

the women's effort to lay a wreath at the Women's Memorial at Arlington Cemetery, and I have in my mind a memory of Congresswoman DAVIS joining us on those many occasions, uniting around our effort to pay tribute to women members of the armed services of the United States of America.

So this evening I simply say that we will miss her, thank her for her pioneering spirit and her leadership, and I would like to say simply to her husband, Chuck; her children; and to thousands of her friends around the Nation and in her district our prayers and condolences are to your family and certainly to your community. So many lives were touched by your service. So we say to you, farewell, our dear friend. May you rest in peace.

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The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LINCOLN DAVIS of Tennessee). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

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

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

SCHIP

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

Mr. KAGEN. Mr. Speaker, what kind of Nation are we, and is anyone really listening? We have over 47 million citizens in this country going without health care coverage; 47 million citizens have zero, and they've been left behind. Why? They don't have the money. They simply don't have the money to be able to afford the impossible cost of health care today. People cannot afford to pay for their pills; they cannot afford to pay their doctor bills or their hospital tests or their cancer treatments. These treatments now are out of their reach. And why? It's simple. They don't have the money.

And what kind of Nation are we when, in my home State of Wisconsin, in Shawano County, 19 out of 20 families filing for bankruptcy recently did so only because they couldn't afford their health care bills. We need a uniquely American solution to this crisis, and we need it now because my patients and my constituents cannot hold their breath any longer.

Mr. Speaker, what kind of Nation are we? Let's agree right here and right now that we need to come together in a bipartisan way and help to begin to

solve this national disgrace. My constituents are listening tonight, and so are yours. Let's end this national nightmare and guarantee access to affordable care for every citizen.

Now, we're very fortunate to have a Democratic majority in the United States today. We're fortunate because we have the SCHIP bill that will be coming back to the House floor on the 18th of this month, that's one week from this Thursday. We're hoping to get enough votes to override President Bush's recent veto of this essential piece of health care legislation.

The SCHIP bill is a State-run program. There have been a great number of misrepresentations about what it really is, and tonight for a few moments I would like to review with you what the SCHIP bill really is all about. It's a State-run, private program. It's aimed and focused at the poorest working families. It will cost \$3.50 every day to ensure a child, \$3.50 a day. Compare that to the millions and millions and billions of dollars we're spending in the sands of Iraq, \$3 billion per week, nearly \$400 million a day, and \$3.50 to guarantee access for a child to see their pediatrician or their family practitioner. What kind of a Nation are we to say no to that?

The eligible people will be those who are in the low-income group. Low-income is three times the Federal poverty level. People who earn \$50,000 or \$55,000 a year simply don't have the money to spend on health insurance policies, which are now averaging \$12,000 to \$14,000 every year.

It will cover up to 10.8 million children in our country. But don't take my word for it about health care. These are cards I've received from my constituents in Wisconsin. Joe from Hazelhurst writes, "I am more likely to die because I can't afford the medical care needed than I am in danger of being killed by terrorists. Fix this, please." He's not a child, but he needs our help today.

Megan and Eric from Appleton, Wisconsin, "We are a young family with four kids, 6, 3 and twins age 5 months. Our insurance is out of control. Our family earns about \$38,000 a year, and we pay \$520-plus each month to have health insurance. Our country needs to make affordable health care a priority."

And what about Pat from Green Bay, Wisconsin. "Health care issues are critical. We need to develop a plan to help the elderly and the uninsurable." For too long, insurance companies have been allowed to discriminate against citizens. Why? For their own personal and individual corporate profits. For too long, our insurance companies have been able to deny people access to affordable care because of a preexisting condition. We haven't addressed that yet, but we will and we must. Allan from Green Bay writes, "Universal health care. I need affordable medical insurance." Rhonda, from Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, "Our middle-class in-

come cannot support the increase in medical premiums, copays and deductibles. What will be done for the middle class?"

The SCHIP bill is a great start. It's aimed at ensuring the children of our Nation, those who are most at risk of going without, become healthy once again.

What kind of Nation are we if we don't care for our own children? Our children, after all, we are dependent on their future. I thank you for listening.

THE REPUBLICAN VISION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. SESSIONS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for allowing us to be on the floor this evening to talk about very important issues.

And of course the House of Representatives, in recess right now, is beginning to prepare for the funeral for our colleague, JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia, who passed away. Today, our colleagues came to the floor one by one to not only acknowledge the service that JO ANN DAVIS gave to the United States of America, but also in her representation of her congressional district JO ANN will be missed. JO ANN courageously fought cancer. JO ANN courageously went back home day after day, week after week, after serving the United States Congress, making sure that she talked about those things which she did in her job and her representation of people from Virginia, but perhaps more importantly, with the strength and character and courage that JO ANN, even in the midst of adversity, brought to this body was an inspiration to Republicans and Democrats alike. It is with a heavy heart that we all will miss her, and we say to her family, how much they know they will miss her, too, and to her constituents, they were well served. Mr. Speaker, we will miss JO ANN DAVIS from Virginia.

Mr. Speaker, tonight I come to the floor of the House of Representatives to talk about the things which I believe are important for so many people to understand, not just about what is happening here in Washington, DC between the two parties, the Republican Party and the Democrat Party, as we talk about public policy issues that are demanding on both parties, and certainly our President and the American people who want to, and do, recognize that America's greatest days lie in our future, but rather, not just understanding the philosophies which are talked about here, but they want to know more about them. What would those policies lead to? And tonight it is my intent, with several of my Republican colleagues, to talk about the Republican vision, the Republican vision that would be of a smaller, smarter,

commonsense government versus the Democrat agenda, which is ineffective, wasteful and intrusive government.

The Republican Party for so many years has been really the party of the free enterprise system, the free enterprise system which has made America the envy of the world, which has made the Republican Party and this great Nation to not only grow in stature, but to provide dreams, dreams to Americans and dreams for people around the world.

Mr. Speaker, just in March of this year, the Financial Times out of London put forth a pretty interesting editorial where they talked about that the EU, now 25 combined nations of the EU has a GDP that equals that of the United States of America, or at least where the United States of America was 25 years ago; meaning that Europe consolidated all of their resources to the EU, the European Union, to these 25 nations, and when they combine all that they have equal that of the United States GDP 25 years ago.

