

committees will have held four hearings on the inadequate treatment our wounded soldiers are receiving at Walter Reed. We are now learning that this is more widespread than Walter Reed, and we must explore major reform options that fix this problem immediately.

Inadequate oversight of the Bush administration by past Congresses allowed these conditions to develop. The new Democratic Congress is going to hold those responsible accountable and ensure that our soldiers receive the help they have more than earned.

UNT WINS TO EARN FIRST NCAA BID SINCE 1988

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

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, my college, the University of North Texas, back in my district, on Tuesday night won the Sun Belt Conference.

Calvin Watson, a forward, scored 24 points and hit six of seven 3-point shots against Arkansas State University and was named the tournament's most outstanding player.

The University of North Texas was locked in a tight game but made all the key plays down the stretch to pull out an 83-75 win at the Cajundome to claim not only the Sun Belt title but an NCAA tournament bid as well.

The University of North Texas, my college men's basketball team, last went to the NCAA tournament when Reagan was President during the 1987-1988 season.

The Mean Green claimed its second NCAA bid by closing the game on an 11-5 run to set off a wild celebration. My team is under the leadership of head coach Johnny Jones. They were the No. 5 seed in the tournament and had to win all of their games to win the tournament title. They came up with standout performance throughout the tournament and in the finals.

I congratulate the fine men of the men's basketball team, their coaches and the staff of the University of North Texas on a great win.

□ 1015

FEMALE TROOPS IN IRAQ

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

Ms. CLARKE. Mr. Speaker, the war in Iraq has presented numerous hardships for our troops, their families, and by extension, our Nation. Over 3,000 American soldiers have been killed. Every day brings news of more explosions and more soldiers coming home with traumatic brain injuries and other maladies. However, this war has been a particular hardship for our Nation's courageous female troops.

In this, the first full week of National Women's History Month, I feel it

is vital that we recognize the historic trials being faced by the women who are defending our country. As of 2005, there was a record 203,000 female troops on active duty in military, along with many thousands more National Guard and Reserve troops activated to work in Iraq.

Like their male counterparts, many of these female troops never expected to fight in a war and certainly not for such an extended period of time. Countless soldiers are mothers who joined the National Guard and Reserves to give back to their country. Now they find themselves half a world away from their homes and families, fighting a war on the sun-hardened battlefields of Iraq with no resolution or end in sight.

CONDITIONS AT WALTER REED

(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, the recent reports of substandard conditions at the outpatient facility at Walter Reed Medical Center are deeply disturbing. The brave men and women who put their lives on the line every day to protect our country do not deserve the shoddy conditions, nor do they deserve to be trapped in the bureaucratic morass that has engulfed Walter Reed.

It is necessary to put into place a seamless program for our veterans from the time they are injured through rehabilitation and home care and work support. I urge Secretary Nicholson of Veterans Affairs to do just that.

The proper treatment of our wounded members of the Armed Forces is not a partisan issue. It is a moral issue. And Congress needs to ensure that our injured brave men and women receive the best, most advanced, and most timely medical care possible. Anything less would be immoral and a dereliction of our duty.

VETERANS, MEMBERS OF MILITARY DESERVE THE FINEST MEDICAL CARE

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

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, as a member of the U.S. Air Force Reserves a number of years ago, in support of our troops. It is unconscionable for the soldiers who defend our freedom to receive anything less than the finest medical care.

I visited the veterans hospital in Seattle again recently and talked at length to one soldier about the quality of care he has received. I was relieved to hear that from the time he was wounded in Iraq to his treatment at Bethesda and his time at Seattle's VA Hospital, the care that he received was excellent. Unfortunately, this is not

the case in every hospital for every soldier.

I will soon be visiting Walter Reed to speak with soldiers there and make sure they are receiving the excellent care that they deserve. I am encouraged by the efforts to hold accountable those responsible for the appalling conditions at Walter Reed.

