

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to stress the importance today of our partnership with the people of Afghanistan.

The 9/11 attacks were planned in Afghanistan, and a number of those who planned it are still at large, including Osama bin Laden. President Hamid Karzai's leadership is vital, as is his continuing work to bring stability and security to Afghanistan; he is an important ally in the global war on terrorism. Unfortunately, reports suggest that progress in Afghanistan continues to be undermined by Taliban and terrorist forces operating out of Pakistan.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot allow Afghanistan to become a failed state again; therefore, we must ensure that terrorist operations in Afghanistan stop and terrorist sanctuaries and safe havens across the border in Pakistan are eliminated. And we need more co-operation from Pakistan. Let's not neglect the situation in Afghanistan. We do so at our peril.

BUSH ADMINISTRATION NOT PREPARED TO SEND TROOPS TO IRAQ WITH PROPER SUPPLIES

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

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, as we know, President Bush wants to send another 22,000 young American men and women into harm's way in Iraq in the face of overwhelming opposition, even within his own party and his own administration. Now we are learning that the military does not have all the equipment needed to safely send these troops to Iraq. The Washington Post reported last week that the increase in troop levels will create major logistical hurdles for the Army and Marine Corps, which are short thousands of vehicles, armor kits and other equipment. Even the Army's Deputy Chief of Staff for Force Development said, "We don't have the armor kits and we don't have the trucks," and it will take months for the Army to obtain the necessary supplies.

This is simply one more piece of evidence that the administration's proposal to increase troops in Iraq is terribly misguided. It is another example of how the rhetoric of supporting the troops is not matched by the reality.

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FORMER BORDER PATROL AGENTS IGNACIO RAMOS AND JOSE COMPEAN

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, you know, we are discussing national security every single day on the floor of this House, and our Border Patrol agents seem to be the forgotten sol-

diers fighting this war on terror. They guard our border every single day and protect our country from terrorists, from human traffickers, from drug traffickers.

Former Border Patrol agents Ignacio Ramos and Jose Compean were recently convicted of shooting a drug smuggler while they were patrolling and protecting the border. Then they were sentenced to a decade in prison. You may have read that our own U.S. Attorney had this drug smuggler brought from Mexico, gave him immunity to testify against our agents, and then the smuggler was released.

Now the drug smuggler is suing the U.S. Government for damages. As soon as Agent Ramos began his sentence in a Federal prison, he was assaulted by drug smugglers and drug users who were inmates in that prison. Ramos was doing his duty, protecting Americans from the thugs and the drug smugglers. Now we have failed to protect him.

BUSH WANTS TO MAKE TAX CUTS FOR WEALTHY PERMANENT WHILE INCREASING TAXES ON 30 MILLION

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

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, last month during his State of the Union message, President Bush said that it is possible to balance the budget without raising taxes, but that is not the case. The President's health care proposal would increase taxes on more than 30 million Americans.

You didn't hear that during the State of the Union address, but the President wants to tax Americans who have what he calls gold-plated health coverage. The overwhelming majority of these Americans are middle class workers who oftentimes accepted better health care coverage over pay increases during negotiations with their employers. Many of these workers either need the substantial coverage for themselves or a sick family member.

The President's tax increase proposal is the latest assault on employer-provided health care. Employers with older and sicker workers pay higher insurance premiums, not because they have gold-plated insurance, but because their insurance companies charge them for more coverage. At a time when 1 million more Americans are becoming uninsured every year, the administration should not provide employers another reason to drop their health care coverage for their workers.

HOPE SHINES AFTER THE DISASTER

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, this weekend, a deadly tornado inflicted

enormous damage in my Congressional district. Yet even in the darkest times, the victims of the storm were enveloped in the incredible generosity of its neighbors. By Saturday, over 1,400 volunteers provided 22,000 meals and snacks and distributed 1,000 health kits.

Tim Miller and his three sons helped the Suggs family gather their belongings after the storm left. Tim Miller said, "I'm just doing what I can to help."

Villages resident Al Seiden said, "Despite our house being destroyed . . . if you look around, there are at least eight people, volunteers, friends and neighbors who have come in and helped us . . . The spirit of this community is unbelievable."

Wendy Spencer, the COE of the Governor's Commission on Volunteerism adds, "We are receiving so many offers to help, which is wonderful. Our goal is to maximize this generosity to be as effective as it can be for meeting the needs of the tornado survivors now and in the weeks and months to come."

Congratulations to all these volunteers. Great job.

AMERICAN HEART MONTH

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

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge American Heart Month, which is observed each year throughout February. I anticipate that many of my colleagues will attend events in their districts commemorating Heart Month, as I will.

As we do, I urge all of us to pay special attention to the effects of heart disease on women. The good news is that heart disease deaths are beginning to decline among women.

The bad news remains, however, that heart disease is still the number one killer of women in this country. Although awareness among women about their risks for heart disease is increasing, awareness remains particularly low among minority women.

Let's take the opportunity during American Heart Month to talk with the women in our lives and in our community about their risks for heart disease and the preventive steps they can take to decrease these risks.