What is interesting is that they also look at the amount of spending that would take place within their medical system and within research and development in medicine, and both those lag 25 years behind the United States.

The United States of America has a strong and vibrant system, the free enterprise system, as a result of not just the United States Congress and tax cuts and making sure that we have the greatest health care system in the world, but it comes as a result of what you're going to hear tonight of a public policy that is enunciated from a Republican vision. And certainly, as we look at what has made America great, you would want to look at, well, why has Europe lagged so far behind? I mean, after all, Europe could do the exact same things that America does. They have education. They have wonderful people. They have innovate ideas and opportunities. I would submit to you it is because of the public policy. And the public policy that they have in Europe really has three basic tenets that are entirely different than the United States has, our free enterprise system. And that was pretty much enunciated by what you saw tonight; we're talking about health care, where it's a State-run program. This is what the Democratic Party is pushing for their public policy. They want a State-run, single-payer health care system, just like Europe.

We also see rules and regulations. Europe is completely covered up with rules and regulations that tell not only employers but also employees exactly how they will be treated. Forget the free enterprise system, forget innovativeness, forget the new opportunities that people might have to bring new products and services. You've got to look up the union rule book; you've got to find out what you can do.

And lastly, the third tenet that separates the United States of America from the European model is taxation.

Taxes began as a battle point under Ronald Reagan here in this country. And we recognized that back under Ronald Reagan, and the President recognized it, that our taxes were not just too high, they were stifling innovativeness and the free enterprise system. They were stifling the ability that we had to grow our free enterprise system in favor of giving the money to the government, to grow the size of government. And as our President, Ronald Reagan, said, he hoped that he would change that to where America once again would be the shining city on the hill. In fact, that did take place. As we cut taxes, as we became prepared for the future way back when Ronald Reagan was President to be prepared today, and for the last few years, for America to propel itself forward.

Mr. Speaker, the Financial Times was right when they said in March that the European Union could not compete against the United States economically because of the three tenets that make the EU different, and that is, high taxes, more rules and regulations, and single-payer system for health care.

Tonight, you are going to hear members of the Republican Party talk about how that is virtually exactly what the Democrat Party agenda is for this great Nation. And tonight you're going to hear Republicans talk about smaller, smarter, commonsense government whereby we not only balance budgets, where we have tax reform, where we have health care that works on behalf of people to where we can maintain the greatest health care system in the world. We will talk about agriculture; the gentleman from the great State of Oregon (Mr. WALDEN) is here to do that. We will talk about intelligence and homeland security. And lastly, we intend to talk about education.

It is with great honor tonight that I am joined by a dear colleague who is from the State of Oregon, the gentleman from Oregon, and I would yield to him at this time.

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Representative SESSIONS, I appreciate your comments tonight about the differences between our parties, Republicans versus Democrats; but moreover, the vision for this country. Because I think at the end of the day Americans want us to come together with a vision that will produce jobs, that will let Americans keep more of what they earn, that will do something to protect our various resources and allow us to be competitive internationally.

I heard your comments about our competitiveness versus the European Union, and I am no economist, but I did spend a little time over there this spring. And, you know, they're headed down this path of higher taxes in some countries, and other countries have figured out they can't compete with higher taxes and they can't compete with very short work weeks, and they're actually trying to reform to be more like the United States.

Mr. SESSIONS. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. I would be happy to yield.

Mr. SESSIONS. I thank the gentleman.

You know, an example of this might be the recent election that we saw in France. And I'm going to let you amplify that, but as we in America looked at France, and just in the past few years as we looked at a closed system that they have to where they're not only having to have people to come through immigration to their country, they are not able to grow their economy, to be able to bring them into their economy so that they can be real positives. It's a closed system.

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What we have seen is how the French people changed their government as a result of that. America still is the big dream. I think the French understand that.

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. I appreciate that. America is a great country with a great future if we don't allow it to get messed up in these Halls. We have a great opportunity ahead of us, I believe. I certainly think when you see what is happening in some European capitals, some are good things and then there are some questionable things. In some of these areas they realized their tax rates are much too high. All you have to do is go back and look at Ireland that went ahead after many decades of stagnant economy and then did a major tax reform or reduction and all of a sudden its economy is blossoming. They are creating jobs. They are attracting companies to locate in Ireland.

I guess that is what troubles me a bit about what I see happening here in the new Democrat majority is they are looking at how do we raise taxes, which I don't think is the way to go. I think hardworking Americans deserve to keep more of what they earn. Certainly that has been my philosophy and how I have voted here. I think that the outcome is clear. If you look at when President Kennedy cut the capital gains tax rate, revenues went up to the Federal Government. Bill Clinton understood it. He cut capital gains rate. Revenues went up to the Federal Government. Republicans cut the capital gains rate. Revenues went up to the Federal Government. The new majority, the Democrats say, We may just let that expire. We may raise it. We may raise all these taxes. I think the effect will be very harsh on our economy and revenues to the Federal Government will probably go down.

Mr. SESSIONS. Exactly what the gentleman is talking about, the newest word out today in the Wall Street Journal, last week the Bureau of Labor Statistics released new figures, 110,000 jobs created in September of this year.

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. 110,000 new jobs.

Mr. SESSIONS. September 2007 is the 49th consecutive month of job growth,

setting a new record for the longest uninterrupted expansion of the U.S. labor market. There is more good news. No surprise. We also learned that the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office said the Federal deficit came in at \$161 billion for the just-completed 2007 year, down significantly from \$248 billion the year before, meaning that we are following exactly what the gentleman from Oregon is talking about. We are following through to make sure that with these tax cuts that not only do people have jobs, but the government increases the amount of revenue it has.

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. I am glad you made the point about the declining deficits and the increasing revenues to the Federal Government. This Federal Government has never been richer. It has never had more of our tax dollars than it has today. The issue here is how do you control spending. I think that Wall Street Journal editorial and column went on to say today that, Look out, because there are all these new spending programs being put on the desk.