This issue transcends party lines and requires an immediate response by all parties. This is about young men and women who have sacrificed much for our country and for our freedom. We owe it to them to correct this injustice.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF ARMY SERGEANT PHILLIP MCNEILL

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

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the legacy of a brave young man who lost his life serving in Iraq. Sergeant Phillip McNeill, who grew up in Owingsville, Kentucky, was killed in Iraq on January 20, 2007. Sergeant McNeill was serving with the 3rd Battalion, 509th Parachute Infantry Regiment, based in Fort Richardson, Alaska, when his Humvee was struck by an IED, bringing his bright young life to a tragic end.

Sergeant McNeill came from a family steeped in American military tradition. His military service was inspired by the brave men in his family who had served before him. His family described his dedication to his mission, saying that he "believed in the cause and that he was a soldier who wanted to be over there." This was Sergeant McNeill's second tour in Iraq.

As we celebrate the spirit of this great soldier, my thoughts and prayers are with Sergeant Phillip McNeill's family and friends. We are humbled by Sergeant McNeill's dedication, and we are forever indebted to him for making the ultimate sacrifice for our Nation and for our freedom.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 700, HEALTHY COMMUNITIES WATER SUPPLY ACT OF 2007

Mr. CARDOZA. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 215 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 215

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 700) to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to extend the pilot program for alternative water source projects. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are

waived except those arising under clause 9 or 10 of rule XXI. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. The bill shall be considered as read. Notwithstanding clause 11 of rule XVIII, no amendment to the bill shall be in order except those printed in the portion of the Congressional Record designated for that purpose in clause 8 of rule XVIII and except pro forma amendments for the purpose of debate. Each amendment so printed may be offered only by the Member who caused it to be printed or his designee and shall be considered as read. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. McNULTY). The gentleman from California (Mr. CARDOZA) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. CARDOZA. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS). All time yielded during consideration of the rule is for debate only. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. CARDOZA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARDOZA. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 215 provides for the consideration of H.R. 700, the Healthy Communities Water Supply Act of 2007, under an open rule with a preprinting requirement. The rule provides 1 hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill except for clause 9 and 10 of rule XXI. The bill shall be considered as read.

The rule provides that any amendment to the bill must be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD prior to consideration of the bill. Finally, the rule provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

Mr. Speaker, simply stated, maintaining an adequate water supply is critical to the health and livelihood of our agricultural industry, our economy, and our environment.

However, as critical as water is to sustaining our way of life, all too often we take it for granted. Water does not come in an infinite supply. It is, in fact, a very, very scarce resource, particularly in my region of the country.

There are significant water supply issues in my home district of California's Central Valley. The valley faces water shortages as various interests compete for this scarce resource.

The Central Valley is not unique. Water scarcity is occurring across the country and is becoming more widespread due to several factors. Popu-

lation is on the rise. Pollution is a constant threat. Growth and development are expanding. And drought can strike us at any time.

Despite these pressing needs, we are severely lacking in programs that address the looming shortage. The Environmental Protection Agency, the Congressional Budget Office, and other organizations have estimated that \$400 billion is needed for programs to maintain existing and build new water infrastructure. The EPA has also estimated that programs to address sewer overflows need in excess of \$140 billion.

However, even meeting the needs of these programs has been challenging as this administration has constantly cut funding. Moreover, these programs deal exclusively with protecting our water quality and do not address scarcity or shortages.

While these programs are just as important, it doesn't make sense to have a one-track mind. Improving the quality of water is just one part of the equation. We also have to find innovative ways to reuse and recycle water that we have so it will be there to meet our needs as well as the needs of future generations. The rule and the bill we have before us today will begin to address this problem.

Mr. Speaker, the Healthy Communities Water Supply Act of 2007, H.R. 700, is quite simple. H.R. 700 extends a critical pilot program for alternative water source projects. Alternative water source projects allow local communities to develop innovative ways to reuse and recycle water, thereby saving money and expanding water use options for the entire country. This pilot program was initially created in 2002, but the program has expired.

