

should be established (rollcall 549), and H.R. 2546, To designate the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Asheville, North Carolina, as the "Charles George Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center" (rollcall 550).

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, June 25, 2007, I was absent from the House for a familial medical emergency.

Had I been present I would have voted:

On rollcall No. 548—"yes"—H. Res. 189—Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that a "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day" should be established.

On rollcall No. 549—"yes"—H.R. 2546—To designate the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Asheville, North Carolina, as the "Charles George Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center."

IN SUPPORT OF 100 PERCENT AIRPORT WORK SCREENING

(Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, America recently got a wake-up call when we learned that law enforcement had thwarted a Muslim extremist plot to blow up Kennedy Airport and the surrounding neighborhoods.

This is not the first time that we have had our security exposed at our airports. In March airport employees at Orlando International exploited a loophole in our security and placed a bag with an arsenal of weapons on the airplane. As workers, they never had to pass through a metal detector or had anyone check their bags or equipment.

That is why I introduced H.R. 1413 with my good friend Congresswoman NITA LOWEY from New York to implement a 100 percent worker screening pilot program at seven of our airports.

Listen up, America. It is unacceptable that we spend billions to secure our airports and airplanes from dangerous passengers, yet we leave the back door open to workers. I would hope that the Homeland Security Committee heard this wake-up call and scheduled a full committee markup as soon as possible so we can close this dangerous loophole.

IT IS TIME TO BRING OUR TROOPS HOME FROM IRAQ

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as we begin to commemorate and celebrate the founding of this Nation, what a great Nation, July 4 brings all Americans together. We stand strong. We are bold and we are proud. I am proud to be an American.

But I petition this government, this Congress, this President that we must

resolve the Iraq crisis. Our soldiers are defined as they are, warriors for justice. But when you have a complete collapse of government, as was evidenced in the last 24 hours, suicide bombs, car bombs, an enormous toll and toll of lives being taken, our soldiers emerged in neighborhoods, sitting as sitting ducks, it is time to bring our troops home. And as long as we remain tone deaf to the American people, we undermine the values of this Nation that indicates we all are created equal.

It is time to bring our troops home from Iraq. It is time for a new policy and a new direction.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ROSS). 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.

REVISIONS TO THE 302(a) ALLOCATIONS AND BUDGETARY AGGREGATES ESTABLISHED BY THE CONCURRENT RESOLUTIONS ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEARS 2007 AND 2008

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

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to section 207(d) of S. Con. Res. 21, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2008, I hereby submit the revised 302(a) allocations for the House Committee on Appropriations for Fiscal Years 2007 and 2008. Section 207(d)(2) directs the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget to adjust the discretionary spending allocations for an Internal Revenue Service tax compliance program integrity initiative as provided in section 207(d)(1)(B) of S. Con. Res. 21.

DISCRETIONARY APPROPRIATIONS: APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE 302(a) ALLOCATION (In millions of dollars)

	Budget authority	Outlays
Fiscal Year 2007	950,316	1,029,465
Fiscal Year 2008	953,459	1,028,780

IN SUPPORT OF H. RES. 505, RECOGNIZING THE INNUMERABLE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE RECREATIONAL BOATING COMMUNITY AND THE BOATING INDUSTRY TO THE CONTINUING PROSPERITY AND AFFLUENCE OF THE UNITED STATES

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

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I would first like to commend the distinguished chairman of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure (Mr. OBERSTAR) for his support of House Resolution 505 and for his

leadership on the committee. These days we face mounting challenges to improve our infrastructure and protect our highways and waterways from expanding populations and from terrorist attacks. Personally, I can think of no other person better qualified to lead this important committee.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 505 to highlight the important contribution of the recreational boating community and the boating industry to our quality of life and to our continued economic prosperity and to urge the President to issue a proclamation calling upon the American people to observe National Boating Day.

Boating is a famous symbol for south Florida, where I am from. Millions of residents and tourists take to the waters of south Florida by boat to fish, dive, snorkel, and view scenic tours along our pristine coastline and unique intracoastal waterway. Palm Beach County alone has over 40,000 registered boaters, and Ft. Lauderdale's majestic canals have earned it the nickname the "Venice of America."

But the significance of the boating community is not only symbolic. The recreational marine industry is a major economic force in Florida, responsible for over \$18 billion of revenues and 220,000 jobs statewide. And I should note that \$13 billion of the economic impact and 162,000 of those jobs as well as almost half of the industry's gross sales come from the tri-county region of Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach Counties.

As many of our colleagues know, the contributions of the recreational boating community extend far beyond the Sunshine State. The boating population exceeds 73 million individuals in our country and an estimated 18 million recreational watercraft. In addition, the recreational boating industry provides more than \$39 billion in sales and services to the U.S. economy and provides nearly 380,000 manufacturing jobs. Altogether there are approximately 1,400 active boat builders in the United States with contributions from all 50 States.

One need only look at the geographic diversity among members of our Congressional Boating Caucus, of which I am a proud member, to measure the broad influence and contributions of the boating community and the boating industry to our country and the quality of our life. Members come from 38 States, including Wyoming, Pennsylvania, Kansas, and West Virginia. Clearly, boating is not just a coastal pastime; it is an American pastime.

In addition, boating also brings us closer to our national treasures. I strongly believe that an appreciation for environmental stewardship comes through interacting with nature. For example, it is hard to comprehend the beauty of coral reefs until you see them underwater with your own eyes.

Once you do, you begin to understand their importance and the need to protect them for the continued health of our oceans.