I met with a group this weekend in my district and I said, You know, if you smoke, if you drink, if you are born, if you die, if you have capital gains, dividend income, if you just work, look out because the taxes on you are most likely going to go up. That is what we see here, as you know, on the farm bill that recently was approved by this House. I reluctantly at the end voted against it because it abrogates 55 international tax treaties we have on how our companies and other international companies are dealt with. Those are treaties we have. And this House, no notice to anyone here, I think we learned the night before the vote, suddenly wanted to raise taxes \$78 billion and abrogate all these international treaties America has entered into. Not renegotiate them. Just blow them apart.

And I don't think that is the way to go. We hear more about this every day. It is pick on this group or that group or the next group, set one American against another American and try to leverage one group and wedge one group and engage in all this political posturing to grow government.

Mr. SESSIONS. The point that the gentleman from Oregon is making is so true, and it seems like that we are always in gear for an election. The fact of the matter is that every 2 years there is an election, but now, the year before the election, we have engaged in so much bashing of not only America but really how great America is.

What the gentleman talks about here would also be true with trade, about how America has found a way to find trading partners all around the globe to reduce tariffs. And if there is one thing, and the gentleman knows that I am a big scouter with the Boy Scouts of America. I teach merit badge classes back home. All of my scouters learn right off the bat, what is a tariff? And they respond, it is a tax. We are reduc-

ing taxes and allowing countries all around the globe to be able to compete so that they better their own economic circumstances and end poverty in their own country. This is part of what that overall plan is.

Agriculture plays a key role in this.

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. A huge role.

Mr. SESSIONS. The American is a farmer making sure that not only what we produce in this country that we get that opportunity for it, but making sure the rest of the world has that same opportunity. So this is where these trade bills which are languishing right now in the House of Representatives, the clock has already started. Please let everyone know back home if you can, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN), that we need to continue these trade bills to make sure that American agriculture and our manufacturing pushes our products overseas and we take their products which helps not only these countries but also all of humanity.

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. As the gentleman well knows, the trade bills that are pending open their markets to our goods, because our markets are all already open to their goods. This is about American manufacturers, American agriculture being able to sell what we make or raise here into other markets in a fair way.

I met with a wheat marketing group on Friday morning in my district in the town of Moro, Sherman County. And wheat there, they had just sold a barge full of U.S. soft white wheat from the Northwest for \$11 a bushel. I stutter because it is a record amount, \$11 a bushel. Why? Well, there are droughts in Australia and elsewhere, enormous demand for this product on the world market. Where they have suffered year after year when there have been gluts on the market, in this year, world economy, effects of agriculture around the globe, international trade policy being open, they are going to get up to \$11 for their wheat. Now the market has come down a little bit, \$300 for barley right now. These are tremendous prices that will help American farmers because it needs to be sold to countries overseas that are consuming it in enormous amounts.

So we benefit from trade if these agreements are fair, if they are negotiated properly, and if they are enforced correctly. Now, let me give you an example in my part of the world that is really troubling and that this Congress needs to do something about, and that is the issue of illegal logging. It ties into the whole issue of the environment and how I think Republicans want to take care of the environment that we have especially in our forests. There is an enormous amount of illegal logging going on overseas to satisfy the wood demand that we have right here in the United States and elsewhere. But we are the big importers in many cases.

According to the G-8 illegal logging dialogue which happened in Berlin in

June of this year, 40 percent of illegally cut timber is attributable to imports to the G-8 countries, and United States is responsible for a quarter of those imports. Now, what is going on around the world I don't think most Americans are aware of. I wasn't. The Washington Post did a terrific story on it. I have now read other studies. Brazil, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Russia appeared to supply, but not necessarily from all their own forests, a great majority of this illegal timber. There may be logs on the books that say, Don't cut here. But that doesn't stop rogue provinces and illegal operators from doing that. Why does that matter? Because here in the United States, this Congress and this government has clamped down on our domestic production of timber off our forested lands, especially in the West, 80 percent reduction since 1990. Meanwhile, wild fires ravage America's forests.

I tell you, Congressman SESSIONS, if Theodore Roosevelt were alive today, he created these forest reserves in 1905, he would be rolling over in his grave to watch how mismanaged they are. We had over 8 million acres go up in fire this year, nearly a record. We are on track for a record each of these last few years. It costs the taxpayers of America \$1.2 billion so far and we are not done with the fire season, so far to extinguish these blazes.

Mr. SESSIONS. Tonight we are talking about the Republican vision versus the Democrat agenda. Smaller, smarter, commonsense government versus ineffective, wasteful, intrusive government. Forestry may be one of those issues that would fit right in here.

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. It absolutely is one of those issues. When Republicans were in control of this assembly, and I am sorry to sound partisan on this, but it is just the way it is in the clash of philosophies on this particular issue, while we had some bipartisan help, I chaired the Forestry Subcommittee in the House Resources Committee. We held hearing after hearing after hearing on these issues. We marked up and passed legislation, some of which made it all the way into law, some of which was bipartisan and passed this assembly.

But unfortunately, today, the Speaker of the House, the majority leader of the House, the Democratic caucus chair, the Natural Resources Committee chair and the Rules Committee chairwoman all voted against, for example, the Healthy Forest Restoration Act, which did become law, which allowed some thinning of our forest, not as much as I would like to see but helped streamline it. The whole leadership of this Democrat Congress voted against that in the House. So it makes it almost impossible to go to the next step to help stop these wild fires from ravaging our forests, to get to commonsense management of our timber.

I want to show an example here of a fire that occurred in my district. This

is the example of the Egglely fire. The Egglely fire burned about 140,000 acres of America's grasslands and forest lands out in Harney County, 140,000 acres. Do you see the devastation? These two children are the grandchildren of the county judge there, a Democrat, Steve Grasty, and they are standing there as a stark example of the future that they are now inheriting. Some of this area burned before. Some of this area has been basically made off limits. We think you ought to go in there and remove the burned dead trees while they still have value and restart a new forest sooner. We had legislation that passed the Republican House last year, it was bipartisan, that would have gotten that going. Unfortunately, the Senate never picked it up.

