

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR
WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON
WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO
COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND
COOPERATION IN EUROPE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 3003 note, and the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Members of the House to the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, in addition to Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Chairman, appointed on January 12, 2007:

Ms. SLAUGHTER, New York
Mr. MCINTYRE, North Carolina
Ms. SOLIS, California
Mr. BUTTERFIELD, North Carolina
Mr. SMITH, New Jersey
Mr. ADERHOLT, Alabama
Mr. PENCE, Indiana
Mr. PITTS, Pennsylvania

HONORING THE BENTONVILLE
HIGH SCHOOL CHAMBER CHOIR

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

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise this afternoon to honor an exceptional group of teenagers from my home district, the Bentonville High School Chamber Choir.

The choir, comprised of juniors and seniors, is one of only four across the Nation chosen to go to Carnegie Hall next week for the National High School Choral Festival.

Under the direction of Terry Hicks, the choir has participated in many regional and national competitions, representing Arkansas and the Third District with class. We are privileged to have students such as the Bentonville Chamber Choir living in and representing the State of Arkansas, and I commend their success.

I wish them the best of luck on their performance at the world-famous Carnegie hall.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. CLARKE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

RENAMING THE DEPARTMENT OF
THE NAVY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, in 1947, with the National Security Act, the United States Congress clearly stated that we have four separate military services, the Army, the Air Force, the Navy and the Marine Corps. Too many times people, both in the military and outside the military, do not realize that we have four separate services.

The Department of the Navy was created to be the department for two equal services acknowledged by law, the United States Marine Corps and the United States Navy. Both the Navy and the Marine Corps have proud heritages. In my service in Congress and in my seven terms on the Armed Services Committee, many times in hearings we hear the Navy admirals and the Marines generals stating for the RECORD, we are one team, we are one fighting team.

Madam Speaker, it is time for the Marine Corps to be recognized as the other three services are recognized. As a great defender of freedom for America with H.R. 346, this is the fourth Congress that I have introduced legislation to change the name of the Department of the Navy to be the Department of the Navy and the Marine Corps.

Madam Speaker, 121 of my colleagues last year cosponsored the bill. This year the bill is the same language. We are gaining large numbers from both parties who believe in the fairness of this legislation.

I would like to share part of an editorial published last year in the Chicago Tribune, and I quote, "No service branch shows more respect for tradition than the United States Marine Corps does, which makes it all the more ironic that tradition denies the corps an important show of respect: Equal billing with the other service branches."

Madam Speaker, I submit for printing in the RECORD the entire editorial from the April 21, 2006, Chicago Tribune.

[From the Chicago Tribune, Apr. 21, 2006]

STEP UP FOR THE MARINES

No service branch shows more respect for tradition than the U.S. Marine Corps does, which makes it all the more ironic that tradition denies the corps an important show of respect: Equal billing with the other service branches.

The Continental Congress ordered "two Battalions of Marines" to be raised in 1775 as landing forces for the Navy. The Marines have remained within the Navy on government organization charts ever since, even though the corps functions through wartime and peacetime as a separate branch in every other way.

Like the Army, Navy and Air Force, the Marine Corps has its own command structure. Its commandant holds equal status with other members of the Joint Chiefs of

Staff, which happens to be chaired for the first time by a Marine, Gen. Peter Pace.

Several Marine veterans and supporters have launched an online petition drive to support a bill proposed by Rep. Walter B. Jones. The North Carolina Republican, whose district includes Camp Lejeune, wants to fix the matter simply by changing the Department of Navy to the "Department of the Navy and Marine Corps."

Jones has twice passed similar measures in the House with bipartisan support, but the Senate was cool to them. Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman John Warner, a Virginia Republican, veteran and former Navy secretary, has promised "fair consideration" for the legislation. That's Senate-speak for a reluctance to commit. His reluctance seems to be rooted in a sense of tradition. But sometimes it's good to break with tradition. The War Department, for example, became the Defense Department after World War II. The Army Air Corps was elevated in 1941 to the Army Air Forces and in 1947 to the autonomous Air Force.

The Marines have not asked for complete autonomy. Nothing structurally needs to change in their relationship with the Navy, which has served both branches well. The corps only asks for recognition. Having served their nation proudly and courageously since colonial days, the leathernecks have earned a promotion.

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The Marines have not asked for complete autonomy. Nothing structurally needs to change in their relationship with the Navy, which has served both branches well. The Corps only asks for recognition, having served their Nation proudly and courageously since colonial days. The leathernecks have earned a promotion.

Madam Speaker, I want to say more emphatically beside me is a poster, is a blow up of orders from the United States Navy to submit to the family of Michael Bitz, a Marine sergeant killed in Iraq. His family received a Silver Star for valor. He gave his life for this country.

