

Stamp program and how we can better meet the needs of low-income Americans.

PROMOTING ADOPTION TAX RELIEF

(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. Madam Speaker, in January I introduced a bill to make permanent the \$10,000 adoption tax credit which is set to expire in 2010. Four months later this bill has garnered 125 bipartisan cosponsors, including Ways and Means Committee Chairman CHARLES RANGEL.

As the grateful father of an adopted son and a member of the Congressional Coalition on Adoption, I know all too well the challenges and rewards adoption brings. The adoption process can be mentally and physically exhausting. Families should not be overwhelmed with the financial burdens as well. We should offer incentives, not penalties, for making this commitment.

I urge my colleagues on the Ways and Means Committee to move forward with this legislation and make the dream of a family a permanent reality by promoting adoption.

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

DEMOCRATS WANT TO BETTER CARE FOR AMERICAN FAMILIES BUT FACE RESISTANCE FROM BUSH

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

Mr. ELLISON. Madam Speaker, the new Democratic House has been busy passing a wide range of measures to help our Nation's economy grow. Unfortunately, we are having a difficult time finding support from the White House.

We began by increasing the minimum wage for the first time in 10 years. The bill was overwhelmingly supported by this House, and yet President Bush has already vetoed it once.

This House also voted to support the Employee Free Choice Act, which helps all Americans share in our Nation's economic growth by supporting the basic right of workers to choose their own representative. But the President has threatened a veto.

The Congress also overwhelmingly supported a bill that invests in hiring 10,000 new science and math teachers so that we can better compete in the new global economy. Unfortunately, the Bush administration opposes this legislation in its current form.

Madam Speaker, the new Congress is passing legislation that will grow our economy. Now we just need support from the White House to make it a reality.

ATTACK ON FORT DIX

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

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, recently six foreign-born extremists, inspired by al Qaeda and its preachers of hate, planned to murder U.S. troops with semiautomatic weapons and rocket-propelled grenades. The place, not in Iraq, but the United States Army base at Fort Dix in New Jersey.

They were knowledgeable and cunning, using one member who delivered pizzas on the base to gain intimate knowledge of the fort. They were also planning to attack a U.S. Naval installation in Philadelphia.

Before the attack could be unleashed on U.S. troops, the FBI was tipped off to their plans, and they were arrested. Not surprisingly, three of these terrorists were in the country illegally. Two others had green cards.

We are no longer a safe nation. The dangers of our security are real. We discuss in Congress the war against extreme radicals, but it starts with securing the borders. Because crossing unsecured U.S. borders is very easy. It brings the good, the bad, and the ugly. Because all three groups know that, for political reasons, the Federal Government refuses to protect American citizens by securing our sovereignty.

And that's just the way it is.

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DEMOCRATS' LONG RECORD OF ACHIEVEMENT

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

Mr. ALTMIRE. Madam Speaker, we are now 4½ months into the new session of Congress, and the Democratic Congress has a long record of achievement. We have already passed 37 pieces of key legislation, many, I am proud to say, with bipartisan support.

We have passed bills to strengthen our military, increase funding for our veterans, restore accountability, promote energy independence, lower the cost of prescription drugs and student loans, balance the budget and grow our economy. But unfortunately, not everyone got the loud and clear message the American people delivered for change last November. President Bush opposes two-thirds of those bills that we passed this session. I hope that the President will join us in moving this country in a new direction.

GSE REFORM

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

Mrs. BACHMANN. Madam Speaker, promoting homeownership, especially homeownership for low and moderate income families, is a high priority for Republicans in this United States Con-

gress. The GSEs, the Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, have played a very important part in that goal. We ought to preserve that system, Madam Speaker, we ought to protect that system. However, Congress also has a responsibility to limit the risks that the GSEs pose to the United States taxpayers and their burden to that market.

Many of my colleagues have been working for years to enact meaningful reform of the GSEs and their regulator. That's a good thing. But this year's bill goes far beyond improving the safety and the soundness of the GSEs by now taxing those portfolios to create an affordable housing fund.

I agree with the Congressional Budget Office, Madam Speaker. This new assessment on the GSEs will be passed along to customers in the form of higher fees. It will raise the cost of purchasing a home or refinancing a mortgage. That is exactly the opposite direction that we want to go.

I urge my colleagues to join me in opposing this fund.

HOUSE WORKS IN STRONG BIPARTISAN FASHION TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF OUR ARMED FORCES

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

Mr. WILSON of Ohio. Madam Speaker, today the House begins debate on the Defense authorization bill, a bill that was passed out of the Armed Services Committee 58-0, unanimously. The legislation received the support of the entire committee because it focuses on our Nation's immediate threats and the benefits our soldiers need today.

The Defense bill authorizes substantial resources to improve the protection of our troops, including \$4 billion for Mine Resistant Ambush Protected Vehicles. These vehicles have been shown to dramatically reduce the injuries of our soldiers. We want to ensure that our troops have access to the best equipment that will protect them while they are in battle.

In his budget earlier this year, the President proposed giving our troops a 3 percent pay raise. This Congress believes they deserve more, and consequently they will receive a 3.5 percent raise.

Madam Speaker, this Defense bill shows our dedication to the troops on the front lines, and it deserves strong bipartisan support.

WELCOMING GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN SCHOOL

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, I would like to welcome Good Shepherd Lutheran School and all the visitors that we have in our Nation's Capital today.

