

Statistics just help us to number the dimension of HIV/AIDS in our country but every single number reflects more, reflects the life and the living with HIV/AIDS of one of our fellow citizens.

While we are far away from curing AIDS, science has made enormous progress.

Today, we can say that early and correct treatment enables people to live longer and to live with HIV/AIDS more as a chronic illness than a definitive death sentence.

Even with these opportunities, we face new challenges.

The African-American community is disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS.

According to the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, black women are 9 times more likely to die of AIDS than white women; black men in New York City are 6 times more likely to die of AIDS than white men.

This is another sign of the massive health disparities that exist in our nation. We need to work together, all of us in Congress, to address and eliminate the disparities in health and health care between the people of our country.

That is why I strongly support the National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, celebrated on February, 7.

The goal of this day is clear to all of us: We have to fight against both the stigma and the spread of HIV/AIDS in our African-American community, and I would add, in every American community.

Groups like Bronx AIDS Services and the AIDS Center of Queens County do excellent work, but we in Washington need to back them up with the right support.

This includes full funding for Ryan White, ensuring the housing needs of those afflicted are met through the HOPWA program, and eliminating the stigmas attached to the illness.

We also need to allow each community group to speak to and target those at greatest risk of exposure in the most effective ways possible.

But overall, we know that educating about and against HIV/AIDS, engaging in safe sex, and getting tested are the main elements of comprehensive prevention efforts.

Closing, I like to emphasize the importance of the National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day by quoting its goals:

Get tested to know about your HIV status. Get educated about HIV/AIDS.

Get involved in your local community.

Get treated if you are currently living with HIV.

It is these missions that we must work to achieve.

I thank the gentle lady for her resolution.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, reports have been coming out since the HIV/AIDS epidemic first surfaced in the United States more than 25 years ago and every year, they have—and continue to—report the same findings: Since the beginning, this epidemic has had—and continues to have—a disproportionate and detrimental impact on the African American community. In fact, over time, the impact of the epidemic on the Black community has gotten worse, leaving African Americans—more so than any other population group—hardest hit by HIV/AIDS at every stage of life.

Today, African Americans—who are represented in about 13 percent of the U.S. popu-

lation—account for more than 40 percent of all individuals currently living with AIDS and nearly 50 percent of all new HIV infections. More than 7 in 10 children born to women infected with HIV are African American and the AIDS case rate among African Americans is nearly ten times higher than that among whites. Additionally, African Americans account for 40 percent of all AIDS deaths. In fact, African Americans are 7 times more likely than whites to die from an AIDS-related causes.

Particularly affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic are African American women, who are represented in roughly 7 in 10 new AIDS cases among women and who are an estimated 25 times more likely than white women to be infected with HIV. In fact, in 2002, AIDS was the leading cause of death for African-American women, aged 25 to 34 years of age.

Mr. Speaker, this epidemic has and continues to kill African Americans during their most productive life years, robbing them of their opportunity to follow their dreams, pursue their destinies and contribute not only to their communities, but to our society. As a physician who has seen—first hand—what the HIV/AIDS epidemic does not only to the people it afflicts, but to their families, friends, and communities, and given the incidence and prevalence numbers, the unnecessary, often-premature deaths, and the unbelievable toll that this epidemic has in the African American community, I feel strongly that the time has come for us to do more. We can do more, and we must.

I, therefore, rise today in strong and unwavering support of H. Con. Res. 35, which supports the goals and ideals of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. Recognized on February 7, National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day—which reaches its 7th anniversary of being observed this year—is a critically important day because it raises awareness about the disastrous impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic on the African American community.

We all should support H. Con. Res. 35 and on February 7, 2007, we should observe National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day in a manner that is consistent with its intent. We should publicize the importance of being informed about HIV/AIDS and about ones HIV status, and we should encourage our friends in the media to deliver messages stressing the importance of getting educated, involved and tested. Additionally, I urge all of my colleagues, on February 7 and beyond, to: encourage de-stigmatization of the disease among African Americans; expand voluntary testing because knowledge is power; work to reduce the social determinants of health—such as poverty and lack of education—that put people at greater risk for HIV infection; ensure that incarcerated and ex-offender populations have access to adequate and realistic HIV prevention methods, receive voluntary and confidential HIV testing and, if necessary, are rolled into adequate HIV/AIDS-related care, treatment and services; expand access to culturally appropriate substance abuse prevention programs, as well as to drug treatment and recovery services; and create the necessary political to fully fund the Minority AIDS Initiative in the amount of at least \$610 million in order to target needed funds to build capacity in minority communities to give those who are hardest hit by HIV/AIDS a fighting chance.

Mr. Speaker, our new political climate has brought us a new day. As the Chair of the

CBC Health Braintrust, I am asking all of my colleagues to seize that new day and to support H. Con. Res. 35, to observe National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day on February 7 and to use it as a day to commit to act with cognizance of the impact that this epidemic has on the African American community.

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in recognition of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day and to show my support for its goals and ideals.

Domestically, the HIV/AIDS crisis in the United States continues to have a disproportionate impact on African Americans in terms of illness, survival times, and deaths. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, HIV/AIDS is a leading cause of death for African Americans.

Each year, the 7th of February marks National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, a national community-wide effort to build capacity and increase awareness of HIV prevention, testing, education, treatment, and support among African Americans, who are at greater risk of HIV/AIDS infection. National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day reminds us of the uneven effect of HIV/AIDS on African Americans and provides us with an opportunity to renew our commitment to the promise of finding a cure.

