

here in Washington, DC will take the opportunity to call my office to get on this bill and start the process of restoring confidence and integrity to the House of Representatives.

#### HONORING CLAIRE MITCHEL AND RECOGNIZING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CARNEY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ) is recognized for 5 minutes.

##### HONORING CLAIRE MITCHEL

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, this Sunday, the Miami Herald's Broward County edition will publish the 1,130th column by writer Claire Mitchel. Claire's column, entitled "The Third Third," is believed to be the longest-running, uninterrupted features column on aging in any major newspaper in America. Nothing in the last 22 years, not illness, surgery, births, deaths, computer foul-ups, vacations, hurricanes, nothing stopped Claire Mitchel from offering her unique weekly perspective on the aging of America.

Week after week, Claire's column has offered us wisdom, guidance, insight and gentle chuckles. Her book, a collection of her columns, was entitled "Seeing the World Through Rose-Colored Bifocals." Tony-winning playwright Vinnette Carroll conceived a musical based on Claire's line, "At our age, we don't buy green bananas."

But Claire Mitchel has been far more than a columnist. She has been a public relations person who represented everyone from Ann Landers to Eleanor Roosevelt. She marched with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; she had her own radio show; and she was an ardent feminist before mainstream America understood what that meant.

Claire was Coordinator of Women's Concerns for Broward County's Human Relations Division for 10 years and a co-founder of the Older Women's League. She was chosen Feminist of the Year by the Broward Commission on the Status of Women and was inducted into the Broward County Women's Hall of Fame. And through it all, she has been a devoted wife and mother.

In her column, marking her 85th birthday recently, Claire offered this observation: "Today I am a woman of 85, asking the same question everyone asks following such a statement, where did the years go? My answer is, with a lot of living."

"Each day, on each occasion, when there was a question of whether to do something, I chose yes. No regrets for what I did, just what I didn't do. When others hesitated, I volunteered. Mostly it was the right decision, leading me to an activity that I enjoyed."

This has been the underlying message, Mr. Speaker, of each of Claire Mitchel's weekly writings for the last 22 years: keep living every day to its fullest, no matter what age you are.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I pay tribute to Claire Mitchel, whose shoulders are strong enough to have supported thousands of women by sharing with them her pearls of wisdom.

##### RECOGNIZING NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I also rise today in recognition of National Women's History Month as we wind down to the last day of this month on Saturday, March 31. First let me start off by saying how honored I am to be a part of the 110th Congress, which boasts 90 women Members serving in both the House and Senate.

With this year's theme of "Generations of Women Moving History Forward," it is my honor to recognize some very special women in my district, the 20th Congressional District of Florida, who have done and continue to do their part to advance the women's movement.

Today I call specific attention to a particular group of women who volunteer their time at the Jack and Jill Children's Center in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. The Jack and Jill Children's Center is a nonprofit organization that provides family-oriented, early childhood education and support to strengthen working families.

The center has a volunteer Grandparent Program, whose mission is to engage older adults in volunteer services to meet critical community needs and to enrich the lives of volunteers. Jack and Jill's grandparents have the important job of interacting with little children. Whether it is tying shoes, serving meals, patting backs at nap time, or sitting with a child and practicing writing their name, these grandparents provide each child with a special relationship that he or she may not otherwise receive.

The success of the Grandparent Program, Mr. Speaker, is attributed to its mutually beneficial nature, to both the participants and children who receive the care. Many of the programs' grandparents are working with their own grandchildren, who will grow up in a loving educational environment, fostering a stronger sense of community, work ethic and successful life.

These amazing women, Mr. Speaker, are Martha Myrick, Pearline Scott, Annie Welch, Merceline Victor, Barbara Osgood, Elizabeth Dorsey, Johnnie Daniels, Maria Morency, Margaret Lewis, and Albertha Brown. They collectively average 75 years of age and have been an active part of our south Florida community all of their lives, some of whom even attended grade school together.

By providing a better life for our Nation's working, single and low-income mothers, Jack and Jill's Grandparent Program is moving women's history forward.

Mr. Speaker, our Speaker, NANCY PELOSI, exemplifies that a woman can do a job that any man can. I thank her for her service to our Nation, and

thank you for giving me the opportunity to tell America about some of the women in my district who make positive changes in the lives of others.

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 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.)

#### A SALUTE TO WOMEN DURING NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

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. Mr. Speaker, I rise this afternoon to comment on what has been an important journey that this House has taken. As I do that, might I also mention that we celebrate National Women's History Month and salute the women Members of the United States Congress, and particularly salute and offer my admiration for our new Speaker of the House, NANCY PELOSI.

At the same time, I want to pay tribute to my mother, Ivalita Jackson, and my late aunt and all of the women in my family. Also might I especially pay tribute to the women of the 18th Congressional District. They are certainly strong, and they certainly have invested, not only in Houston, Texas, but in this Nation. Dominique de Menil, Christy Adair, the businesswomen of our community, Ninfa Lorenzo, and so many others that symbolize the kind of strength that women have exhibited as strong Americans.

I am also quite enthusiastic about the fact that we will soon have the bust of an early suffragette in legislation that just passed and was signed by the President that I authored, along with Senator CLINTON in the other body, and that is the bust of Sojourner Truth, an abolitionist and a woman suffragette.

