

result the President has made clear he will veto this bill.

As our Nation continues to debate the future of U.S. involvement in Iraq, some of my colleagues have argued that Congress should mandate a hard deadline for the redeployment of U.S. troops. While I believe that Congress has an important role to play in this debate, such crucial decisions should not be made without substantial input from our military and foreign policy leaders. I have disagreed with many aspects of our strategy in Iraq, but I feel strongly that requiring an arbitrary date for troop withdrawal would endanger our soldiers and undermine efforts to maintain stability in the Middle East.

Now is the time for Democrats and Republicans to unite around a strategy that funds our troops and supports an effective way forward in Iraq. We cannot afford to waste precious moments arguing over political objectives and pork barrel spending projects, such as those included in this conference report.

Mr. Speaker, I intend to vote against this bill and I call upon my colleagues to dispense with the political rhetoric and get to work immediately on passing a bipartisan emergency supplemental spending bill.

IN SUPPORT OF TAIWAN'S BID FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 26, 2007

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, for years now, Taiwan has had no representation in the World Health Organization (WHO). The health rights of Taiwan's 23 million people have been grossly neglected. As a democracy, the Government of Taiwan is compelled to respect the wishes of its people and apply for membership into the WHO. Also, Taiwan would like to be invited to send observers to sessions of the World Health Assembly this May.

I support Taiwan's bid to be a member of the WHO. Taiwan's bid is closely related to its campaign for World Health Assembly observer status and meaningful participation in World Health Organization activities. The health rights of the 23 million Taiwanese people must be respected. Moreover, Taiwan is willing and able to contribute to the world health network. As of December 2006, Taiwan had 32 technical missions stationed in 29 partner countries and dispatched 16 mobile medical missions to 12 countries. It is conceivable that with a membership in the WHO, Taiwan will be able to contribute even more of its resources to the global health network.

Several years ago, Taiwan was gripped in crisis with the outbreak of SARS. Since Taiwan was not a member of the WHO, Taiwan encountered a significant amount of red-tape in getting WHO assistance to the affected areas during its urgent time of need during the SARS crisis. Should there ever be a new medical crisis in Taiwan, the WHO should be free of all barriers in assisting people in urgent need of immediate medical attention.

Madam Speaker, Taiwan's application for WHO membership in the name of Taiwan does not represent any change of Taiwan's status quo. Taiwan is most commonly known

as "Taiwan" internationally and the Government of Taiwan has made it absolutely clear that it has no intention of changing its national name. Taiwan's Constitution has not been changed.

I hope that the administration will once again enthusiastically support Taiwan's application and that no government will dispute Taiwan's membership request. All nations, especially the United States, Japan, and major European countries, should request the WHO to make appropriate arrangements for Taiwan to participate in WHO's mechanisms or at the very least grant Taiwan WHA observer status this May.

TRIBUTE TO THE AU SABLE ANGLERS

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 26, 2007

Mr. STUPAK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize one of the most effective, well organized and long standing conservation groups in the State of Michigan, the Au Sable Anglers. This organization, which has done so much to preserve the Au Sable River, celebrates its twentieth anniversary on Saturday.

The Au Sable River is located in northern Michigan's Lower Peninsula. The river winds from Lake Huron inland running approximately 140 miles to the center of the peninsula. This picturesque river and its surrounding wetlands are a favorite fishing spot for Michigan residents seeking brown trout as well as for fishing enthusiasts who travel from across the country each year for some of the best fishing in the nation. The river has faced many threats, but the Au Sable Anglers have remained stalwart champions of the river, helping to preserve this wondrous natural resource for future generations of trout anglers and outdoorsmen.

The Anglers of the Au Sable was born out of efforts to prevent a Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) policy from being rescinded. The State's 1986 Catch and Release fishing policy was at the time being challenged. To thwart efforts to rescind this policy, a local businessman named Rusty Gates, whose fishing lodge and tackle shop abuts the banks of the Au Sable River, rallied supporters.

In May of 1986, Mr. Gates began culling a mailing list from his lodge guests and patrons of his fly shop to organize allies and protect the catch and release policy. In September of 1986, six anglers—Rusty Gates, Dan Drislane, Ed McGlenn, Dennis Potter, Vic Prislipski and Gene Ballou—met in the Gates Au Sable Lodge. This organizational meeting was the genesis of the Au Sable Anglers. In August of that year, the Au Sable Anglers held their first annual members meeting with 75 conservationists in attendance.

While the Au Sable Anglers were originally formed to address the issue of the Department of Natural Resources' Catch and Release policy, they rapidly expanded their areas of interest to face down an array of threats to the Au Sable River.

