

will tell you it is the 2 years he was president of the Association of Former Members of Congress.

Matt McHugh personifies what a Member of Congress ought to be because of his integrity, his willingness to work with Members from both sides of the aisle for the good of the country, and because of his dedication to the ideals of deliberative representation. I would like Matt to come forward here.

This plaque that we are going to present to Matt is inscribed as follows: The 2006 Distinguished Service Award is presented by the U.S. Association of Former Members of Congress to the Honorable Matthew F. McHugh for his long and illustrious career in the House of Representatives, and for his laudable efforts as counsel to the president of the World Bank. During his entire career in public service, Matt McHugh exemplified the highest standard of integrity, dignity, and intellect. He inspired those serving with him and left a legacy for those serving after him. His beloved State of New York sent to Congress one of the best and brightest ever to walk these hallowed Halls of the Capitol and his former colleagues applaud and salute him for his distinguished and dignified service.

Mr. MCHUGH. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Jack, for your very gracious remarks and for this recognition.

Thanks to all of you for being here this morning. We want to thank you, Jack, and the officers and staff for the great work that you do in leading the association and in making those programs that we heard about this morning work so well. On a personal note, I also want to say on behalf of my wife, Alanna, and myself how much we admire you and, as the Speaker said, our thoughts and prayers are with you and Charlie during these very tough times.

I also want to express appreciation to my wife and my family, some of whom are here in the gallery this morning. As we all know, politics is an exhilarating, serious profession with a lot of rewards and satisfactions along the way. But most of those rewards go to the candidate and the officeholder and precious few go to the spouse and the family. They make enormous contributions, but they are very seldom recognized. So today is a day to say thank you to Alanna and to my family for their patience and understanding and support at all times in my life, but especially during those very hectic political years that we are all so familiar with.

As I said, I am grateful for this recognition, but I am very much aware that the honor could as easily go to anybody sitting here. As I look around the Chamber, I see so many people who have contributed so much to our country and to the Congress. One of the great things about our association is that it gives us an opportunity to continue to serve an institution that we love. I see so many of you who have done that, during your years here and afterwards as well. The association

brings us together for a variety of reasons. We get to see old friends. We reflect upon some of the experiences we shared together here. We learn something new about what is happening in the world today. But most importantly the programs of the association give us a chance to continue to serve in some small measure the institution that we do love and that is so important to the lifeblood of this country, the Congress.

We are able in some small measure to increase public awareness of how important Congress remains to the country. We have heard many of the programs described this morning, some of which serve that purpose very well but none more important, I think, than the Congress to Campus Program. I know many of you have participated in those campus visits that have been already described. Bill Goodling and I went together recently to Amherst College, and as always we were really touched by how impressive the young generation is, idealistic, bright.

But at the same time given the kind of coverage that government and politics gets today and the other distractions and pressures young people have in their lives, there is a real risk that many of them will not really take a real serious interest in public service. Of course, that would be a great tragedy for the country because clearly the future of the country rests with them. It rests with young people like my own granddaughter who is here today who is going off to college in the fall. And so the Congress to Campus Program gives us a chance to reach out to those young people to explain why public service is important and rewarding, to demonstrate among other things that Republicans and Democrats who serve together can actually talk and discuss issues thoughtfully and constructively, and to encourage them to really engage in public service and community service when their school days are over.

I think we can be grateful to our association for giving us that opportunity, not only in the Congress to Campus Program but in many other ways as well. I know that we are very limited on time. We are almost ready to abandon the Chamber, so I would like to close simply by thanking all of you for your work with the association, for your continuing service to the Congress and the country, for the recognition that you have given me today, and for being with us to share this very special moment.

Thank you so much.

Mr. BUECHNER. Matt, we also are presenting you with a scrapbook filled with letters of congratulations and little notes and memorabilia from your good friends from across the years that you have served with in this Congress, just another additional measure of our respect for you and the compassion that you have always held for the people of the great country and your district.

Mr. MCHUGH. Thanks so much, Jack.

Mr. BUECHNER. At this time, Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield back to the Chair for some closing remarks.

Mr. SLATTERY. Thank you, Mr. President. First of all, let the Chair again congratulate Matt McHugh. It is great to see Alanna here today and the McHugh family. We welcome you. Matt, let me just say that I don't think anyone who I had the honor of serving with brought greater credit to this institution than you. I always viewed you as someone, and I am sure this view was shared by your colleagues on both sides of the political aisle, as someone who went to work every day here trying to not only make the decisions that you thought were best for the people of New York and the people of this country. That sense of duty and commitment to our country was deeply admired by all of us who had an opportunity to serve with you. To sum up, I would just say that you are a public servant in the finest sense of the word. We are honored to know you. We are honored to recognize you here today. Matt McHugh, good luck to you.

Before we wrap up today, I would also like to again associate myself with the remarks of others made here today about Jack Buechner and his dedicated service to this association. Jack, without your leadership over the last 2 years and your dedication to the objectives of this association, we would not have seen the progress that we have seen with the Congress to Campus Program. We would not have seen the progress that we have also seen with our efforts in the global democracy building work and the election-monitoring efforts around the world. We recognize you for your dedicated leadership through a most difficult and painful personal ordeal and time in your life. We have the deepest respect for you. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts for all you have done to advance the goals of the Association of Former Members of Congress. Jack, good luck to you, my friend. We look forward to your further participation in the work of the association. Jack Buechner, let's give him another round of applause.

The Chair again wishes to thank all of those former Members that are here today and give you all another opportunity to record your presence if you did not do that at the beginning of the events here today. The Chair also wishes to thank all the former Members of the House for their presence.

