

laws we have ignored. The motives appear to always be about money or power.

However, our government would do well to assume its constitutional responsibility to protect America. The government has the ability, but not the will, to protect the border.

Congress needs to provide adequate resources for border security. The government has the responsibility then to enforce the law and not give in to special interest groups. Then we can deal with the people that are here illegally after the government proves it has the will to secure our homeland.

And that's just the way it is.

ENDING THE WAR IN IRAQ

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

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, this Democratic Congress has been successful in raising the minimum wage with help from people on the other side of the aisle, and the President signed that into law.

It has also passed stem cell research with some help from people on the other side of the aisle. The President has threatened to veto that bill and that's unfortunate.

The biggest issue hanging over this Congress is the war in Iraq; and while this Congress has made moves to have timetables and benchmarks, it hasn't achieved a consensus that the President will agree to and effectuate policy that brings our troops home.

It will take colleagues on the other side of the aisle, people who have been wedded to this war, President Bush's war, and have been unable to get themselves derailed from that train that's on a collision course. Until Republicans come forward and heed America's call to bring our troops home, more and more Americans will die in Iraq, more and more American dollars will be spent in Iraq where they shouldn't be.

We need to redeploy our troops to fight terrorists in Afghanistan and other places and keep our country safe. I ask my Republican colleagues, Mr. Speaker, to join us.

SENATE BILL IS NOT THE ANSWER TO IMMIGRATION REFORM

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

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, today the President of the United States will come to the Capitol Building to revive a deeply flawed immigration bill being considered in the U.S. Senate.

One year ago, the President challenged this Congress to find an answer to the crisis of illegal immigration, and, Mr. President, amnesty is not the answer. The core fallacy of the Senate bill would grant unlimited Z visa amnesty to millions of illegal immigrants

who simply pay a fine and submit to a background check.

While the Senate bill is not the answer, there is a way forward, Mr. Speaker. I truly believe that after the Senate bill goes away, the House of Representatives would do well to come together across party lines and find a way forward that puts border security first, rejects amnesty and creates a new guest worker system that requires illegal immigrants to leave the country to apply and to learn English once they're here.

There is a way forward. We can achieve immigration reform in this Congress, but the Senate bill is not that way.

CROSS-BORDER PILOT PROGRAM BY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

(Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today dismayed by the Department of Transportation's decision to rush dangerous Mexican trucks onto American roads.

In the last month, this House voted twice to impose severe restraints on any cross-border trucking program. Three weeks ago, we passed my Safe American Roads Act by an overwhelming, bipartisan 411-3 margin. The supplemental appropriations bill included similar language. It passed both Houses, and it was signed into law by the President of the United States.

But although we have twice loudly and unambiguously rebuked the Department of Transportation, they are simply ignoring the American people. On Friday, they announced plans to launch a cross-border pilot program anyway, in clear violation of both Houses and the will of the American people.

Their actions are deceptive, and they are intolerable. The people's House cannot be sidestepped through bureaucratic trickery. I urge the DOT to put the brakes on this profoundly undemocratic course of action. The safety of our highways is at stake.

HONORING DR. HARLON CRIMM

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

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Harlon Crimm, who last week announced his retirement as president of Chattahoochee Technical College.

In the past 24 years, Dr. Crimm's contributions to Chattahoochee Tech have been profound. He quadrupled enrollment, making Chattahoochee the largest technical institution in the State of Georgia. He oversaw the college's accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. He instilled a sense of mission and pride in

the institution, helping it gain national prestige.

But Harlon has been molding Georgia's young minds for nearly half a century. He began his career as a high school teacher in Mississippi, later becoming the principal of Lockheed Elementary School in Marietta and director of personnel for Marietta City Schools. My four children attended Marietta, and they benefited greatly from their exposure to Dr. Crimm.

Now in retirement, Dr. Crimm will be able to spend more time with his wife, Jo Ann, a retired Ph.D. educator, and his children and grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join me in thanking Dr. Harlon Crimm for his years of service educating Georgia's young minds. In fact, Dr. Crimm eloquently summed up his own work when he referred to his past 44 years in education not as a job or a career, but as a calling.

DEMOCRATS LIVE UP TO THE PROMISES OUR NATION MADE OUR VETERANS

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

Mr. CARNAHAN. Mr. Speaker, after years of funding cuts by Republican Congresses and the Bush administration to key education, veterans, college aid and transportation programs, this House is now bringing appropriations bills to the floor that invest in the right priorities, while also remaining fiscally responsible.

This week, Democratic leadership will pass the largest increase in veterans health care funding in history, a critical step in fulfilling our Nation's obligation to our service men and women, their families and our veterans.

The Veterans Health Administration estimates that they will treat 54,000 more troops in 2008 than they did over the last year, including more than 263,000 veterans of the war in Iraq and Afghanistan. This House is going to provide our veterans the health care services they are entitled to.

We also add 1,000 new claims processors to reduce the backlog of benefit claims so that our veterans will get the services they need in a timely way.

Mr. Speaker, this Congress is dedicated to fulfilling our commitment to our veterans in a fiscally responsible way.

SECRET EARMARKS

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

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, for months we have heard the Democrats' promises that they would make this the most transparent and ethical Congress that our Nation has ever seen, and of course, we all want to

see Congress held accountable. We all want the legislative process to be open and be accessible to the American people.

