

Additionally, I urge my colleagues to join me in cosponsoring the Ethiopian Consolidation Act, which would advance human rights in the Horn of Africa and links U.S. foreign aid assistance to full compliance with the Algiers Agreement. We must see to it that the tragedy of the last decade is not repeated.

HOUSE TO VOTE ON INCREASING THE MINIMUM WAGE

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

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, next week the House will have its first vote to increase the minimum wage in over 10 years. This is good news for the more than 7 million hardworking Americans who today only make \$5.15 an hour. It could also be good news for millions of middle class workers who could see their hourly wage increase as a result of the higher minimum wage.

Despite repeated efforts by the House Democrats to expand economic opportunity for millions of Americans over the last 9 years, the House Republican leadership has refused to allow the floor vote on increasing the minimum wage. Next week they have no choice, however. Thanks to action in the House Appropriations Committee on Wednesday, the committee voted to gradually increase the minimum wage from \$5.15 to \$7.25.

The American people should not be surprised that the out-of-touch House Republican leadership is also voicing strong opposition to the wage hike and vows to kill it next week. This would be shameful, and millions of Americans will be affected. They need to have a living wage.

I look forward to the vote next week and hope that the House will finally take action in a new direction to expand economic opportunity for all.

POLITICAL PROGRESS CONTINUES IN IRAQ

(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, in only 3 years, the world has watched the nation of Iraq transform from a brutal dictatorship to a promising democracy. Saddam's torture chambers and mass graves have been replaced with democracy's voting booths and legislative referendums.

Today Iraqi citizens are working tirelessly to secure their freedoms. By participating in the election of the transitional assembly in January of 2005, the drafting of an approval of the Constitution by October and the national elections in December, they have demonstrated that they refuse to allow terrorists to determine the fate of their country. Last month, Iraqis achieved another historic victory when they announced their new unity government.

U.S. troops, coalition forces and Iraqi citizens continue to face challenges in establishing a civil society in Iraq, which protects American families by destroying terrorist training camps in the central front of the global war on terrorism.

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

EXPANDING OPPORTUNITY TO MILLIONS OF AMERICANS BY INCREASING THE MINIMUM WAGE

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

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, next week the House will finally have an opportunity to lift millions of hardworking Americans out of poverty. For the first time in a decade, we will have a vote on the House floor to increase the minimum wage so that 7 million Americans can finally make a living wage. I think most Americans, quite frankly, would be stunned to hear that the House Republican leadership has refused to allow a vote to increase the minimum wage for over 10 years now.

Republican inaction has led to the fact that the minimum wage is at its lowest level in 50 years. In fact, if the minimum wage had just kept up with inflation since 1968, it would have been \$8.88 in 2005. That is still, quite frankly, a pittance for what people need to live.

House Democrats are committed to expanding economic opportunity to millions of Americans who are just trying to make a living wage. They want to provide a better tomorrow for their families. A majority of the House Appropriations Committee defied Republican leadership earlier this week and supported an increase in the minimum wage to \$7.25. That is only fair.

Seven million Americans deserve a minimum wage, an increase in the minimum wage, so let us make sure they get it.

HONORING C.J. FOUTS

(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 memory of C.J. Fouts, a businessman and community leader in the city of Smyrna, Georgia, in my district. Mr. Fouts passed away this week, leaving behind his wife, Betty, three children, eight grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, and a community full of grateful citizens.

Mr. Fouts captured the essence of the American dream, Mr. Speaker. He came to Smyrna at age 18 from rural Georgia in search of work. He started his own business, a service station that later grew into a sales shop for cars, trucks and equipment.

Mr. Fouts gave his time, energy and passion to the Smyrna business community. He has the distinction of pos-

sessing the longest active business license in the city of Smyrna, 54 years. Just a few weeks ago the city honored him with a plaque commemorating him as a founding member of the Downtown Development Authority. I am so thankful to have been in attendance.

Mr. Speaker, our communities are blessed with men like C.J. Fouts. Their work ethic boosts our economy, and their determination allows our towns and our cities to flourish. Smyrna, indeed, and the State of Georgia, lost a great man this week, but his work and vision live on throughout the city.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me in honoring Mr. Fouts' memory.

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DEBATE ON THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR

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

Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, today is an important day in the United States Congress. Beginning around noon this afternoon, the House will debate for 10 hours the Iraq war. The question will be should we continue on the course that President Bush and the administration has set or should we have a new plan? We will have 10 hours of debate.

Consider, over 2,500 young men and women killed, over 30,000 amputees, blinded and the like, hundreds of thousands who will have mental health deficiencies when they return. Retired generals have spoken. We need a new direction. The troops should be redeployed. They should be brought home at the most practical time with a plan that we don't now have under this administration.

So, America, listen and look. Should we stay the course, or should we have a plan of redeployment to protect our troops and to protect America?

DEBATING THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, today we will hold discussion and a debate about the global war on terrorism and about the battles in Afghanistan and in Iraq. It is appropriate indeed that we do so.

This week, we are celebrating the Army's birthday. We are celebrating Flag Day, and we are continuing to honor the men and women who serve so brilliantly in the U.S. military.