This constitutional Republic works. The Founding Fathers, which I believe established this through divine providence, established a government based upon compromise, also a government that is concerned about the different branches of government and the checks and balance systems which then were enacted to defend against usurpation by either and each branch.

I just come here today because many times we forget about the great institution in which we serve, about the blessings of freedom and liberties, and that God truly has blessed this Nation and will continue to do so.

IN SUPPORT OF H.R. 1968

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

Ms. SOLIS. Madam Speaker, today I rise in strong support of legislation that I recently introduced, H.R. 1968, the Community Health Workers Act of 2007.

The bill provides Federal support for community health workers, also known as promotoras. Community health workers conduct education and provide prevention information on chronic illnesses to communities of color, the Asian, Latino, African American and even Native American communities. They are able to reach out to patients in ways that traditional health care providers can't, through culturally and linguistically appropriate care. They are trusted by their communities.

Families who interacted with community workers were eight times more likely to obtain health insurance for their children, and their children stayed insured. That is why I strongly believe that the community health workers need to be part of the SCHIP reauthorization bill moving forward in the House.

As the Chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus' Health Task Force, I am committed to reducing health care disparities in our country. The legislation will help achieve that goal, and I am proud to have the support of other colleagues here today.

HOUSE REPUBLICANS STILL WANT TO PROVIDE PRESIDENT BLANK CHECK ON IRAQ WAR

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

Mr. BUTTERWORTH. Madam Speaker, while the President continues to resist any changes to his failed policy in Iraq, the situation is getting worse, it's getting worse for our troops. American casualties are up 53 percent this year over the same period last year.

Despite the escalating civil war, last week Pentagon officials told 35,000 more American troops that they will be sent to Iraq. Earlier this year, the President said the surge would last a couple of months, but now the adminis-

tration is planning to stretch the plan out for 18 months.

It is increasingly clear that the President's plan to escalate the war in Iraq is not working. The American people overwhelmingly favor a new direction in Iraq and a plan to hold the Iraqi Government accountable for their own nation and their own security, but for some reason Republicans continue to stall, unwilling to break away from President Bush and ignoring all the bad news on the ground.

Madam Speaker, after 4 years of failed policies, we do not need to give the President a blank check.

TRADE AGREEMENTS MUST HAVE INTERNATIONAL LABOR STANDARDS

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

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Madam Speaker, last Thursday, the leadership of the House announced a new trade policy for America. And as this body considers future trade agreements, it would be well to look at the House Ways and Means Committee Web site where a one-page policy on a new trade policy for America is stated. That policy states that our new trade policy will ensure trade agreements raise the standard of living, including requiring companies to adopt, maintain and enforce international labor standards and their domestic laws and practices, thus promoting basic worker rights and acceptable working conditions.

We need to make sure that the maintenance and enforcement of those international labor standards are part of any trade agreement on the domestic side of those trade countries that we are negotiating with.

The Constitution of the Soviet Union had great statements about protecting the rights of workers and protecting the rights of individuals, and on paper that's what they said, but in reality they meant little. These trade agreements need to have enforcement on the other side to be effective.

HOMETOWN HEROES' CLAIMS MUST BE RESOLVED

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

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Madam Speaker, I rise in honor of our brave men and women in uniform, the police officers, firefighters and other public service officers who protect our communities.

As yesterday was National Peace Officers Memorial Day, there is no better time to call on the Department of Justice to award the benefits due to our law enforcement officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice in defending our Nation.

For 30 years now we have made a strong statement about the value our

Nation places on the contribution for those who serve our community through the Public Safety Officers Benefit plan. About 4 years ago, however, I learned the PSOB was routinely rejecting claims or requiring burdensome documentation from these officers and first responders who died from a heart attack or stroke while serving our communities. I felt that this was wrong, and so did most of my colleagues here in Congress. In a strong bipartisan effort, Congress unanimously passed and the President signed it and the Hometown Heroes Survivors Benefit Act became law.

Since 2003, when the law was enacted, only two claims have been awarded out of the more than 240 received, while nearly 40 claims have been rejected. The rest languish in a bureaucratic mess.

I urge the Department of Justice to act swiftly and fairly on the remaining claims and pay these claims to provide this much needed and much deserved benefit as we observe National Police Week.

LESS TROOPS IN BAGHDAD AND MORE COPS IN AMERICA

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

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, I thought about what I would use my 1-minute on today, and one thought was to address all the beautiful people that I see have come to Washington and Congress to view our Capitol and our Nation's Capital, and it is a beautiful sight. And another thought was to talk about the need for General Alberto Gonzales to resign to bring back the morale in the Justice Department and the people's faith in that institution. But the bottom line is the thing I campaigned upon is still the most important issue facing America today. We need to bring our troops home, redeploy our troops, and put our resources, financially and also personnel-wise, to work in America, protecting our streets and giving us a more secure country.

We need less troops on the streets of Baghdad and more cops on the streets of Memphis and other cities in this country to fight crime here at home.

GAS PRICES ARE HIGH DUE TO BUSH ADMINISTRATION'S FAILURE TO ENACT ENERGY POLICY

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

Mr. KAGEN. Madam Speaker, as we move closer to Memorial Day weekend and the summer months ahead, families in Wisconsin and across the country will be packing up their families to head off on vacation, like up north in Minocqua, Door County in Wisconsin. And once again, gas prices are hitting record highs. American families and