I am advised that the House will reconvene 15 minutes after the bells ring.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 27 minutes a.m.), the House continued in recess.

□ 1055

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. THORNBERRY) at 10 o'clock and 55 minutes a.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to five 1-minute speeches per side.

RAILROAD TO NOWHERE

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, the President this week threatened to veto the emergency supplemental spending bill currently under consideration in the Senate, and rightfully so.

Members of the other body have been busy adding billions of dollars in non-emergency pork to this emergency spending bill, and the price tag is simply unjustifiable.

One particularly egregious earmark seeks \$700 million in Federal funds to move a railroad track that has just been repaired at the cost of \$250 million. Supporters of the project say the rail line needs to be moved because it is vulnerable to hurricane damage. Yet the proposed new location is just a short distance inland and was greatly damaged by Katrina last year.

The real reason supporters want this newly repaired rail line moved is to make room for a casino gambling development along the gulf coast.

Mr. Speaker, relocating a newly updated rail line to an equally vulnerable area simply to make room for casino gambling is not an emergency. The taxpayer should not have to pick up the tab for this railroad to nowhere.

I urge the President to stand by his veto threat unless pork like this is removed from the bill.

REPUBLICAN NOTE TO LOBBYISTS

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, investigators have recently uncovered a letter from the Republican leadership to special interest lobbyists.

Dear Lobbyists,
How do I love thee?

Let me count the ways.

I love thee to the depth of thy oil wells, for thou shall have \$14.5 billion to drill them.

I love thee to the heights of thy drug profits,

For the Medicare bill gives you \$139 billion in profits.

I love thee for thy golf courses, private jets and retirement jobs.

I love thee for thy donations, libations and vacations.

For now we must part, and I call it reform.

But remember, in December, once we get past November,

The travel ban expires, and I'll meet you at the tees.

Yours forever, cause I can't quit you,
The Republican Congress.

SIMPLE QUESTION

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, along with the rising gas prices over the last few weeks, we have also seen the rise of Democratic demagoguery. For the moment, though, I would like the Democrats to put aside this demagoguery and answer a simple question: What have you done to help lower gas prices?

I know that House Republicans have been working hard to lower the cost of gasoline over the mid- and long term. We have passed the Gasoline for America's Security Act which increases U.S. fuel supply by encouraging new refineries, bans price gouging, promotes conservation.

House Republicans have also passed the Energy Policy Act which allows new domestic oil and gas exploration and development, increases conservation, and embraces new fuel choices.

That is what the Republicans have done. The Democrats, on the other hand, have opposed building new refineries, have opposed drilling in ANWR and, in fact, voted against both of these bills.

Mr. Speaker, Republicans have worked hard to address America's energy needs. And the Democrats? Well, I think we have our answer. They have not done much.

ENERGY POLICY

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, there is no small amount of irony that Republicans are now rushing to investigate high gas prices and professing themselves to be on the side of the consumer.

What is important is not what they have said in the last couple of days, but what they have done for the entire time they have been in power here in Washington, D.C. It is outrageous that the same people who are now decrying high gas prices were lavishing billions of dollars in subsidies on the same oil industry a few months ago, despite already bloated profits.

In the 1990s the Republicans even passed legislation that forbade the Department of Transportation to even study higher fuel efficiency, something that would significantly reduce demand today.

And they have expressed no outrage that the American taxpayer is being cheated out of fair payment for the oil and gas that is being taken from public lands by these same large companies.

There are real solutions. Invest in conservation, the only way to reduce immediate dependence on expensive foreign oil now. Shift the billions of dollars in oil and gas companies to renewable and alternative energy sources, and insist that the American

taxpayer be given full value for the billions of dollars of oil and gas taken from public lands.

□ 1100

LONE STAR VOICE: BILLY MINX

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, another Lone Star voice from my district. Billy Minx in Channelview, Texas, e-mailed me on Tuesday. This is what he had to say about those illegally in America:

"In the recent immigration protests; the first protests showed the true intent of the mass of these illegal immigrants. The overwhelming majority of the flags were Mexican flags. These people are loyal to Mexico. I have a neighbor down the street who is a naturalized U.S. citizen from Mexico, and he flat out told me if the U.S. and Mexico were at war with each other, he would fight for Mexico.

"We may be a Nation of immigrants, but the majority of Americans were born here and their parents were born here. My great, great, great, great, great Grandfather John C. Hale was killed at the Battle of San Jacinto in 1836 defeating Santa Anna and Mexico (and thus making Texas an independent country). He is one of nine Texans buried there on the battlefield.

"Now my elected officials want to simply hand Texas back to Mexico. It's a traitorous act what is about to happen in this Congress. I pray you will not be an accomplice."

Mr. Speaker, Congress has an obligation to prevent the illegal colonization of this Nation.

And that's just the way it is.

BUSH RX DRUG TAX: EIGHTEEN
DAYS UNTIL TAX TAKES EFFECT

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

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, if House Republicans really want to help America's seniors, they would join us in reversing a proposal in the Republican prescription drug plan that would penalize any senior who chooses a private drug plan after May 15.

As this calendar shows, we have 18 days left. If House Republicans do not support our efforts to extend the deadline until the end of the year, millions of seniors will face a prescription drug tax that they must pay every month for the rest of their lives.

Over 14 million seniors still have not chosen a plan. Some are frustrated, confused by dozens of plans they have to choose from. Others have heard the horror stories of seniors not having access to drugs they were promised or seniors being overcharged for some of their medication. Some of these seniors will eventually want to choose a