

GENERAL BOB LIVINGSTON

(Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, it's that time of year when we begin to make plans to travel to be with our families for Thanksgiving, so I want to recognize those American military men and women fighting overseas who will be unable to go home for Thanksgiving.

Specifically, I'd like to recognize General Bob Livingston, who is currently serving with South Carolina's very own 218th National Guard Brigade currently serving in Afghanistan.

General Livingston sent an American flag to his wife, Barbara, who put it into my hands to thank me for supporting their mission. I've never been more honored and never received anything more symbolic of true patriotism.

Our U.S. soldiers are making the sacrifice away from their families during these holidays. They're always serving to protect our freedom and our safety.

My wish during this time is that our citizens offer a salute to these brave soldiers for the loyalty and honor they have had in America and for their courage to fight for freedom.

218th, Fit to Fight.

HONORING FOREIGN-BORN SOLDIERS

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

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Speaker, I rise today also to honor the soldiers and veterans that sacrifice so much for this Nation. And this week in which we celebrated Veterans Day, it is an appropriate and necessary time to reflect on that sacrifice. And in the Congress that often feels the need to scapegoat or debase immigrants, this body often forgets how immigrants enrich our lives.

I rise today to take a special moment to thank those foreign-born noncitizens who are serving in this war and have served in wars past. In this current war, there are approximately 21,000 noncitizens in uniform. No other war has produced anywhere near as many posthumous citizens as this one.

Madam Speaker, I ask you and all my colleagues to work toward civility, solutions and humanity when we talk about immigration. Please do not play politics with the lives of current and future immigrants and their family members, like me, who are only a generation removed from the experience.

□ 1030

WELCOME HOME MINNESOTA GUARD

(Mrs. BACHMANN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BACHMANN. Madam Speaker, today America and our allies in Iraq

are breathing a collective sigh of relief as we continue to receive successful report after successful report of al Qaeda's demise in Iraq.

We continue to pray for a complete end to hostilities, but today we pause to thank America's brave military members and also their family members.

Just recently, 168 brave men and women returned from the famous Red Bulls to Minnesota. They were deployed for 13 months, and we thank them for their sacrifice.

The happy news is that not one of the 168 returned home with serious injury. Everyone was able to walk out and meet their loved ones.

It seems every generation has to learn the lessons of freedom. Freedom is precious, Madam Speaker, and we thank those today who secured our freedom and the freedom of our allies.

IMMIGRATION

(Mrs. NAPOLITANO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Speaker, since 1886 immigrants to the United States have passed the Statue of Liberty, which has inscribed, "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses." Why is it that now, when those huddled masses happen to be brown, the golden door of freedom is being slammed shut?

Immigrants contribute to the economy. They are free thinkers. They are hard-driven workers who strive for success, not only for themselves and their community but for their families. They come to this country because America is a beacon of hope for them. They are looking for a better life, just like every immigrant since the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock.

So why do some amongst us feel it necessary to place every obstacle possible in their path, to launch bigoted assaults on them, to wrongly blame those who work the hardest at the worst jobs for the ills of all of our society?

Immigrants are the history of the United States. They are our past, they are our present, and I must not rest until we recognize they are part of the future of this great country.

FUNDING THE TROOPS

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Well, here we go again.

Instead of getting down to business and tending to the people's business, the majority wants to play a political game. So to do it, they are going to tie temporary funds for our men and women serving in Iraq and Afghanistan to a timetable for withdrawal. No amendments can be offered. Once again, the leadership of the House is

set to embark on a legislative gamble to force the hand of U.S. military leadership. This is their 41st Iraq vote.

But the suspense comes. Will the Houses of Congress, the President, and the American people take their bluff? I think it is very highly unlikely.

The Democrat leadership seems content to write legislation that they know is going to fail. Now, why would you write something you know is going to fail?

Let's get past this. Let's give up the games. Let's take care of the people's business. Let's pass clean legislation to ensure the safety of our troops.

JEC IRAQ WAR REPORT

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

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, by every measure the war in Iraq has cost Americans far too much, whether it's lives lost, dollars spent, or our reputation tarnished around the world.

House Democrats plan to send the President a smaller war funding bill than the one he requested but one with a bigger message: Start bringing our troops home now.

Without a change in course, the Congressional Budget Office has estimated that Federal spending on the war could reach \$2.4 trillion by 2017. A new report from the Joint Economic Committee finds that when you add in the "hidden costs" of the war, such as higher oil prices, interest payments, and helping to take care of our wounded veterans, the total economic costs will rise by over \$1 trillion to \$3.5 trillion.

It's time for a new direction in Iraq.

IMMIGRATION

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

Mr. BACA. Madam Speaker, like many other of my colleagues who spoke right before, who told stories about how the lack of immigration reform has affected many families, Madam Speaker, the time for Congress to pass immigration reform is long overdue.

Our system is broken. Our country is less safe. Families are torn apart. And people are living in fear. For the Hispanic Caucus, this is an issue that is personal to a lot of us. Our communities should not be a punching bag for the vocal few. It's time to stop this hateful rhetoric that serves only to divide us and bully the vulnerable.

Children should not be torn apart from their mothers. We have been asked to stand against what are American values of family, providing a chance to do better.

America is a Nation of immigrants, not just from Mexico and Latin America but from Canada, Asia, Europe, and Africa. Immigration is not an Hispanic

issue; it's an American issue. It's an American issue.