SUPPORT THE METHAMPHETAMINE REMEDIATION RESEARCH ACT OF 2007

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

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 365, the Methamphetamine Remediation Research Act of 2007. In Minnesota, methamphetamine usage has increased dramatically over the past decade. With that being said, legislators, law

enforcement and concerned citizens are all taking the necessary steps to protect our communities from the threat of methamphetamine usage and production.

This legislation addresses the difficult problem of meth lab remediation. Meth production, which occurs most often in residential homes, leaves behind dangerous toxic waste. In fact, according to the Minnesota Department of Health, meth production leaves behind up to 7 pounds of dangerous chemical waste for every pound of meth produced. This waste presents a health risk to future residents and an environmental risk to the surrounding area.

In 2005, in Minnesota, 88 major meth labs were discovered, each of which presented significant risk. Although Minnesota has strong local and State guidelines for dealing with meth lab remediation, the Federal Government can still play an important role in making our communities safer.

H.R. 365 will direct the EPA to research and establish important voluntary guidelines for meth lab remediation. Furthermore, the bill will bring together local and State agencies, organizations and individuals to share their best strategies for cleaning up meth labs and determining when they are inhabitable.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation is a necessary step toward improving the meth lab remediation process nationwide. It will help local, State and Federal law enforcement safely move forward after discovering a meth lab, and it will make local communities dealing with the methamphetamine problem cleaner and healthier. I encourage its passage.

AMERICAN HEART MONTH

(Ms. BORDALLO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, February marks the 44th annual American Heart Month, an effort to raise awareness of the single largest cause of death for both men and women in this country, heart disease. Like the country as a whole, heart disease is the leading cause of death on my island of Guam.

However, heart disease is increasingly becoming an issue for Pacific Islander women. In fact, a recent Centers for Disease Control study indicates that heart disease is responsible for 214 deaths per 100,000 women on Guam. This is a staggering rate, and only through greater awareness and education can we begin to confront this challenge.

I urge everyone, Mr. Speaker, to take this opportunity to battle this disease by educating others about the benefits of healthy living and the risk factors contributing to heart disease.

NEW NATIONAL SECURITY ESTIMATE SHOWS THAT THERE IS NO MILITARY SOLUTION IN IRAQ

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

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, last week, the White House received a new National Intelligence Estimate from our intelligence agencies that confirms what we already know: The situation in Iraq is bad and likely to get worse. The NIE report concluded that the U.S. has little control over the day-to-day developments in Iraq and that there is a strong possibility of further deterioration.

The report also refutes the President's claim that we could begin to see progress from his troop escalation within the next 6 months. Instead, the President's own intelligence experts expressed deep doubts that the Iraqis will be able to gain any real control over their militias within the next 18 months.

They also stressed that the major security problem is not the presence of al Qaeda but instead is the Iraqi-on-Iraqi violence. The intelligence officials make clear that the political accommodations are crucial to reducing sectarian tensions, but the report concludes that the parties are unwilling or unable to make them at this point.

ADMINISTRATION DOESN'T HAVE ENOUGH SUPPLIES FOR TROOP ESCALATION PLAN

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

Mr. Sires. Mr. Speaker, as President Bush moves forward with his unpopular plan to send an additional 22,000 troops to Iraq, it is crucial that this Congress take a hard look at how this surge affects our national security throughout the rest of the world.

Last week, General James Conway, the Marine Corps Commandant, told the House Armed Services Committee that if troops were needed somewhere else in the world, the response would be a lot slower than we might like. Army Chief of Staff Peter Schoomaker went as far as saying that pooling resources for troops in Iraq limits our ability to respond to emerging strategic contingencies.

Mr. Speaker, after hearing all these warnings from military officials about the President's escalation plan, Congress must step in and voice its opposition in the name of protecting our national security. The days of rubber stamping the President's war plans are over.

STIFLING IRAQ DEBATE IN SENATE

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, democracy is based on the free exchange of

ideas, debating issues to find a solution reasonable people can agree upon. However, when it comes to discussing the most important issue facing our Nation, the Senate Republican leadership is more concerned with giving the President political cover than engaging in a democratic debate of ideas.

The Republican Senate leadership is even blocking the voices in their own party by filibustering debate on any resolution dealing with the war in Iraq, including the McCain-Graham resolution supporting the President's troop surge and the Warner-Levin resolution in opposition to it. The consideration of these resolutions, especially the bipartisan Warner-Levin resolution, would serve as the basis for the first real debate on the President's flawed Iraq war policy since the war began nearly 4 years ago.

Mr. Speaker, the American people deserve a democratic discussion of ideas on the issue that is most important to them. Next week we will have a debate here in the House that will allow each of us to speak our minds on the President's plan, and I would hope that the Senate leadership would allow the same debate over in the other Chamber.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DOYLE). 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.

Recorded votes on postponed questions will be taken later today.

METHAMPHETAMINE REMEDIATION RESEARCH ACT OF 2007

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 365) to provide for a research program for remediation of closed methamphetamine production laboratories, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 365

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Methamphetamine Remediation Research Act of 2007".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds the following:

(1) Methamphetamine use and production is growing rapidly throughout the United States.

(2) Materials and residues remaining from the production of methamphetamine pose novel environmental problems in locations where methamphetamine laboratories have been closed.

(3) There has been little standardization of measures for determining when the site of a closed methamphetamine laboratory has been successfully remediated.