When the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission initiated its re-licensing process for scores of hydroelectric dams in Michigan, in-

cluding six on the Au Sable River, the Anglers helped ensure that Au Sable River would be protected. In the early 1990s, the Anglers discovered illegal water regulation at a dam on the Au Sable that was causing extremely low water conditions. After pressure from the Anglers, the owner of the dam abandoned this environmentally damaging practice. The Au Sable Anglers were also involved on issues surrounding gas exploration near the river.

Although the Au Sable Anglers are active on public policy and environmental issues affecting the Au Sable River and its ecosystem, they are not afraid to roll up their sleeves to help remediate pollution and keep the river clean. Over the years they have helped restore scores of soil erosion sites and funded the repair and restoration of hundreds of fish habitat sites. Every year since September of 1996, they have held an annual river clean up, in which hundreds of volunteers walk more than 100 miles of river, filling trash bags with waste and debris. Since its inception, the annual river clean up has evolved into an event that rallies the entire Au Sable River community together. Not only do volunteers from the Anglers pitch in, but local property owners along the river open their land to the trash collection teams and help guide the teams from point to point.

The organization has also lent its financial resources towards engaging young people in conservation studies. Over the years, the Anglers have underwritten several graduate biology students to investigate soil erosion and other problems impacting the Au Sable River and its habitat.

Today, after twenty years of hard work to preserve the Au Sable River for future generations, the Au Sable River Anglers remains a vibrant and effective organization. The group boasts over 600 conservationists as dues paying members and remains involved in local environmental issues and in river remediation efforts. Rusty Gates continues to serve as the organization's President. Like the organization's founders and board members, he should be commended for dedicating so much of his personal time to building the organization and protecting the Au Sable River.

Madam Speaker, the Au Sable Anglers provide an inspiring example of how ordinary citizens can band together to protect and improve their local environment. While the Au Sable Anglers have not won every battle they have fought, their collective, tireless efforts have done much to preserve one of northern Michigan's great locations for fishing, canoeing and outdoors life.

Twenty years ago, six outdoorsmen gathered to discuss how they could protect and improve a northern Michigan river that they cared for greatly. Today, twenty years later, thanks to that initial meeting, the Au Sable Anglers remains a vigilant defender of the Au Sable River.

Madam Speaker, as this local, grassroots organization observes its twentieth anniversary, I would ask that you and the entire U.S. House of Representatives join me in thanking the Au Sable Anglers for their work and in saluting them for their stalwart advocacy on behalf of the Au Sable River.

THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FED-
ERAL CREDIT UNIONS

HON. EDWARD R. ROYCE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 26, 2007

Mr. ROYCE. Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to recognize the 40th Anniversary of the National Association of Federal Credit Unions (NAFCU). Founded in my home state of California on April 26, 1967, NAFCU's current member credit unions stretch from coast-to-coast and are more than 1,000 in number. These credit unions in turn represent more than 30 million individual credit union members.

From 1967 until today, NAFCU has been a strong voice in Washington on behalf of Federal credit unions. The NAFCU members in my district tell me that this association does an excellent job providing them with representation, information, education, and assistance to meet the challenges that cooperative financial institutions face in today's economic environment.

It is with this in mind, I rise today to congratulate the National Association of Federal Credit Unions on their 40th Anniversary. I have worked with NAFCU on issues that are important to the credit unions in my congressional district, and I look forward to doing so in the future. Congratulations NAFCU on your 40th Anniversary.

ON PROTECTING AMERICA'S WORKERS ACT OF 2007

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 26, 2007

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration Act (OSHA), passed in 1970, promised America's workers safe and healthy workplaces.

However, OSHA has gaps in coverage and approximately 8.6 million State, county and municipal employees are not covered by the law. Public employees have the same health and safety problems as do private-sector workers but have no protection in more than 20 States and the District of Columbia.

In addition, millions of airline and railroad employees, as well as Department of Energy contractors, are inadequately covered.

Another sad reality is that many employees already covered by OSHA are afraid to report health and safety violations for fear of retribution. When an investigation does occur, however, workers and families are often left in the dark about the progress of the investigation, and too often, even when an employer commits multiple violations, penalties are weak and ineffective.

The Protecting America's Workers Act improves upon OSHA in a number of ways: It raises civil penalties on employees and makes felony charges available against employers who commit willful violations. It also expands coverage to include public employees and millions of other workers who are inadequately covered by other laws. In addition, the Act improves upon current whistleblower protections,

specifically giving workers the right to refuse to do hazardous work and protecting against employer retribution. Finally, it requires OSHA to investigate all cases of death and serious injuries and gives workers and families the right to meet with investigators.