We want to work together to create a real plan to combat hateful and often racist rhetoric that affects all of us. I ask my colleagues to do the right thing and not the political easy thing and to support real immigration reform.

URGING SUPPORT FOR H.R. 4102, STOP OUTSOURCING SECURITY ACT

(Ms. SCHAKOWSKY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Today the New York Times reports that at least 14 of the 17 shootings from the September 16 Blackwater incident in Iraq were unjustified and violated deadly force rules.

Even though the FBI concluded that Blackwater, a for-profit contractor, used excessive force, there is no guarantee that anyone will be punished for these killings.

On Monday, the front page of the New York Times ran a story titled "Security Guard Fires From Convoy, Killing Iraqi Driver." The shooter was an employee of DynCorp, and the victim an Iraqi taxi driver. The details of the incident are still unclear, but one thing is certain. The problem of trigger-happy contractors isn't confined to one company; it applies to all private security contractors.

The longer we wait to fix this problem, the worse the situation is going to get for the Iraqis and for our troops. I urge my colleagues to cosponsor the Stop Outsourcing Security Act, H.R. 4102, to phase out unaccountable private security contractors before they do any more damage.

CAUTIONING SENIORS REGARDING PRIVATE MEDICARE INSURANCE OPTIONS

(Ms. CASTOR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. CASTOR. Madam Speaker, the Medicare open enrollment period begins tomorrow, November 15, and runs through the end of the year. Across the country, private HMOs have placed large newspaper ads and are running TV ads to convince seniors to sign up for their private Medicare insurance.

I am here to advise seniors to be very cautious. These private HMO insurance salesmen are on the streets and are oftentimes luring our seniors into private Medicare coverage that they do not need. If they leave traditional Medicare and sign up for a private HMO, oftentimes they will lose access to their doctor.

Be very cautious. Sons and daughters, grandkids across America, help your parents and grandparents sort through this myriad of options under private Medicare. In Florida, you can seek independent advice from the Department of Elder Affairs and the

SHINE Volunteers. Seek independent advice and be very cautious with these private Medicare options.

WARNING AGAINST IMMEDIATE WITHDRAWAL FROM IRAQ

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

Mr. BAIRD. My colleagues, as someone who opposed the invasion of Iraq and believes it was one of the most egregious mistakes in the history of this country, I rise today to implore you to not make a mistake today by demanding that we begin an immediate withdrawal.

The facts on the ground are that the situation is improving in Iraq. Courageous Americans have given their lives and time away from their families to make that happen. Hundreds of thousands of Iraqis have died in a conflict that we created. We have a chance now to try to improve the situation.

Progress is being made. Do not let anyone today say it is not. Violence is down. Political leaders are reaching out across the aisle. Shias are meeting with Sunnis. Sunnis are meeting with Shias. They need more time to succeed, and an insecure situation will undermine the progress, not further it.

We need to have more time to debate this resolution today. We need to take the good parts of it, keep those in, but abandon this requirement for an immediate withdrawal.

There is a big difference between 1 year, which this measure says we have to be out in, or a 10-year horizon. We should find the nuance now that we can agree on.

DEMOCRATS CONTINUE TO FIGHT FOR A CHANGE OF DIRECTION IN IRAQ

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

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, 2007 has been the deadliest year for American troops in Iraq. No doubt that a change of direction is needed, but President Bush refuses to change course. He envisions a world where our troops will still be on the ground in Iraq 10 years from now.

This Democratic Congress rejects such a plan. And this week we will once again consider legislation that will require President Bush to redeploy our troops out of Iraq while providing our troops in harm's way with the resources that they need.

President Bush has asked Congress for an additional \$200 billion for Iraq. This House will instead vote on a \$50 billion package that will require the immediate start of the redeployment of U.S. forces out of Iraq. The legislation sets a goal of having nearly every troop out of Iraq by the end of next year. That is a significant change in the course of the war, and it is a change that will finally hold Iraq accountable for its future course.

Madam Speaker, this Congress will continue to fight to change President Bush's 10-year, trillion-dollar war. We are committed to bringing our troops home soon, repairing the readiness of our military, and refocusing our efforts to fight terrorism around the world.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1429, IMPROVING HEAD START FOR SCHOOL READINESS ACT OF 2007

Ms. CASTOR. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 813 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 813

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 1429) to reauthorize the Head Start Act, to improve program quality, to expand access, and for other purposes. All points of order against the conference report and against its consideration are waived. The conference report shall be considered as read.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. TAUSCHER). The gentlewoman from Florida is recognized for 1 hour.

Ms. CASTOR. Madam Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to my good friend, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART). All time yielded during consideration of the rule is for debate only.

I yield myself such time as I may consume.

GENERAL LEAVE

Madam Speaker, I also ask unanimous consent that all Members be given 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on House Resolution 813.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. CASTOR. Madam Speaker, House Resolution 813 provides for consideration of the conference report for H.R. 1429, the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007. This is the standard rule for a conference report. It waives all points of order against the conference report and against its consideration. It also provides that the conference report shall be considered as read.

Madam Speaker, for over 40 years Head Start has served as the premier educational and developmental program for America's children, more than 20 million American children and their families. Head Start works. Head Start works because it is a well-researched, comprehensive initiative that combines all of the children's educational needs, their health care needs, and it requires parental involvement. Years later, after four decades of Head Start, the research shows that children that participate in Head Start are