I have met his family, I have met his children, twins he will never know on earth because he died before they were born. You can see that the orders for Silver Star says at the top, the Secretary of the Navy, Washington D.C., and there is a Navy flag, but there is nothing about the Marine Corps about the heading.

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We took these orders and we want to show you how, if this bill should become law, how the fairness will show itself. If you take the orders for Michael Bitz, again, a marine who died for this country, his family received a Silver Star, and should this bill ever become law, this is what the orders will say: the Secretary of the Navy and Marine Corps, with the Navy flag and the Marine flag.

Madam Speaker, before I close, this is only an issue of fairness. The Marine Corps has earned this distinction to

stand with the other three services and be recognized as a separate service.

With that, Madam Speaker, I ask God to please continue to bless our men and women in uniform. I ask God, in his loving arms, to hold the families who have given a child dying in Afghanistan or Iraq. And I close by asking God to please continue to bless America.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. CLARKE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PALLONE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. POE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DREIER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SCHIFF addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. REICHERT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. REICHERT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BOOZMAN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

DEMOCRACY IN BELARUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, democracy and the rule of law is something that we have cherished in this country for over 200 years. And it is part of our responsibility to not only strengthen and preserve that in our country, but support those countries who are fighting for democracy and freedom.

Many of you may be thinking that this talk is about Iraq and Afghanistan. It is not. It is addressing the last dictatorship in Europe, which I am fortunate to have a relationship with based upon a niche I have developed in working with former captive nations and Eastern European countries.

The country of Belarus has been in a dictatorship for many years. And I am here today to call attention to the arrest two nights ago of an opposition leader, Vintsuk Vyachorka, by the KGB police. Yes, the Belarusian police still go by the KGB, under the direction of the Belarusian dictator, Alexander Lukashenka.

Vintsuk Vyachorka was pulled from his home in the middle of the night, only to be brought up on non-existent charges that will likely land him in jail for at least 25 days.

Madam Speaker, it is my belief, along with many others who have been monitoring the unraveling civil liberties of Belarus, that this arrest is merely the beginning of a series of arrests that the dictator, Mr. Lukashenka, is going to try to use to intimidate opposition leaders into abandoning a large protest on March 25 in honor of Belarusian freedom.

I say that we need to stand together today and say that we will not sit by and watch idly as Mr. Lukashenka uses his power to intimidate and scare the Belarusian people.

I am holding up a wrist bracelet, and many kids have been wearing these now in the United States for a couple of years. It is very simple. In Belarus, you can get arrested for wearing this. In fact, young people are pulled off the streets, intimidated and harassed. So today I bring this on the floor to show

my solidarity with the Belarusian people, for those who are seeking freedom, a return to democracy and the rule of law.

I will not be silent, and I know the world community will not be silent until the last dictatorship in Europe changes its ways and becomes a democracy and enters the community of free, democratic countries in Europe.

CHEMICAL FACILITY SECURITY IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2007

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Chemical Facility Security Improvement Act of 2007.

It is my hope that this act will improve upon the current legislation authorizing the Department of Homeland Security to regulate security practices at the Nation's chemical facilities.

On October 5, 2006, H.R. 5441, FY07 Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act became law (P.L. 109-295). Section 550 of that bill granted the Department of Homeland Security the authority to promulgate interim regulations for chemical facility security.

Although not required for interim regulations, the Department put out an Advance Notice of Rulemaking and requested public comments. Parts of the proposed regulations caused concern, prompting comments from myself and several of my colleagues in Congress. The intention of this bill is to address four areas of concern: Preemption of State laws, use of specific security measures, information protection, and private rights of action.

The most concerning piece of the proposed regulation occurred when the Department decided to go far beyond congressional intent and assert the right of the Secretary to preempt any State or local law; H.R. 5441 was silent on the issue of preemption of State laws, and other major chemical security legislation considered in the 109th Congress—specifically H.R. 5695 and S. 2145—protected State laws from preemption in most cases.

This bill will protect State laws by allowing no Federal funds to be used to approve a site security plan unless the facility meets or exceeds security standards established by the State or local government.

H.R. 5441 restricted the Secretary from requiring the use of any particular security measure. The use of specific security measures could, however, prove necessary to lower the risk posed to and by the chemical facility in certain cases. This bill removes this restriction and would allow the Secretary to require the use of specific security measures where necessary.

According to the proposed regulations, the Department seeks to create a new class of security information called Chemical-Terrorism Vulnerability Information (CVI). The creation of new classes of protected information is not desirable, and this bill would require Vulnerability Assessments and Site Security Plans to be treated as Sensitive Security Information (SSI). SSI is the same information classification currently used for Vulnerability Assessments and Site Security Plans required by the Coast Guard under the Maritime Transportation Security Act, under which chemical facilities located at ports are currently regulated.