Mr. SESSIONS. So the opportunity to go in and clear, the opportunity to allow this burned timber to be harvested would mean that bugs and all the things which might find a way to eat this timber or weaken it, rather than clearing it and getting started again, is in the process of decay, not health at this time.

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. I will tell you what is worse. We have a lot of cattle ranchers out there who have permits to graze on some of this ground. Because of the intensity of this fire, it may be one year or two before the grasses come back and they will be allowed to graze. They are having now today, literally today, with the price of hay being what it is and the demand, they are having to liquidate their herds. Some of them may go completely out of business all because these lands aren't being properly managed.

Now, for our friends who are concerned about global warming and greenhouse gas emissions, I serve on the Select Committee on Energy Independence and Climate Change. A fire that burns as intensely or more so than this one probably emits 100 tons of greenhouse gas emission for every acre, 100 tons per acre. This burned 140,000 acres. A good, green, healthy-growing forest like a lot of them we have in the Northwest will sequester between 4 and 6 tons of carbon per acre. So wouldn't you think that this Congress would be focusing on doing better management on our forests? And yet the subcommittee that I used to chair has now been compressed in with the National Parks, Forests and Public Lands Subcommittee into one, has held one hearing in 9½ months on this issue. They have marked up no legislation dealing with this issue. Nothing is happening of consequence, except taxpayers are spending \$1.2 billion to fight these blazes. The future these kids are looking at is a long way off. I like my forests green and healthy, not black. But some of the groups out there who appeal even thinning in these areas issued a statement recently that said burned forests are healthy forests.

Now, I suppose in the enormous scope of time, they grow back. We know that.

But I don't think burned forests are the policy that Americans want us to have when it comes to their forests. It doesn't work well for habitat, for water quality and watersheds.

Meanwhile, I'll bet we don't cut a stick of this, or very little of it. Instead, because this will get litigated because we won't change the law here which is what needs to happen, even though you and I would do it and you have been helpful in these efforts, instead we will proudly go to the local store and get our furniture made in China from illegally harvested wood from countries that have no environmental laws where the forests are extraordinarily important around the equator to sequester carbon.

□ 2045

I don't understand the ineffective, wasteful vision of the other side, when I believe no land manager in America would allow this to occur and wouldn't go in right afterward. Counties don't do it. Private foresters don't allow this to occur. They get in right away. I have been out on sites, and they get in right away, clean it up. Our State of Oregon has a very progressive Forest Practices Act. But they don't wait. They don't wait a year. It will be a year before they are done writing their plan, and then it will be subject to appeal and litigation, most likely for another year.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I remember when the fires at Yellowstone were taking place, and I remember seeing how many of our friends who were environmentalists said, let it burn, let it burn, and yet I remember seeing the carnage that took place with wildlife and the millions of animals who not only lost their home but then would be thrust out in the cold as a result of the huge fire, when in fact I had learned from my being an Eagle Scout, and the gentleman from Oregon is an Eagle Scout, we learned in our forestry merit badges that healthy forests are those where you can come in and clear out those things that were from years of use, and come and clean the forest, and you could come and take sections so that you made sure that any fire did not destroy the whole thing. They would come and cut the forest and work with Mother Nature and then re-plant.

Mr. Speaker, in the last 5 or 6 years, and you can look at any National Geographic or perhaps the Discovery Channel and see where the people, the companies that grow trees, they have healthy forests. I think the healthiest forests are where private people and private companies own the trees, as opposed to the government, because the government has a policy of ineffective, wasteful and intrusive government in managing our forests.

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. The other thing we learned as Scouts, and, like you say, we are both Eagle Scouts, what has always stuck with me when it comes to how we manage our resources

was a very simple line: "Leave your campsite better than you found it." That, I think, is a great guiding principle for those of us in this body, not only for natural resource policy, but for this country, to leave it better than you found it.

Mr. Speaker, let me just suggest that we burned more than 8 million acres this year, and 5.7 million acres, which is our new average that we are burning every year in this country, is an area larger than the entire State of New Jersey. We throw these big numbers around in Washington, the bureaucrats do it all the time, and we do from time to time. Think about every year you're burning an area of your national forest and grasslands and other areas larger than the size of the State of New Jersey.

Let me tell you what just happened in my district of eastern Oregon. I have 70,000 square miles of terrific eastern Oregon. Three of the last mills have been put either on indefinite closure or closure in very remote areas where they are surrounded by overstocked forests that need all this work, and they are some of the last, if not the last mills in these communities, and 198 people in those three communities have lost their jobs. That is 2.6 percent of nonfarm payroll.

Now the State's economists, the certified smart economic folks, said, I wonder what that impact of those 198 jobs would be if it was spread over 2.6 percent of nonfarm payroll over the Portland metropolitan area. So a standard city in America, what do you think that would be? It would be the loss of 26,400 jobs.

So all across the rural West in small communities where the mills close, there's barely a yawn or a whimper in this Congress about what is happening, and yet the prior forest service chiefs and the current one will tell you our country and our forests and our ability to manage those forests cannot be sustained if we lose the infrastructure to do the management.

That is precisely what is happening today, for a lot of reasons, some of it market conditions, but part of the market conditions is an 80 percent reduction in the timber harvest on Federal land, an inability to go in and even clean up after a fire in less than 2 years on Federal land.

I was just out on the GW fire, not named for me, even though it's my initials, GW fire outside of Black Butte Ranch, Sisters, Oregon. It burned, I think, 7,000 acres, something like that, or 8,000. Where the forest service had done thinning, the fire dropped to the ground and they put it out. That is part of what we were trying to accomplish with our Healthy Forest Restoration Act that President Bush signed into law, that we as Republicans wrote, with bipartisan help.

The thinning project, where it dropped to the ground, the trees are all green around it, was held up by environmentalists for let's say 5 years in

litigation, 2001 until, I think, 2006, and finally the forest service prevailed and they worked the sale. They thinned out this overstock stand, and a fire hit it and it went out, and the trees are still green.