So this week the Democrats get to take a swing at making good on their promises of transparency and accountability, and they're already striking out with their secret slush funds.

By deciding not to include any earmarks in the appropriation bills and instead to slip them in by the dark of night into conference reports, preventing anyone from questioning or challenging their earmarks, they have completely shut off the legislative process to the American people.

Now, let me make it clear that I am not against earmarks. I am more than willing to get up here on the floor and defend each and every earmark that I have ever gotten or tried to get for my district. And I think that all Members should have the opportunity to defend their projects and their requests, but more importantly, tax paying citizens have the right to know exactly how their hard-earned dollars are being spent.

To make this process closed is an insult to taxpayers, and if Democrats have nothing to hide, they should live up to their promise and open the process back up to the American people and hold themselves accountable for their spending.

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DEMOCRATS ARE FOCUSED ON THE RIGHT PRIORITIES AND ARE FULFILLING OUR PROMISE TO VETERANS

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

Mr. MAHONEY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, this year and in years past, the Bush administration has neglected the needs of America's veterans. In his annual budget request, the President did not propose enough funding for the Veterans Administration to meet the growing needs of our veterans.

Fortunately, the new Democratic Congress did not forget about our veterans. This week, we will bring a Military Construction and Veterans' Affairs Appropriations bill to the floor that provides the largest increase in veterans' health care funding in history. Our bill includes \$600 million for a new initiative for mental health and post-traumatic stress syndrome, so that we can ensure that our veterans and returning soldiers have the facilities and the care they need. The funding bill also provides essential services that will allow these veterans to transition back into their communities.

Democrats know that the Federal Government must keep its promises to the men and women who have defended our Nation. This bill, I am proud to say, lives up to that promise.

INDEPENDENCE PRIZE

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

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, the disastrous effects of our Nation's dependence on foreign oil are being seen in every new tank of gas and every cent we send overseas to pay for Middle Eastern oil. Rising gas prices are a product of rising demand and not enough supply.

The time is now to revolutionize the way we produce and consume energy. That's why I am proposing a 21st Century Manhattan Project to spur the ingenuity of our American private sector, to deliver free market solutions for our Nation's energy problem.

I am introducing legislation to create a \$1 billion prize, the Independence Prize, as I call it, that will go to Americans who develop revolutionary products that substantially reduce our dependence on foreign oil, eliminating our dependence on foreign oil. The Independence Prize provides incentives to American entrepreneurs to get transformational innovation to consumers, and more importantly, put Americans on a path to energy independence. Independence is the key.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

DEMOCRATIC HOUSE WORKING ON BEHALF OF AMERICAN PEOPLE WHILE PRESIDENT OBSTRUCTS PROCESS

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, House Democrats have been working in a bipartisan manner to approve important legislation which will have a real impact on the lives of hardworking American families. Unfortunately, President Bush has expressed his opposition to a majority of the bipartisan legislation we have passed.

Last week, Congress sent the President a stem cell research bill that would provide hope for millions of Americans suffering from diseases like cancer, diabetes and Alzheimer's. The final bill promotes lifesaving embryonic stem cell research by increasing the number of stem lines that are eligible to be used for federally funded research.

I would hope the President would not stand in the way of real medical progress and would reconsider his veto threat to this vitally important legislation. The President also opposes legislation passed by the House that would make prescription drugs more affordable for America's seniors. And he also opposes legislation making more affordable student loans for America's teenagers.

Congress cannot move this Nation in a new direction on its own. It's time

for the President to join us, creating a meaningful change for the American people.

LACK OF BORDER FENCE FUNDING

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, we are hearing illegal immigration is a big debate. There is a lot of passion on this issue.

Last year, Congress took the right step in passing the Secure Fence Act. It was the right thing to do. It puts 800 miles of fencing in place, both physical and electronic borders, on our southern border.

Now, authorizing it is one thing, but paying for it is another matter. That duty has fallen to the new liberal leadership here in the House. Even though they have increased Homeland Security spending by \$2.4 billion, a lot of that is going to go into global warming.

They have cut funding for the fence by \$187 million, compared to last year's budget. You are going to hear a lot about this as we begin our appropriations process today.

As we work on this Homeland Security bill, they will claim to have budgeted \$1 billion for the fence, but they are withholding \$700 million of that while we go through bureaucratic red tape. We have got to be certain we don't hurt the environment, all the while 4,500 illegal immigrants cross the southern border every day.

It is disgraceful. Do not delay the fence. Fund it. Take action in the appropriate matter. The hold-on-to-your-wallet Congress is at it. Stand up for the fence.

PRESIDENT REFUSES TO CHANGE COURSE IN IRAQ DESPITE INCREASING VIOLENCE

(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, last week the President's new war czar told the Congress that the troop escalation plan is failing and that the American people should expect sectarian violence in Iraq to continue.

Finally someone in the administration is making sense of the situation on the ground in Iraq, but honesty does not make up for the fact that President Bush continues to stubbornly oppose any change in war policy.

In the wake of the deadliest 2-month period in the war, 231 U.S. service men and women were killed in April and May. The facts on the ground show an increasingly grim picture.

In fact, a recent internal military assessment shows that the U.S. military's plan to secure Baghdad against a rising insurgency is falling far short of its goal. To date, according to the document, only one-third of the Baghdad