade deficit, and petroleum is really the major part of, at least the largest single entity in that trade deficit, and this is a major threat to our economy. Right now, the purchase of foreign oil contributes about one-third of that trade deficit that we are now experiencing.

The United States has only 3 percent of the world's petroleum reserves. So we are highly dependent on the rest of the world. We are now using more petroleum than we are discovering. So we

are on a downhill slope. Obviously, we have to do some things differently than what we have been doing, and I think the energy bill we passed here in the Congress last summer was certainly a step in the right direction.

Many people may remember there was a renewable fuel standards in it that was fairly significant. There were incentives for wind, solar, hydrogen fuel cells which may be the wave of the future, something that is not a renewable fuel standard, but also some nuclear incentives were in there. We have not done much nuclear production for a long time, whereas Europe has moved ahead, and much of the energy in Europe is now due to nuclear power.

A couple of the major issues in a renewable fuel standard have to do with ethanol and biodiesel, and the remainder of my remarks will be addressed mainly to those topics.

First of all, a renewable fuel standard adds \$51 billion to farm income over 10 years, and the good news for taxpayers is that this reduces government farm payments by \$5.9 billion over that 10-year period. That is money that otherwise would be paid by the taxpayer. It also reduces the trade deficit of the United States by roughly \$34 billion, and it significantly reduces air pollution as well.

So we think that obviously there are some tremendous benefits to the renewable fuel standard. Currently, we are producing roughly 5.9 billion gallons of ethanol this year, 2006; and the energy bill mandates by the year 2012, just 6 years from now, that we produce 7.5 billion gallons; but, actually, we will far exceed that at the pace that we are now producing ethanol.

□ 2000

By 2025, there is a goal on the part of many of us to become independent of the oil that is produced in the Middle East, which would mean we would need to produce roughly 60 billion gallons of ethanol, biodiesel, and those types of fuels. And this is doable. It is going to take a concerted effort, a commitment on the part of our country, but we can do that. Technology is changing rapidly.

One thing that I think is important to show is that we often hear that, well, ethanol is okay, but it actually burns up more energy than it produces. And that is not true. Ethanol, for every Btu of fossil fuel used, yields just about 1.4 Btu's of energy because a lot of the energy in ethanol comes from the sun. In contrast, gasoline, for every 1 Btu of fossil fuel used to produce it, yields about eight-tenths of a Btu. So there is an energy deficit.

The same is true of MTBE. And, of course, MTBE is rapidly being phased out, so there is a tremendous demand now for ethanol to fill that gap. So, anyway, the technology is certainly changing.

Something that is on the horizon is cellulosic ethanol. This is ethanol that would not necessarily be made from