Mr. Speaker, I think that what Americans want is for us to manage, to be good stewards of this land and this resource. To do what is happening today without reform is ineffective, it's wasteful, it's intrusive. Today, 45 percent of the forest service budget goes to fighting fire. It used to be 15. That is 45 percent goes to fighting fire. A nearly like amount goes to paperwork to process the various activities they do, rather than on the ground, doing what they are trained to do. We tie them up in court, in litigation, in all this process and all this stuff.

We have got to fix this problem, and if we do, when we passed the Forest Emergency Recovery and Research Act in the House last year by a big bipartisan margin, it would have generated, I think, \$140 million over 10 years to the Federal Treasury in net new revenues. It would have helped pay for cleanup and restoration effort.

We can do these things, but this leadership today, they voted against it, from the Speaker on down. They put people in charge of the committees who were opposed to us every step of the way.

So I would tell my colleague from Texas, elections have consequences, and the changes are being played out today as more and more firefighters are called upon to put out these blazes, as cattle ranchers in eastern Oregon and around the West are driven off their allotments, having to liquidate their herds or trying to get disaster help in, when it doesn't have to be that way. It doesn't have to be that way.

We can work smarter, we can fix these problems, and in so doing, we can improve the environment. Do you think this is great habitat for anything other than bugs and woodpeckers, which need habitat; I'm not downplaying that. We have seen case after case. In Colorado, the Hayman fire. After that enormous fire, the Denver watershed was deluged with mud and dead animal debris and dead fish as the runoff occurred. We are always going to have fire. We need to be smart on how we manage our forests so we can manage our fires. Get it back in balance with nature.

Mr. Speaker, this Congress has held one hearing, taken no legislative action, zero, zip, zilch, let it burn, don't fix it afterwards, and we will just get our imported wood from illegal logging and furniture from China. It doesn't make sense. It needs to change.

Mr. SESSIONS. I thank the gentleman from Oregon, who not only has persuasively brought forth arguments that he sees in his home State of Oregon, but also who amplified the Republican vision, smaller, smarter, commonsense government, almost something you can find in a Scout hand-

book, or a merit badge, versus the Democrat agenda, which is ineffective, wasteful, intrusive government, allowing not only for thousands of people to lose their job, but mismanagement of the natural resources that has been given to this great country that Lewis & Clark found out so much about, that we tout as not only the Teddy Roosevelt answer to the way America would be, but also how we are going to bring her on in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Oregon not only for his time, for his dedication, but also for the things which he believes in.

I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I want to make one other comment. You're going to see a lot of discussion in this Congress about what to do about global warming. I serve on both the Energy and Commerce Committee and the Energy and Air Quality Committee and the Select Committee on Global Climate Change, and I want to do what is right for the environment. But there are going to be competing viewpoints. The two philosophies are going to collide here.

There are some on the Democrat leadership side who think a carbon tax is where America should go, a .50 cent a gallon increase in taxes on your gasoline. That is their vision. It's \$50 a ton carbon emissions from power plants, higher taxes, higher fees on ratepayers in America or drivers in America. I don't think it has to be that way, by the way. I think there are ways we can invest in research and development and get new technologies and incent Americans to do the right thing, not punish them with higher taxes, because Europe is kind of going that direction. They are looking at a cap and trade model in Germany. They rolled it out 5 years and the price of electricity in Germany went up 25 percent. They miscalculated. Guess who got the bill? The ratepayers did. Now they are going to try and change that. They think they have got a little different thing worked out.

But I would rather invest in research, development in new technologies for new fuels. I was out at the dedication of an ethanol plant in my district. If we can ever get to cellulose, we can use woody biomass and we can use things like algae to scrub carbon out and to produce fuel. It is amazing what lurks out there on the horizon. But we don't have to punish ratepayers, I don't think, at least. And yet, you watch, that is what is coming.

Think back to Jimmy Carter in the seventies. He put on his sweater, sat by the fireplace in the White House. The sweater thing may be there, but you aren't going to get to have a fire. You're just going to shiver in the cold because you won't be able to afford your electricity or your power because they are going to drive up the costs so high that people are going to say "I can't afford it." And then they will race back here to get more money from

the government to help bring down the cost of heating.

Mr. Speaker, it doesn't have to be that way. We ought to have incentives, not punishment. There are ways to get this done. There is a great story in the Wall Street Journal today about big national companies that are beginning to ask about carbon footprint of their suppliers, and Americans are beginning to say maybe you ought to put a fluorescent light bulb in. If you put it in five of your most used lights, you can save an enormous amount of energy. It's a good thing for your bottom line, and it reduces carbon. Keep your air up in your tires, you reduce carbon emissions and you increase your gas mileage.

These are things Americans will do because we want a good, healthy environment. But do you want to have a 20 percent increase in your electricity bill this winter? Do you want 50 cents more on top of a gallon of gas? And who gets the money? The Federal Government. You could have a trillion dollars that way in a heartbeat and it will all be hidden; it will be phased in, come out of your power bills, you will never know it happened. And the big spenders around here are just licking their chops.

I don't think it has to be that way. I think we can have smaller, smarter commonsense government that uses market principles and incent the people to do the right thing, not ineffective, wasteful and intrusive government that just costs taxpayers more and more and more.

Mr. SESSIONS. I want to thank the gentleman from Oregon. There's only one thing you didn't mention, and that's the BTU tax that many of the new leaders of the United States Congress today, the new Democrat majority, right there with the BTU tax. They're back. What they are really saying is pretty simple: Don't use this electricity; sit in the dark. Don't go create something that is good or better, don't find a way to have less emissions; go and tax things.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for being here today. We have been joined also tonight by the gentleman, who is a dear friend of mine from Iowa, Mr. KING. We are talking tonight, Mr. KING, about the Republican agenda, smaller, smarter, commonsense government, versus the Democrat agenda, which is ineffective, wasteful and intrusive government. And perhaps the thing which I identify most, and particularly when I see you, is to talk about taxes and how important tax reform has been.

Mr. Speaker, it has been said a long time ago that the Republican party is here as the bull dogs for the taxpayer, to make sure that efficiency occurs, to make sure that the original mission statement of what a program might be for, to balance a budget is important. I don't know if the gentleman heard or not, but the Bureau of Labor Statistics released new job figures of 110,000 net

new jobs in September. September 2007 is the 49th consecutive month of job growth, setting a new record for the longest uninterrupted expansion of the U.S. labor market.