Today, Mr. Speaker, I want to rise for a moment and honor the men and women of the Tennessee National Guard. They have had deployments in the past year, and they have served with distinction. Today many of the junior officers and the commanders of the Tennessee Guard are in town. They

were honored at a reception last night, and they are visiting us here on Capitol Hill today.

We welcome them. We honor them, and we thank them and their families for their outstanding service, for their sacrifice, for their commitment to freedom, for loving this Nation and for being the embodiment of that freedom on foreign soil.

LINE-ITEM VETO BILL

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

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, as a cosponsor, I am glad the Budget Committee has approved H.R. 4890, the so-called line-item veto bill. H.R. 4890 is similar to the Ryan-Stenholm amendment to H.R. 4663 from the 108th Congress. I say "so-called" because it does not have the constitutional defects that led the Supreme Court to strike down the line-item veto law passed in 1996.

Instead, like legislation I introduced last year, it would simply enable the President to require Congress to vote on individual spending items or targeted tax breaks included in a larger bill signed into law. Congress would still make the ultimate decision on the basis of a majority vote. There would be no need for a two-thirds vote to override the President. This bill will not solve our budget problems, but it will promote greater transparency and accountability when it comes to taxing and spending. It deserves approval.

THE SUBURBAN AGENDA ON EDUCATION, HEALTH CARE, CONSERVATION AND THE ECONOMY

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

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, Congress fulfills its potential when we address key problems facing American families. Most Americans in the 21st century live in the suburbs, and the House is now moving a suburban agenda.

The suburban agenda includes bipartisan legislation on education, health care, conservation and the economy. We unveiled the first seven bills for the agenda last month, and this morning I am here to report on the progress we have made.

Yesterday the House passed Congressman PORTER's bill allowing school boards across the Nation to check interstate criminal records before hiring a coach or a teacher. Next week, we will consider Congresswoman JOHNSON's bill to deploy full electronic medical records shown to reduce errors by doctors by over 80 percent.

Action is coming in this Congress to establish 401 Kids tax-deferred savings accounts and new tools for parents to fight against sexual predators who misuse Web sites like myspace.com.

The suburban agenda, it is moving through the Congress and helping this House fulfill its full potential.

SAY NO TO PRIVATIZING SOCIAL SECURITY

(Mrs. MCCARTHY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, with so many things going on here in the House, I think it is important to remind people a year ago Democrats, all Democrats from this House, went across the country to talk about why we needed to make sure that Social Security stayed the way it was. We are hearing rumors already that in January of 2007 that they are again going to try to attack Social Security.

May I remind the American people how important Social Security is, not only to our seniors who need it to keep them out of poverty, but also to our widows who are taking care of children, for people with disability.

Social Security is the one plan that has worked since it was conceived here in Congress. Democrats will protect it. I will fight for it. The American people have answered a year ago. We want Social Security.

With everything that is going on here in the House, just remember, Democrats are keeping their eye on everything.

THE UNCHECKED UNITED NATIONS

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

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor this morning to take issue with some of the comments by Mr. Mark Malloch Brown, the Deputy Secretary General of the U.N. Mr. Brown recently stated in a speech that there was "too much unchecked U.N. bashing and stereotyping."

Well, at first I was a little offended by that, and then I got to realizing we haven't been doing enough bashing of the U.N. You look at what is going on.

We have had some problems with criminality in this body. Those are being addressed. As bad as they are, that criminality shows rank amateurism compared to what is going on in the U.N.

We have got families in the U.N. profiting from their other family member's positions. We have got some of the worst violators of human rights in charge of overseeing human rights violations. We even had Libya as chairman of that group back in 2003. Six of the worst, of the worst as designated last year, are on the human rights committee now.

We have got problems with their diplomatic immunity, we have got people where they turn around and try to take credit for things like polio eradication that Rotary International did, when they cannot find anything else to take credit for.

Mr. Speaker, I would just close by saying this, it is time we did some more bashing of the U.N.

RIISING COLLEGE EDUCATION COSTS

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

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, as a Nation, we should encourage our young people to strive to achieve their full potential. We must give them the resources and opportunities to make their dreams a reality. For many students these dreams begin with access to higher education.

But after 6 years of Republican rule, access to college is now out of reach for too many of our Nation's youths. Since 2001, tuition and fees at 4-year public colleges have increased by 40 percent. At the same time, Republicans have made drastic cuts to higher education, including underfunding Pell Grants and cutting the higher education budget by \$12 billion this year alone.

These cuts not only mean that more students have to take out loans to pay for college, but they will also face higher interest rates as they pay them back unless they refinance by July 1. That is when the Department of Education will raise Federal student loan interest rates to offset the Republican cuts.

As Members of Congress, we should be doing everything in our power to make college more accessible and affordable for all students, rather than cutting critical education dollars to fund tax breaks for the wealthy few.

□ 1030

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H. RES. 861, DECLARING THAT THE UNITED STATES WILL PREVAIL IN THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 868 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 868

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order without intervention of any point of order to consider in the House the resolution (H. Res. 861) declaring that the United States will prevail in the Global War on Terror, the struggle to protect freedom from the terrorist adversary. The resolution shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the resolution and preamble to final adoption without intervening motion or demand for division of the question except: (1) ten hours of debate equally divided and controlled among the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on International Relations, the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Armed Services, the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary, and the chairman and ranking minority member of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence; and (2) one motion to recommit which may not include instructions.