Since the passage of OSHA in 1970, much progress has been made. It has been reported that over 349,000 lives have been saved. Nonetheless, too many workers are still dying—5,764 in 2005—and millions of others are injured or become ill by working in unsafe and unhealthy conditions. The provisions of the Protecting America's Workers Act strengthen OSHA so that it can meet its promise to ensure safe and healthy workplaces for all Americans.

INTRODUCTION OF THE COM- PREHENSIVE LEARNING ASSES- SMENT FOR STUDENTS AND SCHOOLS

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 26, 2007

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, today I introduced the Comprehensive Learning Assessment for Students and Schools Act or "CLASS Act of 2007." This legislation makes practical and meaningful reforms to the No Child Left Behind Act.

The importance of ensuring that each child in America is given the opportunity to reach his or her full potential cannot be overstated. Having an educated workforce is a matter of economic competitiveness and it is a matter of national security. I voted for the No Child Left Behind Act, NCLB, in 2001 because it placed much needed focus on accountability and on closing the so-called "achievement gap" in this country by targeting the achievement of low-income and minority students. These remain laudable and important goals.

Since the law was enacted 5 years ago, I have met with students, parents, teachers, principals, superintendents, and others to discuss the real-world effects of this Federal mandate. What I have learned is that there is broad consensus in favor of establishing high standards and accountability, but there is also an emerging consensus that the law has had some unintended consequences.

In 2005, several stakeholders in Colorado's education community, including representatives from the Colorado Association of School Executives, the Colorado Association of School Boards, the Colorado Education Association, and the Colorado Board of Cooperative Educational Services Association, produced a policy paper suggesting meaningful reforms to the NCLB. The policy paper's prescriptions mirror what I have heard first hand from constituents in my district and other Coloradans. My legislation addresses many of these suggested reforms.

First, the way that the Department of Education currently measures Adequate Yearly Progress, AYP, does not yield an accurate metric for actual student progress in our Nation's schools. For example, in Colorado in 2004, the Boulder Valley School District met 140 of 142 required performance targets, Littleton Schools met 124 of 128, and Durango met 91 of 94. Yet under the "all or nothing"

rules of NCLB each of these districts were labeled as failing.

The CLASS Act would allow schools to use longitudinal growth to measure student proficiency to calculate AYP more accurately. Longitudinal growth measures a student's progress from previous years as opposed to comparing the scores of one cohort of students one year to an entirely different cohort the following year. By focusing directly on individual students, we can develop a much better understanding of ways to improve the grade-level learning process.

In addition, the CLASS Act would require that multiple measures be used to assess AYP. These would include: the proportion of State report card indicators met, a performance index score, student drop-out rate, and a measure based on individual student achievement gains over time by disaggregated groups. When a school is required to offer transfer choices and supplemental services to a school because that school has failed to meet all of its AYP targets, transfer choice and supplemental services will only be available to students who fall under the one of the subgroups that failed to meet an AYP target. For example, if the students with disabilities subgroup is the only one within a school to not achieve AYP, then only those special education students would be offered transfer options and supplemental services. This common-sense measure allows schools and districts to target resources where they are needed most.

Second, two federal mandates of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) and NCLB are conflicting. Whereas NCLB requires that students progress at similar rates, IDEA expressly states that students with disabilities progress at different rates. NCLB requires that students progress be measured by a "proficient score" on a standardized test; IDEA is based on an Individual Education Program (IEP) team decision with a test score as just one factor. The CLASS act would allow a student's IEP to be taken into consideration when determining the assessment level under which a student would be tested for the purposes of NCLB.

Third, the CLASS Act would acknowledge the fact that becoming fluent in a new language is a complex process that occurs over time. It is unfair and unproductive to require students, while they are learning English, to be tested in both the acquisition of a new language and in the subject content. The CLASS Act would exclude the performance of students with limited English proficiency who have resided in the United States for less than three years, so as to avoid any distortion in measurement resulting from the new arrivals of such students.

NCLB has provided critical tools for parents, teachers, and administrators to understand how children are learning and what schools and families can do to improve education. But in order for accountability assessments to be meaningful, they need to be transparent and fair.

Madam Speaker, the CLASS Act goes a long way toward achieving the goal of transparent and fair assessments of student progress without compromising the critical goal of demanding excellence in our public education system. I encourage my colleagues to support this legislation.