

their community here with us this morning; and I thank him very much for his opening prayer.

OPPOSING THE IRAQ FUNDING BILL

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

Mr. KUCINICH. At present, Congress has before it, for consideration in committee, an Iraq funding bill which will keep the war going perhaps through the end of President Bush's term. It would order the privatization of Iraq's oil and open the door for the President to order an attack on Iran without congressional authorization.

Democrats were brought to power not to spread war, but to stop it. The administration took us into war for oil. We should not be confirming that purpose by promoting privatization in the Iraq funding bill.

The President desires to attack Iran without Congress asserting its constitutional authority. We should be asserting our constitutional authority to restrain another administration abuse of power.

DEMOCRATIC PLAN FOR IRAQ IS RECIPE FOR FAILURE

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, Friday's *The Post and Courier* of Charleston, South Carolina, detailed the dire consequences of setting artificial timelines for withdrawal from Iraq. The editorial states that it would be tragic if the rug should be pulled from under U.S. forces by the U.S. Congress.

The political message coming from House Democrats threatens to throw efforts to stabilize Iraq off balance. As *The Post and Courier*, where I was a former reporter, concludes, General Petraeus should be given the time and forces he needs to succeed, and not a legislative recipe for failure. Democrats and Republicans should be united to remember that al Qaeda spokesman for Osama bin Laden, Zawahiri, has clearly identified that Iraq and Afghanistan are the central fronts in the global war on terrorism. Bin Laden has specifically stated, "The most serious issue today for the whole world is this Third World War that is raging in Iraq."

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11.

SUBPRIME LENDING

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

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, in the last 2 weeks, we have

seen a tsunami of foreclosures and turmoil in the subprime markets. The Federal regulators' recent joint guidance to stop issuance of loans that borrowers can't repay in full is a good first step, but lenders won't make bad loans if no one will buy them. The secondary market must stop buying the loans causing this crisis.

Freddie Mac did this voluntarily, and I am introducing legislation to require all the housing GSEs to do the same. In the interim, I call on Fannie Mae and the Federal Home Loan Banks to follow Freddie Mac and stop buying these risky loans. Both Congress and the GSEs must act to protect homeowners and stabilize the system.

BUILDING A STRONG WORKFORCE BY IMPROVING MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT

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

Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Employers spend over \$26 billion per year in direct medical costs to treat depression. But the indirect costs, including lost productivity and absenteeism, increased spending by some \$51.5 billion per year, but appropriate treatment for depression reduces health care costs for businesses.

The National Institutes of Mental Health reported depression treatments reduce absenteeism and save money. Plans for Federal employees where mental health coverage is included in their health care plan also saves money.

Employers and Members of Congress should review the benefits of mental health insurance coverage and note that coverage of mental health treatment can also significantly reduce public health care spending on Medicare, Medicaid and our criminal justice programs.

I would urge all my colleagues to review how businesses and the Federal Government can save money on this by reviewing my Web site at murphy.house.gov. And remember, patient-centered health care saves lives and money by emphasizing patient safety, patient quality and patient choice.

DANIA BEACH/SOLAR ENERGY

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

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. I am RON KLEIN, and I represent Florida's 22nd Congressional District in south Florida.

Today, I am honoring the city of Dania Beach, a community in southeast Florida, for investing in a \$1 million solar energy system to power the city's streetlights. Not only is this an innovative and environmentally sound decision made by the city of Dania Beach, but it is also a decision that

will strengthen the safety of the community.

After Hurricane Wilma struck, Dania Beach could not restore its power and the pole damage quickly enough, leaving the city streets without lighting for a lengthy period of time. With the new solar panels, the streetlights will not be dependent on electricity, and the panels will be mounted to withstand even the most fierce hurricane winds.

I applaud this sort of ground-breaking, innovative way of thinking. Alternative energy sources are the way of the future. If more communities around the country would follow Dania Beach's lead, we would leave our environment in a much better condition for our children and our grandchildren.

CAIR MEETING

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

Mr. McHENRY. Mr. Speaker, House Democrats and the Speaker of the House arranged for a conference room in the Capitol to be used by the Council on American-Islamic Relations, or CAIR, an Islamic advocacy group which refuses to disavow terrorist groups like Hamas and Hezbollah.

CAIR officials have been charged with, and some convicted of, offenses related to the support of terrorism, including a CAIR fundraiser, Rabi Haddad, as well as a founding board member and a former CAIR civil rights coordinator.

Most notably, the CAIR fund-raiser Haddad was deported to Lebanon in 2003 after being arrested in a raid on an Islamic charity that Federal officials said, "provided assistance to Osama bin Laden and the al Qaeda network and other known terrorist groups."

Apparently, the Democrats live in some parallel universe where it is okay to set up a meeting in the Capitol for a group with known terrorist ties. The American people must ask about this colossal failure of judgment. With friends like these, imagine our enemies.

CONGRESS CANNOT AFFORD TO GIVE THE PRESIDENT ANOTHER BLANK CHECK ON IRAQ WAR

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

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Good morning, Mr. Speaker.

After 4 years, billions of dollars and thousands of lives, President Bush is once again asking Congress to reward failure with a blank check for the war in Iraq. Many of my Republican colleagues are more than willing to give the President anything he wants, but Democrats refuse to be a rubber stamp for the President's failed policies and, instead, want to finally require Iraqis to take control of their country. And yet the President has threatened to

veto legislation that contains his own benchmarks for success in Iraq, ensures our troops have the training they need, and fully supports both our veterans and our soldiers wounded in combat.