□ 2100

Since August of 2003, our economy has created more than 8.1 million jobs and today has the lowest unemployment that sits at 4.7 percent. There is more good news. You see, if you have a country that produces great dreams for people and they can go make things happen, like jobs, we also learned last week that the nonpartisan CBO, Congressional Budget Office, said the Federal deficit came in at \$161 billion for the just-completed fiscal year, down from \$248 billion the year before. I think we are headed in the right direction. I yield to the gentleman from Iowa.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for organizing this Special Order this evening and pulling together a lot of the thought process regarding the Republican vision versus the Democrat agenda.

Looking at the 40 consecutive months of job growth, I would take us back to why we didn't have job growth before this began in August 2003. I would like to frame this for when the Bush Presidency came in in January 2001. That was in the middle of the bursting of the dot-com bubble. We had an economy that was really a false economy. It was a speculation on the ability to store and transfer information more efficiently than ever before, but it had not been corrected for.

Well, the dot-com bubble was in the middle of bursting in January 2001. By September 11, 2001, the financial center was attacked, America was attacked and the Pentagon was attacked and they had the plane that crashed in Pennsylvania. This was another attack on our finances. This was a double-whammy cloud that came over the very new Bush administration.

So we came forward with two rounds of tax cuts. We asked for \$545 billion worth of tax cuts over that span of time. We got a pretty good chunk of that. In two rounds, those tax cuts have been what produced this thriving economy that shows a stock market that sets new highs, and also this job growth of 49 consecutive months of job growth.

Mr. SESSIONS. As I recall, we spent at least one or two of those elections talking about how the stock market was down and how people had lost their savings and their pensions were in trouble, and how all of these terrible things were happening, cataclysmic events.

Then along came a market-based idea which we had known and understood not just from watching President Kennedy who cut capital gains and President Reagan to talk about you cut taxes you get more money because of invasion, isn't it true what this

brave Republican Congress did is they cut taxes because they wanted to spur the American economy for people to have jobs and be competitive with the world, and so families would have an opportunity to keep more of what they made rather than giving it to the government.

Mr. KING of Iowa. What the gentleman says is exactly true. Believing in the free market system and allowing people to keep more of what they earn, allowing them to make those decisions, that was entirely the philosophy behind the tax cuts. It has proven to be true throughout all these years, and it continues to grow this economy in the face of some very poor messages coming out of this Congress. Thankfully, not much of what has been attempted on the other side has been accomplished.

I think a strong market indicates that Wall Street doesn't believe that the Democrats are going to accomplish very many of the things they would like to do.

To go back to the tax component, and I don't know how I overlooked the corporate corruption which was also a component, Enron, Global Crossing, some of those things, the accounting things that were going on. I recall some people made a lot of money out of Global Crossing. Some went to jail; some didn't. Some are supporting Presidential campaigns. We ought to take a look at those folks and how that worked.

But I would like to take this back to a philosophy that I would ask the American people to think about, that is, Ronald Reagan once said: what you tax, you get less of. He also said what you subsidize you get more of. But what you tax, you get less of. And so the Federal Government, in its, I'll say lack of wisdom, places a tax on all productivity in America. And Uncle Sam has the first lien on all productivity in America. That is our Federal income tax, personal, corporate, capital gains, the tax on your pension, the alternative minimum tax, the whole list of all of the Federal taxes, Social Security tax is another one. That list of taxes is taxes on productivity. Interest income, dividend income, all are measures of our productivity. The Federal Government has the first lien on those taxes.

What I want to do, what a lot of us in this Congress want to do is adopt a national sales tax, a national consumption tax, H.R. 25, the FAIR Tax. I will say this: everything good that anyone's tax proposal does in this Congress, it does all of them in one package. That is not just my opinion. That is the opinion of a lot of economists and some very highly placed, respectable people.

But to put that in place, we have to take the tax off of production and put it on consumption. We will have far more production. The estimates of some of the top economists go from a growth in our economy of maybe 8 to 9 percent up to 33, 35 percent growth in

our economy. But nobody thinks there will be less growth; we think there will be more growth.

But changing the dynamic way we tax, no tax on production, earn all you want to earn, save all you want to save and produce all you want to produce, there is a reward for that because then you get to decide when you pay taxes, and that will be when you consume.

Another thing that is an important component of this, and Alexander Tyler once said that when a democracy realizes, and I will argue we are a constitutional Republic, but he referenced a democracy, when people realize they can vote themselves benefits from the public treasury, on that day a democracy ceases to exist.

We have a number, maybe 44 percent, of Americans don't pay any income tax. That number has been growing. It is 2 or 3 or 4 years old, so I am going to suppose that number is bigger and maybe it is over 50 percent. If half of the people realize they can push their Congressmen and go to the polls and elect people that will vote them benefits out of the public treasury, then soon we are in a situation where that half of the people don't want to work. They don't want to produce any more. So they sit back. They were in the safety net that was created by the nanny state, and now that safety net has been cranked up to the elevation of a hammock, and there they sit, not producing, just sitting not being productive individuals in this society.

Mr. SESSIONS. And aren't we in that circumstance as we speak now with the SCHIP, which is children's health care, where this new Democrat majority has brought forth a bill that, among other things, more than half of the people who would be new to this SCHIP bill would be people who are already on insurance, who already have private insurance, and yet they are demanding, no, no, we have to add them to the government side.

What we are looking at here is a \$6 billion program that Republicans invented because we believe in helping children because we know if you take care of children, immunize them and do things when they are children, then when they are adults, they not only do better in school they grow up and are healthier.

We are taking this from a \$6 billion program a year to a \$13 billion program. And to fund it, it would require, under the Democrat majority plan, 20 million new smokers to pay for the darn program. Is that what you are talking about where you all of a sudden shift from people who figure out you can get the government to pay for everything, a government-run health care program?

Mr. KING of Iowa. That is exactly what I am talking about. People decide they want to be dependent on the taxpayers. They think it is cheaper for them to let somebody else pay for those services. This is a perfect example.