We have come a long way, but we have a long way to go. So I simply wanted to capture very briefly the journey that we took.

Last week, this body voted 218 votes for the emergency supplemental that would set a timeline to bring our troops home, men and women who have been on the front lines in Iraq, who will come home now with dignity and success because the military benchmarks have been met. Saddam Hussein has

been deposed, there have been no findings of weapons of mass destruction, and, frankly, it is time now, as the President has said often, for Iraq to stand up and for us to stand down. It was a courageous vote, and I am delighted that we unified the Nation and were successful.

Mr. Speaker, we traveled through the week. We passed hurricane recovery legislation that was never passed in the last Congress. And now we have a budget that defends America. It lifts up firefighters and law enforcement officers. It provides middle-class tax credits, like the child tax credit and marriage penalty relief. It looks forward to fixing the alternative minimum tax. It protects the middle class. It engages working America by providing health care for all of America's children. \$50 billion is in this budget.

What concerns me, Mr. Speaker, is although I believe in democracy, what concerns me is when my friends on the other side of the aisle continue to play procedural games. You just saw a few minutes ago the objection to setting the time for us to come back after the work recess, the repeating and the re-voting of votes over and over again, dilatory tactics so that this body cannot move forward and pass legislation. Albeit over the last 10 or 12 years that I have been here under the Republican majority, they couldn't get after the tragedy of 9/11, a real 9/11 bill passed. We did it in the first 20 days. They couldn't pass a Medicare prescription drug bill that wouldn't hurt the senior citizens who are still trying to find out how can I pay and leap over the donut hole. They couldn't do it, and we are doing it.

Over and over again, moneys would come back into the Federal Government because of the poor structure of SCHIP, the State Children's Health Insurance Program. They weren't prepared to fully fund it, and we are. The collapse and debacle of Leave No Child Behind that disrespects teachers and takes learning away from children, they could not fix it; but we are going to fix it.

So my instructions to my friends as we go home for Passover and Easter and other religious holidays that we will commemorate, a season of peace, come back with the attitude of working for America and not for yourselves. Come back with the attitude of being respectful to the process of democracy. The majority represents the American people now, and the American people want change, not bickering. They want bipartisanship, not divisiveness.

When you have a budget that fully funds defense, but yet allows us to be able to be compassionate with the heart and support the American Dream, then this side of the aisle should stop with the dilatory tactics.

Mr. Speaker, I hope when we return, we will be a bipartisan Congress and move America forward. The Democrats have taken the leadership. We are doing the right thing, and I want to thank them for all their work.

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 Maryland (Mr. SARBANES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SARBANES 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 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 gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

#### THIRTY-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to address the House. As you know, the working group, we come to the floor to share good information with the Members and make sure that we are all informed on what is happening in this new-direction Congress. Also, for us to understand our future, we have to go into our past. We try not to dwell on that too much, but when there are examples of leadership and courage, we want to identify and illuminate the leadership that many, that the majority of the Members of the House have already taken.

Today's vote with passing this budget resolution by the House is a perfect example of our priorities as we move through the process. As you know, there will come a time when the Senate and the House will get together in conference and we will send our budget to the President, and hopefully we can all come to common ground on behalf of not only domestic priorities, but also international priorities and how we are seen in the world.

This is a Friday for us here in Congress because this is now the close of legislative business, and we are going to be off for the next 2 weeks from Washington, DC. But we will be back in our districts working very hard, talking with our constituents.

Many Members will take this opportunity to share with the members of their community and their district the accomplishments that they have been able to make in the last 2 weeks, and they have been quite historical. I think with the emergency supplemental, even going back to that, since that is a week old and something we have already voted in the affirmative in a bipartisan way, I think that is a testimonial to what this 110th Congress is going to be about and what we continue to work very hard in making sure that the American people have a chance to see exactly how hard we have been working.

I think I am going to have to get my chart that talks about the days we have worked, the resolutions we have passed, the suspension bills we passed compared to previous Congresses. I think it is important when people look at their Members of Congress and they say, well, are you actually working on my behalf. I am hearing from the 109th Congress that there were times that you spent more time out of Washington than you spent in Washington. And many of our Members are hungry to see their constituents because we have been here the majority of the weeks working on a 5-day workweek.

□ 1530

Out of that 5-day work week, there has been a lot that has been accomplished.

So I am going to talk about not only the resolution, but I am going to also talk about the effort of bipartisan votes that have taken place here on the floor and on the accomplishments of being here in Washington, DC, and having hearings. I think that is important, and I think that the American people need to be fully aware.

We talk about Iraq in the same light that we talk about the work. On the 29th, which is today, the total deaths in Iraq, 3,243. That's as of 10 a.m. That's 10 a.m. numbers. Wounded, returned back to duty, 13,473. That number continues to change, Mr. Speaker. And wounded not returning back to duty is 10,841.

Why do I give those numbers out? I give those numbers out to make sure that all of the Members understand that this work is very, very serious.

This number is changing because just today in the Armed Services Committee we had a hearing on Guantanamo that has a connection to the efforts against terrorism throughout the world. But oversight accountability hearings on Iraq are at 104. That is the last documented number I know. When we get back from the break, this calendar will be updated.

Also, we had issues of cleaning up Washington, DC, and making sure that