

the President gave for the troop escalation earlier this year was to better secure the Nation so that the Iraqi Government could meet these political objectives. The GAO report concludes that "violence remains high" and that the political promises have not been kept.

Madam Speaker, I would only hope that our Republican colleagues would take a serious look and join us, as they said they would, in demanding a change of course in Iraq.

COST OF WAR IN IRAQ

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

Mr. SIREs. Madam Speaker, the President's war has already cost the American people dearly in both lives and tax dollars. Congress has appropriated nearly \$477 billion for the war since March 2003, and the U.S. is currently spending an estimated \$10 billion a month on the war. This spending continues despite reports that 15 of 18 benchmarks for success have not been met and casualties in the war are 65 percent higher this year than last.

This Democratic Congress and the American people are ready for a new direction. We believe it is time to bring our troops home and begin investing here in the U.S.

If you took just some of the money we are spending in Iraq and invested it here instead, we could take care of a lot of our seniors' prescription drug cost problems. And for the cost of just one week in Iraq, we could hire 51,000 more police officers to make our streets safer.

Madam Speaker, it is time for Republicans in this body to listen to the American people and join us in calling for an end to the financial drain of this war. It is time to invest in making our Nation safer here at home.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE

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

Mr. SARBANES. Madam Speaker, 10 years ago the Children's Health Insurance Program was instituted. Since then, 6 million children have been given access to private health care insurance in this country. It was absolutely the right thing to do.

But new evidence from the Census Bureau released last week suggests that we are now slipping backwards. The number of children without health insurance coverage in this country increased from 8 million in 2005 to 8.7 million in 2006. That is why we passed 4 weeks ago the CHAMP Act which would increase insurance coverage for children to an additional 5 million children in this country. That's the direction we need to be going in.

Unfortunately, the President is threatening to veto the CHAMP Act. I

hope the President will reconsider, stop posturing on this issue, and do the right thing by America's children.

THE KILLING OF JAMIE DEAN

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

Mr. McDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, as we enter this period when the President is going to come before us and ask us to extend the surge in Iraq, we ought to hear the story of Jamie Dean.

Jamie Dean was a 29-year-old who came from Hollywood, Maryland. He enlisted and served 4 years, including 1 year in Afghanistan where he cleaned out caves and did all of the tough things that went on there. He came home severely depressed, suffering from PTSD, was being treated at the Veterans Hospital after being honorably discharged from the United States Army.

And then he got the letter. On November 26, he received a letter that said pursuant to Executive Order of 14 September 2001, you are relieved from your present reserve component status and are ordered to report to duty. He was going to be sent within 2 months into Iraq, a man who is suffering from PTSD.

This man broke. He started to drink. He had weapons holed up in his home. The day after Christmas, he was surrounded by the police and was shot dead.

We are breaking the Army. We are breaking the Marines. These people should be thought about when we consider the extension.

GAO REPORT FINDS LITTLE PROGRESS IN IRAQ

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

Mr. YARMUTH. Madam Speaker, President Bush continues to ignore reality in Iraq, instead glossing over the deteriorating situation while asking for more money from Congress and more personal sacrifice from our troops.

A report released by the White House in July claimed that progress had been made on eight of the 18 benchmarks mandated by the Congress. But a new, unbiased report from the GAO shows that the situation is even worse than the White House led us to believe.

According to the GAO report, Iraq has failed to meet all but three of the 18 benchmarks required for political and military progress in Iraq. Some of the report's most disconcerting findings include the fact that the capabilities of Iraqi security forces have not improved and that violence remains high.

Madam Speaker, with the release of this discouraging and objective report, Republicans in this body must decide whether to continue rubber-stamping

the President's failed policy in Iraq or begin working with Democrats to bring our troops home.

DEVASTATING FIRES RAGE THROUGH GREECE

(Mrs. MALONEY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, as cochair and cofounder of the Hellenic Caucus, I rise today in strong support of the Sarbanes resolution, H. Res. 629, expressing the condolences and sympathy of the House of Representatives to the Government and the people of Greece for the loss of 65 lives and destruction caused by the devastating fires raging through Greece, and which pledges our full support and solidarity to Greece.

This disaster has affected all parts of Greece. Thousands of people are homeless, many of whom have lost all of their possessions. Hundreds of thousands of acres of land have been ravaged. Our government has pledged \$1.3 million to aid Greece during this difficult time. We have sent professional help and fire equipment.

Along with my colleagues in the Hellenic Caucus, we will be urging the State Department to remain in close contact with Greek authorities so that the United States can continue to assist in every way with this effort.

Greece has been a strong ally to our Nation, assisting us in times of need, including the terrible terrorist attacks on September 11 and Hurricane Katrina. We must now help Greece in its time of need. Our thoughts and prayers are with the people of Greece.

CHAMP ACT

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

Mr. ARCURI. Madam Speaker, last week the Census Bureau came out with a new report that shows the number of children living without health insurance increased last year by 700,000. It is the second year in a row that the number of uninsured children has increased. Today, 8.7 million children in this country are going without the critical health care services they need to live a healthy and productive life.

Fortunately, this Democratic Congress has acted to reverse this disturbing trend. Last month, this House passed the Children's Health and Medicare Protection Act. The legislation provides an additional \$50 billion in funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program which today provides 6 million children access to private health insurance.