I was in the Iowa senate when we shaped the SCHIP policy and supported it at 200 percent of poverty. There are waivers in there, and I can speak specifically to Iowa's numbers. They vary across the country depending on the waivers and what the States have decided to do.

I think it was New Jersey that said no matter what the President says, they are going to grant SCHIP benefits to 450 percent of poverty. In Iowa right now it is 200 percent of poverty, and there are 20 percent that are waivers. So a family of four making \$51,625 a year qualifies. That is mom, dad and two kids. The kids qualify for federally funded health insurance programs making that kind of money.

The bill passed off the House, this Pelosi-led Congress, was 400 percent of poverty. That meant that same family of four in Iowa that qualifies at \$51,625 would qualify at over \$103,000. Well, in the Senate it got negotiated down to 300 percent of poverty. So in my State that is still over \$77,000 for a family of four.

So you have to decide. There will be 2.1 million kids that I will say will be bribed off their own private health insurance by Federal tax dollars. They will say: go on the Federal plan.

They will never be able to do that one again because there will be such a high percentage of the kids that you can never reach into that universe. I don't know if there will be any kids on privately funded health insurance if this SCHIP bill passes. That percentage goes up well over 80 percent of the kids that will be on federally funded health insurance, and there will be companies that are providing health insurance for their employees and the family, and they will take a look at this and decide I am paying them less than \$83,000, which is a commonly used number, so why don't we just offer health insurance to the employee and their spouse or significant other, as the case may be, and just say we don't provide it for children because the Federal Government does.

This bill takes us to the tipping point where it slides over the other side. It is the cornerstone for socialized medicine. It closes the gap, just a technicality to pick up the remaining percentage of kids that would be on private insurance.

By the way, here in this Chamber, September 22, 1993, President Clinton spoke to a joint session on health care. He laid out a lot of this plan which we know now was Hillary's plan, and she began her hearings and her secret meetings after that, Harry and Louise shut that down, along with Phil Gramm and a good number of other people who believe in freedom and private health care.

But Clinton came back and said if we can't get this done in one shot, we are going to do this incrementally. And the next step for full, federally funded coverage for children in America is to go and lower Medicare from 65 down to 55.

If we do that, the people in the middle, SCHIP is covering some kids up to age 25 today. So the people in the middle ages, 25 to 55, they are the ones paying for their own and they would be paying for everybody else's.

Mr. SESSIONS. My guess is they would call that the doughnut hole then.

Mr. KING of Iowa. That is the group of volatile people that will realize they are paying for everybody else's health care, and they are paying for their own. They will say, put me on it, too, I'm paying for it anyway, and then we will have a Canadian plan. That is what I see coming.

Mr. SESSIONS. Where would the Canadians go if America has a single payer, Hillary-style health care plan? Where would the Canadians go when they need real medicine?

Mr. KING of Iowa. I would think they would be worried about that right now. Their Prime Minister came to the United States for melanoma surgery. There are entire companies that have been spawned in Canada who are in the business of setting up the transportation and the access to U.S. health care for the people that are very sick or maybe die in line in Canada that can come down to the United States.

One of the good insurance programs that you can get up there is being able to have your heart surgery taken care of by flying you from Ottawa or Montreal or Quebec down to Houston for heart surgery. That is the Canadian package. There is no place to go if we don't have an American plan.

And by the way, the research and development, the innovation, the things that make us the best in the world in health care, disappear too because the profit incentive is taken out. Then we get mediocre along with the rest of the world. That ends up reducing our quality of life, and it costs American lives.

□ 2115

Mr. SESSIONS. The gentleman, as he makes the point about how important it is that we have a market-based, free enterprise system health care, is so true.

If you look at America and leukemia versus Europe, America's survival rate is 50 percent; Europe's is 35 percent. Prostate cancer, America's survival rate is 81.2 percent; France, 61.7; England, 44.3 percent.

My gosh, it just tells you that what America has is not only the greatest health care system in the world, and one that is of envy, but one that produces results. And of course it is more expensive, and of course it costs money, but if the free enterprise system would support this because we don't tax the ability that people have to buy their health care, which is what the Democrat party mandate is, that you've got to tax people that don't belong in a corporation, then what it means is that you've got a bunch of people that can't afford it.

So that's another point that comes back to your tax element about health

care. You should not have to pay after-tax money on health care. It should all be pre-tax, but the Democrats insist that, if you don't work for a corporation, you should not get this opportunity because it's not something that you negotiated with with a labor contract.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I do have a bill that I've introduced in this Congress, whose number has escaped me, that provides full deductibility for health insurance purchased by individuals, and that's been slow in the coming. It's been lagging. It's rooted back in wage and price controls of World War II. When they froze those wages and prices, then employers figured out that if they couldn't give a raise, they could give a benefit. So health insurance became the benefit that got added on because wage dollars couldn't go up.

When that happened, we built a foundation of employer-based health insurance in this country, and now it becomes the politics of holding on to that employer base. That's why there's not the flexibility that we need to have there.

But an entrepreneur, an individual that starts up a business, a ma and pa store, they have to pay some of the highest premiums because they don't get into a group plan, and they can deduct 100 percent of the health insurance for their employees but not for themselves.

There's something really wrong with that. That needs to be fixed. I would take this thing on over to a lot more freedom, and whenever you give up tax dollars, some of them provide you security like through the military, through those services that can't be provided any other way. Transportation is one of them. But at some point, as you peel out the tax dollars and hand them over into that hand of Uncle Sam, they represent your freedom that you're granting over there to the Federal Government. The Federal Government then decides who's going to be able to exercise their freedom at your expense.

I want to feed my share of this and hold up my end of this freedom, but I don't want those dollars to go to discourage people from holding up their end of this load. That's the difference between Republicans and Democrats.

We're all sociologists here in this chamber. We're here trying to figure out how do people react towards certain stimuli or lack of stimuli, raising taxes, raising regulations, imposing criminal penalties and prison sentences. Everything in between, across the spectrum are all things that we should be analyzing and having some understanding of how people will react.