Our legislation also commits additional funding to fighting the forgotten war in Afghanistan. Over the last 4 years, the Bush administration has redirected funds and troops away from Afghanistan, forgetting that al Qaeda and the Taliban were the ones that attacked our Nation in 2001.

Mr. Speaker, Democrats will not allow President Bush to continue to pursue these failed policies. We will insist on a new direction.

BURMA

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, the U.S. has been calling for prompt action at the U.N. Security Council to address the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Burma. Unfortunately, other member nations have been slow to take up the call. One European nation even suggested recently that the world should wait for the situation in Burma to become urgent and acute before we take action.

Mr. Speaker, Burma reportedly has close to a million IDPs, internally displaced people. Isn't that urgent? Over 3,000 villages have been brutally destroyed by the military dictatorship. Isn't that an acute situation? The latest story out of Burma tells of four teenage girls brutally raped and then thrown into prison by the military rulers, more evidence of their systematic sexual violence there. Isn't that an urgent problem?

Mr. Speaker, there has been enough talk and enough delay. It is time for the world to take action and end the humanitarian crisis in Burma.

CONGRATULATING MANCHESTER WEST HIGH SCHOOL

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

Mr. HODES. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to congratulate Manchester West High School in Manchester, New Hampshire, and Region 14 Applied Technology Center team from Peterborough, New Hampshire, on their victory at the regional FIRST Robotics Competition this past week in Manchester. FIRST is an acronym for For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology.

This remarkable program was developed in New Hampshire and has now spread to 1,500 high schools nationwide. It encourages young people to become actively involved with engineering and technology. FIRST brings innovative companies together with kids, teaching and inspiring them to pursue careers in advanced science. The brilliant stu-

dents who participate actually build robots and then enter the robots in a series of competitions against the creations of other teams.

I salute the creativity and technological savvy of the winning teams. Congratulations to Manchester West and the Region 14 team and to FIRST on its aspirational mission. FIRST is helping inspire the next generation of technology innovators which our country depends on to remain competitive in our global economy.

□ 1015

IN MEMORY OF THE SEVEN OHIOANS WHO PERISHED IN GEORGIA BUS ACCIDENT

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

Mr. JORDAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise in solemn remembrance of seven Ohioans whose lives were cut short by a tragic bus accident on the morning of Friday, March 2, 2007, in Atlanta, Georgia. Though words cannot express the depth of their loss, we honor their memory and offer our condolences to their families, friends, teammates, and classmates of these seven individuals:

David Betts of Bryan, Ohio
Scott Harmon of Elida, Ohio
Cody Holp of Arcanum, Ohio
Jerry and Jean Niemeyer of Columbus Grove, Ohio
Tyler Williams of Lima, Ohio, and
Zack Arend of Oakwood, Ohio.

In the midst of this tragedy, I was heartened to see the selfless way these families and communities pulled together to support each other in a time of need. It reminds me of what is special about America.

I was also humbled by the outpouring of kindness from concerned families in Georgia and around the country. Just minutes after the accident, complete strangers were opening their homes to our families and offering their condolences and prayers.

While we grieve their passing, we know that they will live forever in the hearts of their loved ones and will eternally be remembered by the Bluffton University family and the people of Bluffton, Allen County and west central Ohio.

MEDICARE

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

Ms. CASTOR. Mr. Speaker, access to the highest quality health care for our seniors under Medicare is one of the most important issues facing this Congress. Unfortunately, the Bush White House has sought to undermine the great Medicare safety net by privatizing a great deal of health care under the Medicare system, turning it over to HMOs.

Just last week the former director of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid

Services from 2001 to 2003 spoke at a conference in Tampa and a reporter caught him on record saying that this privatization effort "was done to prime the pump and to get people to go back to HMOs. But it's a much bigger subsidy than we intended."

You see, these private plans receive about 11 percent more per beneficiary than the government spends in original Medicare. And this director said that he had meant for the subsidy to be about half that.

Mr. Speaker, we have a lot of work to do to stand up for our seniors and ensure the Medicare safety net works for everyone.

WAR SUPPLEMENTAL CONTAINS GOODIES

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

Mr. CARTER. There is talk that the \$100 billion war supplemental will include an extra \$20 billion in goodies. Such projects are seemingly irrelevant to the mission our soldiers are expected to carry out. For example:

\$60 million for the California and Oregon salmon fishery disaster of '06;

\$400 million for timber revenue program in Oregon;

\$400 million in low-income home energy assistance for State grants;

\$448 million unrequested funds for State children's health insurance programs, and;

a half a billion dollars for wildfire management and suppression.

Now, these are valuable projects, but they don't belong in an emergency war supplemental. They appear to be nothing more than an attempt to buy votes at the expense of our soldiers in the war on terror. The supplemental is meant to be an emergency troop funding vehicle and there is no excuse for \$20 billion worth of pork in that supplemental.

Let this Congress respect our soldiers and deny this pork.

KOSOVO

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

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to express my deep concern over the recent Department of Defense proposal to remove combat status from American soldiers serving in Kosovo. This summer, roughly 400 Minnesota National Guard soldiers who serve in my district will once again answer the call to duty in Kosovo. Almost every one of these 400 soldiers from my district will be going for the second or third time since September 11. In addition to the financial hardship these soldiers and their families will endure, the Department of Defense is asking them to suffer further by reclassifying this mission. Reclassification will cost American soldiers more than