Boating gives us these cherished opportunities to commune with nature. It should be no surprise that boaters can be impassioned stewards of the environment, teaching future generations of boaters a healthy respect and appreciation for our natural resources.

It is for these and other reasons that I introduced House Resolution 505, recognizing the contributions of the recreational boating community and the boating industry to the continuing prosperity and affluence of the United States. This resolution calls upon President Bush to issue a proclamation to observe National Boating Day with an appropriate time being July 1.

I was happy to have so many of our colleagues from the Boating Caucus join me in supporting this resolution, including the distinguished co-chairs of the caucus, the Honorable GENE TAYLOR from Mississippi and the Honorable CANDICE MILLER from Michigan. I am sure that they can attest that boating is an integral part of our economy and our quality of life not just for those along the coast but for the entire country.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud my colleagues for adopting this resolution today and recognizing the contributions of recreational boating and the boating industry.

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 PROSECUTION OF FORMER U.S. BORDER PATROL AGENTS

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. Mr. Speaker, the House Judiciary Committee is scheduled to hold a hearing this week to examine mandatory minimum sentencing laws. Included in this hearing will be the opportunity to examine the issue of mandatory minimum sentencing in the case of U.S. Border Patrol Agents Ramos and Compean.

As the Members of this House well know, in February, 2006, the two agents were convicted in a U.S. District Court in Texas for shooting a Mexican drug smuggler. They were sentenced to 11 and 12 years in prison respectively, and today is the 160th day since the agents entered Federal prison.

The law that the agents were charged with violating, 18 United States Code, section 924(c)(1)(A), carries a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years. As enacted by Congress, the law requires a

defendant to be indicted and convicted either of "using" or "carrying" a firearm during and in relation to the commission of a crime of violence or "possessing" a firearm in furtherance of a crime of violence.

However, neither Mr. Ramos nor Mr. Compean were ever charged with specific elements of the crime. Instead, the Office of the U.S. Attorney for the Western District Court of Texas, Mr. Johnny Sutton, extracted from the U.S. Criminal Code a sentencing factor, "discharging" a firearm, and substituted that sentencing factor for the congressionally defined elements of the offense. Ten years of each of their sentences were based on an indictment and conviction for a Federal crime that does not exist. The law they were charged with violating has never been enacted by the United States Congress but rather was fashioned by the U.S. Attorney's Office.

In this case I can imagine how difficult it would be to obtain an indictment and conviction for "using," "possessing," or "carrying" a firearm when the Border Patrol agents were required to carry firearms as part of their job. That difficulty may well explain why this U.S. Attorney's Office unilaterally changed Congress's definition of a crime to a definition that would be easier for the prosecution to prove.

When this issue was brought to my attention and to the attention of my colleagues VIRGIL GOODE and former Texas State Judge TED POE, we were pleased to join forces with the Gun Owners Foundation, U.S. Border Control, U.S. Border Control Foundation, and the Conservative Legal Defense & Education Fund to file a friend of the court brief in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. The brief urges reversal of these unjust convictions and 10-year mandatory minimum sentences by spelling out how charges contained in two counts of the indictment against the agents are fatally defective. I want to thank Chairman JOHN CONYERS for scheduling a hearing on this issue, as well as the Subcommittee on Crime and Terrorism and Homeland Security for its willingness to investigate the injustice committed against these two border agents.

I encourage the chairman and the committee to take a thorough look at the action of the Office of the U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Texas and his aggressive prosecution of law enforcement officers like Ramos and Compean.

Mr. Speaker, as I close, I want to let the families of Compean and Ramos know that we are not going to forget these two border agents. They are heroes and should never have been sent to prison.

□ 1845

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HALL of New York). 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.)

U.S. TRADE DEFICIT

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, the U.S. trade deficit continues its relentless spiral upwards. More red ink. More outsourced jobs. More foreign imports. Nothing seems capable of slowing it down, neither the misguided Bush administration policy of forcing down the value of the dollar on global markets, nor a half-hearted, ineffective and ultimately unsuccessful attempt to increase U.S. exports. America wants results, not rhetoric.

According to recent reports, the current account deficit, which is the broadest measure of the trade deficit, reached \$193 billion just in the first quarter of this year. Every year the red ink gets deeper. This represents 5.7 percent of our gross domestic product. It is a heavy ball and chain on the economic growth in our country, and it is becoming heavier. The trade deficit in goods in the first quarter surpassed \$200 billion, and it dwarfed surpluses in services and income payments.

Although you won't hear it from the economists on the coasts, the gargantuan deficit in goods is a dagger pointed at the heart of the economy in parts of the country such as I represent. We need action in Washington to stop the loss of jobs due to the trade deficit hemorrhage and unfair foreign competition, including the remaining closed markets of the world in first world nations like Japan.

The trade deficit, Mr. Speaker, reveals two fundamental weaknesses in our national economic policy. First is our unforgivable utter dependence on imported petroleum, the primary category of trade deficit. American consumers end up paying twice for the government's failure to declare energy independence, first when they fill up, and second, when their own economy is undermined by the global oil giants working in tandem with the repressive kingdoms of the Middle East and other places.

One would think that our government would have heard the warnings long enough and often enough to take action against our dangerous dependence on foreign oil, and I mean real action, like energy independence within a decade.

The President talked about it in his State of the Union speech, but he has not followed up with action. In fact, in his administration we are importing a billion more barrels of petroleum annually from other countries. So we should not be surprised, maybe, considering the President and Vice President are both oil men at heart.

The other weakness revealed by the current account deficit is our failure to