But we understand the motive for earn, save and invest, and we are philanthropists. We give at church. We give to charities. All of us in this country do, more on our side than the other side statistically, but if you let people keep their own money, they'll also understand a good place to put it out of the goodness of their heart.

Mr. SESSIONS. I thank the gentleman not only for being here this evening but a chance to join the gentleman from Oregon and, of course, Texan here.

Mr. Speaker, tonight we've had an opportunity to talk about the Republican vision and how important the Republican vision is for a smaller, smarter, common sense government, versus a Democrat agenda, ineffective, wasteful and intrusive government.

I want to thank my colleagues for being here this evening. Mr. Speaker, we appreciate your time. We know that the people of the good State of Tennessee have sent you here to do the people's work, and that's what we're here to do, same also, for good public policy.

PROTECTING PEOPLE AGAINST
DISCRIMINATION BASED ON
THEIR SEXUAL ORIENTATION
AND GENDER IDENTITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MAHONEY of Florida). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, let me do what I think you cannot do under the rules and reassure your constituents in Florida that you have not become a Tennessean when they weren't looking. I believe the gentleman from Tennessee left the chair, and we do now have the gentleman from Florida in the chair.

Mr. Speaker, I want to address today a very important issue that is generating an intense discussion among a fairly small segment of people who follow things, and it seems to us it's not healthy and that we ought to have a broader discussion, both of the specific issue, which is a question of how to protect people against discrimination based on their sexual orientation and at some point I would hope their gender and their gender identity, and also how do political parties relate to those in the population who are the most passionate, the most committed and the most legitimately zealous about their feelings, often on one particular issue to the exclusion of a broader set.

Before I came to Congress in 1981, former Members, the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. Abzug), gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. Tsongas) and others, in the House filed legislation to make it illegal to discriminate against people in employment based on their sexual orientation; that is, they would have made it illegal in the same way that the 1964 Civil Rights Act made it illegal based on race, but in a different statute for a variety of reasons, for people to be fired, for people to refuse to hire people, for people to be denied promotions or in other ways discriminated against in the job based on their being gay or lesbian or bisexual. That was, and has been, the number one leg-

islative goal of gay and lesbian, bisexual people for more than 30 years.

In many States subsequent to that enactment, that introduction, laws were adopted to do that. Wisconsin was the first in 1982; Massachusetts, the State I represent, the second in 1989. Many States now have it.

As we kept that fight up in the face of a good deal of opposition and as we began to educate people as to why the prejudice against people based on our being gay or lesbian or bisexual was, in fact, invalid as a grounds for economic discrimination, movement expanded to cover people who are transgendered, people who were born into one sex physically but who strongly identify with the other sex and who, in fact, choose to live as members of the sex other than the one they were born in, often but not always having surgery to enhance that new life.

We are at a differential stage in public understanding of these issues. We've been dealing explicitly and increasingly openly with prejudice based on sexual orientation for almost 40 years, since the Stonewall Riots of 1969 and since then.

The millions of people that talk openly and to take on the prejudice against people who are transgendered is newer. It is also the case that prejudice begins with people reacting against those who are different from them in some way. People are rarely prejudiced against their clones. So we have this situation where there is more prejudice in this society today against people who are transgendered than against people who are gay and lesbian, partly because we have been working longer at dealing with the sex orientation prejudice; partly because the greater the difference, the greater the prejudice is to start, the more people fail to identify, the more they are put off by differences, especially when those differences come in matters of the greatest personal intimacy.

We should be clear that as we talk about matters of human sexuality or the human sexual characteristics we touch on the most sensitive subjects that human beings will deal with.

So where we are today is that earlier this year, after years of our introducing the bill which we call ENDA, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, to ban discrimination in employment based on sexual orientation, we added this year for the first time a provision that would also have banned discrimination based on gender identity as we have designated it, i.e., against people who are transgendered.

We began dealing with the transgender issue earlier in the context of the hate crimes legislation, and legislating against hate crimes, it's easier to do than sexual orientation. It is less intrusive, and it is easier to make the argument that assaulting people and destroying their property is wrong than it is to say that refusing to hire them is wrong. I think they're both wrong, but obviously, there is a dis-

tinction in this society. One is a serious criminal issue; one becomes civil.

We originally encountered difficulty in broadening hate crimes to include people of transgender. I first talked about that in 1999. I remember having to explain to people what we were talking about.

Recently, we were successful earlier this, under the leadership of the Speaker of the House, in getting legislation through the House that expanded the hate crime protection, not just based on sexual orientation, but based on people being transgender. The Senate followed suit; although one of the leading senators engaged in that effort noted that whereas, when the Senate voted on that dealing solely with the sexual orientation issue, there were 12 Republican supporters, this year there were only eight. Eight turned out to be just enough to get us 60 votes to break a filibuster, but there was a fourth or one-third of Republican support even on hate crimes which is the easier one.

Despite that, we thought we were in a position this year, under the leadership of the Speaker who had committed early to myself and the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN), my colleague, to bring these issues up, hate crimes first and then employment non-discrimination, we thought we had the votes to pass it.

In fact, on September 5 of this year, when the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ANDREWS), a great supporter of opposing discrimination for all sorts, had a hearing in his subcommittee on the issue, I personally spoke more about the importance of including people who were transgendered than any other witness.

I know, Mr. Speaker, that there are today people who are unhappy with my position because I believe, to get to the central point here, that we have the votes to pass a bill today in the House that would ban discrimination in employment based on sexual orientation, but sadly, we don't yet have it on gender identity. And I differ with some as to what we do about that.

But one of the problems we have today, both on this issue, and as I will discuss in a little bit in general, is people in our society, the most deeply committed, who believe that when a politician tells them an unpleasant fact, he or she must somehow be embracing that fact. Because I have been one of those who has felt the obligation to tell my friends in the transgender community that prejudice against them is greater than prejudice against gay men and lesbians for some of the reasons I talked about, I have been asked why I am so opposed to fairness for people of transgender.

I will submit for the RECORD statements that I made officially, either in committee or on the floor, two in committee and one on the floor, in September 2004, when I said on the floor of the House: Yes, there are people who are transgendered in our society, and they are sadly often victimized.