We must do more than just bring attention to this epidemic. We must also remain vigilantly committed to prevention programs and to finding a cure for HIV/AIDS.

I invite people throughout the Nation to learn more about HIV/AIDS. I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this resolution.

□ 1515

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. TOWNS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 35, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those voting have responded in the affirmative.

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

CONTINUING NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH REGARD TO COTE D'IVOIRE—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 110-11)

The Speaker pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides

for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication, stating that the national emergency and related measures blocking the property of certain persons contributing to the conflict in Côte d'Ivoire are to continue in effect beyond February 7, 2007.

The situation in or in relation to Côte d'Ivoire, which has been addressed by the United Nations Security Council in Resolution 1572 of November 15, 2004, and subsequent resolutions, has resulted in the massacre of large numbers of civilians, widespread human rights abuses, significant political violence and unrest, and attacks against international peacekeeping forces leading to fatalities. This situation poses a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency and related measures blocking the property of certain persons contributing to the conflict in Côte d'Ivoire.

GEORGE W. BUSH.
THE WHITE HOUSE, February 5, 2007.

REPORT ON MATTERS RELATING TO INTERDICTION OF AIRCRAFT ENGAGED IN ILLICIT DRUG TRAFFICKING—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 110-12)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Consistent with the authorities relating to official immunity in the interdiction of aircraft engaged in illicit drug trafficking (Public Law 107-108, as amended, 22 U.S.C. 2291-4), and in order to keep the Congress fully informed, I am providing a report prepared by my Administration. This report includes matters relating to the interdiction of aircraft engaged in illicit drug trafficking.

GEORGE W. BUSH.
THE WHITE HOUSE, February 5, 2007.

BUDGET OF THE UNITED STATES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2008—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 110-3)

The Speaker pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States;

which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed:

THE BUDGET MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT

America is a country of opportunity. Throughout our history, we have overcome great challenges by drawing on the strength, creativity, and resolve of the American people. We have adapted to change—while maintaining our commitment to freedom and an open economy.

Our economy is strong and growing, Federal revenues are robust, and we have made significant progress in reducing the deficit. The Budget I am presenting achieves balance by 2012. My formula for a balanced budget reflects the priorities of our country at this moment in its history: protecting the homeland and fighting terrorism, keeping the economy strong with low taxes, and keeping spending under control while making Federal programs more effective.

As Commander in Chief, my highest priority is the security of our Nation. My Budget invests substantial resources to fight the Global War on Terror, and ensure our homeland is protected from those who would do us harm. We will transform our military to meet the new threats of the 21st Century and provide the brave men and women on the front lines with the resources they need to be successful in this decisive ideological struggle. The Budget will support a new strategy in Iraq that demands more from Iraq's elected government, and gives American forces in Iraq the reinforcements they need to complete their mission. And it will continue to provide the tools necessary to keep America safe by detecting, disrupting, and dismantling terrorist plots.

The U.S. economy is strong. Since August 2003, 7.2 million jobs have been created. Unemployment is low. Wages are growing. Productivity is strong. Inflation and interest rates are low. And we have seen tremendous progress despite a series of challenges, including recession, the terrorist attacks of 2001, corporate scandals, the costliest natural disaster in our Nation's history, energy price spikes, and a temporary slowdown in the housing sector. The resilience of our economy is a tribute to America's workers and entrepreneurs. And well-timed, pro-growth tax policies helped create the right climate for innovation and entrepreneurship.

The Federal deficit is declining and on a path to elimination. Last year, we successfully met our goal of cutting the deficit in half, three years ahead of schedule. This occurred because tax relief helped the economy to recover and grow, resulting in record-high revenues while we restrained non-security discretionary spending. With continued strong economic growth and spending discipline, we are now positioned to balance the budget by 2012, while providing for our national security and making tax relief permanent.

My Budget proposes to keep non-security discretionary spending below inflation for the next five years. My Budget also reforms projects and spending that don't get the job done. We need lawmakers' support to help us accomplish this goal—including reforms that will improve the Congressional budget process.

To bolster public confidence in the Government's ability to manage taxpayers' money successfully, Congress should adopt earmark reform. The earmark process should be made more transparent, ending the practice of concealing earmarks in so-called report language never included in legislation. The number and cost of earmarks should be cut by at least half by the end of this session. I have also called on Congress to adopt the legislative line-item veto, which gives the Legislative and Executive Branches a tool to help eliminate wasteful spending. These common-sense reforms will help prevent billions of taxpayers' dollars from being spent on unnecessary and unjustified projects.

To keep this economy strong we must take on the challenge of entitlements. Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid are commitments of conscience, and so it is our duty to keep them permanently sound. If we do not address this challenge, we will one day leave our children with three bad options: huge tax increases, huge deficits, or huge and immediate cuts in benefits.

In the short term, my Budget works to slow the rate of growth of these programs, saving \$96 billion over five years. This Administration is also actively working with Congress to comprehensively reform and improve these vital programs so they will be strong for the next generations of Americans.

I am optimistic about the future of our country. We are an entrepreneurial and hard-working Nation. And while we face great challenges, we enjoy great opportunities. This Budget reflects our highest priorities while reducing the deficit and achieving a balanced budget by 2012. I am confident that this approach will help make our country more secure and more prosperous.

GEORGE W. BUSH.
February 5, 2007.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 3 o'clock and 23 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.