The bill authorizes \$125 million to help communities finance pilot projects to recycle or reuse water or to develop alternative water sources. It is not an excessive investment. Given the scarcity and challenges we face, this is just a start, but this funding is absolutely critical and is a step in the right direction. This will help spur technological development so that individuals, agriculture, and industry have access to the water they need. The bill is also fiscally responsible as it provides a 50 percent matching requirement.

Many should be recognized for their interest in ensuring that the future water supply will meet future water demands. I would like to commend my colleagues Mr. MCNERNEY, Mrs. TAUSCHER, and Mr. KAGEN for introducing this important bill. I would also like to thank Mr. OBERSTAR and Mr. MICA for their leadership in bringing this legislation to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, this is a good bill. This is a necessary bill. And this is a critically important investment for people today and for generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. CARDOZA)

for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I also want to congratulate the gentleman from California on the managing of his first rule in his capacity on the Rules Committee.

Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. HASTINGS of Washington asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, when most people think of the State of Washington, they imagine a cloudy day with a good chance of rain. However, much of the eastern part of Washington that I represent is very dry and very arid. In fact, my hometown of Pasco averages only 8 inches of rain a year, which is even less than the Central Valley, where my friend from California resides. This part of the State is also noted for its irrigated agriculture, which is the foundation of our rural communities.

Water is a valuable and limited resource that is critical for farmers and our agricultural economy. Two areas of my district in particular know the value and importance of water: the Yakima River Basin and the Odessa Subaquiifer of the Columbia Basin. The Bureau of Reclamation is examining both areas for potential additional water storage, and I hope this Congress will continue past commitments to finding solutions that protect the farmers and the communities in these areas.

I also recognize the need to develop alternative sources of usable water for drinking and for agriculture purposes. By exploring innovative approaches such as membrane-filtering technologies and aquifer storage and retrieval, we can ensure that kitchen faucets and irrigation lines won't run dry in the future. Fresh water is a scarce and valuable resource and certainly one that we cannot afford to lose.

The underlying legislation continues a pilot program under the Clean Water Act that provides grants to encourage water reclamation and reuse. The bill would increase authorized funding for this program by \$50 million without any fiscal-year limitation. However, Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to point out that this program has never been funded. Therefore, the real question of whether this program warrants Federal funding will be left up to the Appropriations Committee and the subcommittee in charge of water spending to decide.

So I urge my colleagues to support this modified open rule, and I hope that we can continue this openness in future legislation, including the supplemental spending bill, the budget resolution, and the Water Quality Financing Act that is expected to be on the floor later this week.

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

□ 1030

Mr. CARDOZA. Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, maintaining an adequate water

supply is critical to the health and livelihood of our agricultural industry, our economy and our environment. Water is not an infinite supply, and water scarcity is occurring across the country and becoming more widespread. We have to find innovative ways to reuse and recycle the water that we have so it will be there to meet our needs, as well as the needs of future generations, and we have to provide the means to make that happen. This bill does just that.

I urge a “yes” vote on the rule and on the previous question.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

COMMITTEE FUNDING RESOLUTION

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 219 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 219

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order without intervention of any point of order to consider in the House the resolution (H. Res. 202) providing for the expenses of certain committees of the House of Representatives in the One Hundred Tenth Congress. The amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on House Administration now printed in the resolution, modified by the amendment printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution, shall be considered as adopted. The resolution, as amended, shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the resolution, as amended, to final adoption without intervening motion or demand for division of the question except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on House Administration; and (2) one motion to recommit which may not contain instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER) is recognized for 1 hour.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER). All time yielded during consideration of the rule is for debate only.

Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Ms. SLAUGHTER asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 219 provides for consideration of House Resolution 202, the 110th Congress committee funding resolution. The rule provides for 1 hour of general debate in the House, equally divided and controlled by the Chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on House Administration.