Unfortunately, there are 6 million other children that are eligible for the program but are not currently enrolled. Our \$50 billion investment would allow us to reach almost every

child who is currently eligible which would significantly reduce the number of uninsured children in America.

Madam Speaker, this Congress has acted. It is time for the President to join with us in prioritizing the health care needs of our children.

THE "RE-SADDAMIZATION" OF IRAQ

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

Mr. INSLEE. Madam Speaker, last week I talked to a father who lost his son in May in Iraq. He was, of course, devastated. He asked me a question: Why did my son die in Iraq?

That is a question that will be on all of our minds in the coming days when we receive the new report from Iraq. When we look at the report in a very calm, dispassionate manner, I hope we think about what is really going on in Iraq. What is really going on in Iraq, what the President has crowed about as a great success in these regions is what you might call the "re-Saddamization" of Iraq.

The President is going to brag about the sense that he is now giving more power to tribes and tribal sheikhs who at some point when we eventually leave Iraq will be better equipped and better armed to fight the central government that the President used to crow about.

I think we need to have a calm, dispassionate review of what we're doing. We are creating the conditions that could result in a worse civil war. We have to have a calm review and make the right choices.

PRIORITIZE CHILDREN'S HEALTH

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

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, President Bush has threatened to veto a bill that would provide health care insurance to 5 million children who are currently uninsured. The President's reason: The bill is simply too expensive. But what he ignores is the fact that the CHAMP Act is fully paid for.

This Democratic House is concerned that too many children are growing up without health insurance, making it impossible for them to receive the regular checkups that they need to live long and healthy lives. The CHAMP Act would strengthen the CHIP program, a popular Federal-State health care partnership so we can reach nearly all of the children who are currently eligible for the program.

The price tag is an additional \$50 billion over 5 years. Again, the President says it is simply too much money. Yet, he has no problem asking this Congress to rubber-stamp a new Iraq war emergency funding bill that press reports say could be as high as \$50 billion and that would only last about 5 months.

Madam Speaker, it is time President Bush prioritize the health care needs of our Nation's children. He should simply support the CHAMP Act.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. LAHOOD. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert a personal explanation at this point with respect to H.R. 811. Although I am listed as a cosponsor of the bill, on further reflection, I do not support the bill and intend to vote against the bill. Were the bill not already on the Union Calendar, I would delete my name from the list of cosponsors.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. SOLIS). Without objection, the gentleman's statement will appear in the RECORD.

There was no objection.

□ 1030

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair must remind Members that, under clause 7 of rule XVII, it is not in order to bring to the attention of the House an occupant of the gallery.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO SELECT COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE THE VOTING IRREGULARITIES OF AUGUST 2, 2007

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 611, 110th Congress, and the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Members to the Select Committee to Investigate the Voting Irregularities of August 2, 2007:

Mr. DELAHUNT, Massachusetts, Chairman

Mr. DAVIS, Alabama

Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN, South Dakota

COMMUNICATION FROM HON. JOHN A. BOEHNER, REPUBLICAN LEADER

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable JOHN A. BOEHNER, Republican Leader:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, September 4, 2007.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, H-232, U.S. Capitol,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER PELOSI: Pursuant to House Resolution 611, I am pleased to appoint the following Members to the Select Committee on Voting Irregularities.

Mr. Mike Pence of Indiana—Ranking Member, Mr. Steven LaTourette of Ohio, and Mr. Kenny Hulshof of Missouri.

These Members have expressed interest in serving in this capacity and I am pleased to fulfill their requests.

Sincerely,

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Republican Leader.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later today.

EXTENDING CONDOLENCES AND SYMPATHY OF THE HOUSE TO THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF GREECE

Mr. FALLOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 629) extending the condolences and sympathy of the House of Representatives to the Government and the people of Greece for the grave loss of life and vast destruction caused by the devastating fires raging through Greece since June 2007.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 629

Whereas more than 3,000 forest fires have been recorded in Greece since June 2007;

Whereas over a 10-day period, an estimated 4,000 people saw their homes destroyed by the wildfires, which razed dozens of villages, destroyed livestock and charred an estimated 469,000 acres of mostly forest and farmland;

Whereas dozens of Greek families have lost their loved ones to the fires;

Whereas thousands of Greeks have been left homeless and hundreds of thousands of acres of pristine forest have been destroyed;

Whereas hundreds of thousands of mature olive trees, vineyards and thousands of animals perished in the flames;

Whereas damage to the Greek economy is estimated at between \$1,600,000,000 and \$5,400,000,000;

Whereas the United States and Greece have stood side by side in confronting world challenges throughout the 20th century, and will stand together in confronting this new challenge; and

Whereas the United States, through its government, its people and its Greek-American community, has already extended significant support to the people of Greece during this difficult time: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) extends its condolences and sympathy to the Government and the people of Greece for the grave loss of life and vast destruction caused by the devastating fires raging through Greece;

(2) vows its full support and solidarity to a close friend, a strategic partner, and a longstanding ally in this painful and difficult hour;

(3) fully supports the Administration's initiatives to provide assistance and relief to the people of Greece, including its pledge of \$1,500,000 in aid as well as expert and technical assistance;

(4) encourages public institutions, specialized agencies, as well as private citizens, to offer their resources; and

(5) expresses confidence that Greece and its people will succeed in overcoming the hardships incurred through this tragedy.