The rule makes in order the committee funding substitute adopted by the Committee on House Administration. It also provides for a new Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming, the text of which is printed in the Rules report accompanying the rule. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the resolution and provides that the resolution, as amended, shall be considered as read.

Mr. Speaker, the rule before us would allow for the consideration of a bipartisan committee funding resolution. It was reported out of the House Administration Committee with the support of both Chairwoman MILLENDER-MCDONALD and Ranking Member EHLERS.

I want to take a moment to say how pleased I am with the way in which this bill embodies the spirit of fiscal responsibility that is so often advocated by this body.

The financial pressures on our government are immense. Recent years have left us with an unprecedented amount of foreign debt. At the same time, my fellow Democrats and I are struggling to ensure the safety of tens and hundreds of thousands of troops abroad, while refusing to shortchange vital domestic programs here at home.

The resolution reflects that reality. While not all committees have received the budget increases they hoped for, this funding resolution provides a bipartisan approach to ensuring that they can fulfill their duties and obligations without asking Congress to spend money we don't have. It includes only a 2.4 percent increase in funding from last year, one of the smallest increases in committee funding in the last 12 years.

As vital as it is to start bringing home some fiscal sanity back to Washington, there is another reason why the legislation is significant. As a result of actions taken by the Rules Committee yesterday, it now contains a provision that represents a profound departure from the approach that recent Republican Congresses have taken toward one of the most pivotal issues of our time, global warming.

Global warming is not merely an environmental issue. It is also a social issue and an economic one. It affects all nations and all peoples, and its consequences, if left unchecked, could produce truly dramatic changes to human society the world over.

For decades, evidence has mounted that our planet's temperature is rising, and that evidence has become so universally recognized that it is no longer in dispute. President Bush himself even used the phrase “climate change” in his State of the Union Address this year, the first time he has acknowledged it.

But the question raised today by some is a different one: Is global warming caused by human activity? Or is it merely a natural phenomenon akin to the last ice age, something that we have to adapt to but we cannot affect?

Efforts to break the link in the public imagination between human activity and climate change are still ongoing. Doubt is still being seeded in the public mind. Sometimes these efforts are blunt. Despite the President's recent admission, his administration has also been accused of rewriting sections of impartial Federal scientific reports that tie human activity to global warming.

Other times, the efforts are more subtle. We hear all the time Members of this body express their desire to, as they put it, “get to the bottom” of the problem of climate change so that we may come to understand its true cause.

Mr. Speaker, my colleagues and I on the Democratic side of the aisle do not share this degree of doubt, nor do we seek to disseminate it. We have been convinced by numerous internationally recognized scientific studies, by years of careful analysis and by endless measurements taken around the world. We have been convinced, as have people the world over, by the overwhelming weight of available, impartial and scientific evidence. We have been convinced of a simple idea, that human beings are altering the planet's environment.

And, as such, we have committed ourselves to being the party of personal, environmental responsibility. We have pledged to confront this great challenge before it is beyond our grasp, beyond our ability to change even if we wanted to.

We have promised a strong path of action, and this bill represents the first steps along that path taken by this Congress in years, if not ever.

The resolution will create a fully funded select committee whose sole purpose will be to focus on global warming. The committee will have 15 members, nine from the majority and six from the minority. It will serve as a much-needed congressional forum for hearings, investigations and discussion, and will have the chance to make recommendations concerning climate change.

Simply put, people all the world over can breathe easier because the resolution will institutionalize the commitment of the House of Representatives to confronting global warming.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to take a moment to address one of the criticisms of this rule that is likely to be voiced by the minority. We may be told that a hearing and markup process for the select committee did not take place before the rule was authored.

But a question like this one, the question of whether or not we should address global warming, has had an ongoing public hearing for a generation. Numerous arguments on both sides of the question have been made. And at the end of it all, the overwhelming consensus, both among the public and among internationally recognized climate scientists, is that global warming is real; it is human influenced; and it is our responsibility to control.