

in the history of this country. It comes out to about \$290-some-billion. But that means to the average household a \$3,000 tax increase. What household can absorb a \$3,000 tax increase in just 1 year alone?

Unfortunately, that is not the only record being set by the Democrats. They have doubled that record in terms of how much money they have spent, over \$800 billion, which would come to \$6,000 per family. American people would be better if we didn't set records like that.

NASA ASTRONAUT SUNITA WILLIAMS

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

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, it is truly a pleasure to rise today to acknowledge the achievements of NASA astronaut Sunita Williams.

On Friday, June 22, Sunita returned to Earth after spending 195 days in space. She now holds the record for the longest duration space flight by a woman. Also, after completing four space walks lasting a total of 29 hours, 17 minutes, she is a record holder for the most hours outside a spacecraft by a woman.

I was at the emotional STS-117 crew return welcome a few weeks ago at Johnson Space Center and saw firsthand how Sunita's achievements serve as an inspiration to so many young people, particularly young ladies, interested in pursuing their dreams of space exploration. She has shown them that if they work hard and are dedicated, they too can one day reach the stars.

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THE CAUSE OF CLEANING UP CONGRESS HAS GROUND TO A HALT

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

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, despite promises that are only 6 months old, the cause of cleaning up the Congress has ground to a halt.

We should kill pensions for Members of Congress convicted of a felony. And after passing a shadow bill in January, this action has completely stalled. No action in February, March, April, May or June.

Now the real surprise. Despite promises of spending reform, Congressional leaders blocked efforts to stop funding the construction of the bridges to nowhere. That's right. Democratic leaders in Congress now support building the bridges to nowhere, one structure, connecting to an island with just 50 people, the other to an island with only 22, at a cost to the U.S. taxpayer of over \$1 billion. Only 6 months into a new Congress, and now Congressional leaders do not want to kill pensions for Congressional felons, but do want to build the bridges to nowhere.

SCHIP

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

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Mr. Speaker, in 1992, I was proud to spearhead one of the first State initiatives to enable working families to purchase private health insurance for their children; 5 years later Congress passed the State Children's Health Insurance Program, SCHIP, enabling every State to implement its own plan.

Today 6 million American children have health coverage thanks to SCHIP. We in Congress are building upon the extraordinary success of SCHIP to extend it to almost 9 million American children who are now uninsured. The goal of insuring all American children is within our reach.

Yet, instead of working with Congress to reach this goal, the President this week made it clear that health insurance for children is not important to him.

Does the President really believe that America's children do not deserve quality ongoing health care? Does the President really believe that emergency rooms are the best place for primary care for children?

It is clear to just about every American that health insurance is expensive, and for too many American families, it is simply too expensive.

Congress recognizes the urgency of the situation, and we move ahead, unlike the President, to take this opportunity to cover every American child.

DALITS

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week I hosted a screening of a documentary entitled, "India's Hidden Slavery," a film about contemporary slavery in India among the 250 million Dalits or untouchables.

The caste system has at the top the Brahmin or priestly class, the ruling class. That includes politicians. At the very bottom, not even considered a caste because they're too low, the Dalits. Today, in the world's largest democracy, an unknown hidden system exists with people without basic human rights.

In contrast to the economic progress in some sectors in Indian society, below the surface is a society still racked by caste, with millions suffering and held hostage to a social structure that reinforces segregation, poverty, injustice and slavery. Recently, village leaders just condemned to death a couple that married outside their caste.

While the government of India has taken some small steps to outlaw the caste system, in reality, it permeates every aspect of life there.

I commend India for its economic progress, but I urge government leaders to ensure that all people in India have basic human rights, and especially the 250 million Dalits.

THE IRAQ WAR

(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, the war in Iraq is in its fifth year, but the Bush administration still refuses to develop a realistic, strategic plan for the Middle East and Iraq.

The Iraq War has destabilized the region, and the United States must reassert and protect its fundamental national security interests by actively taking the necessary steps to stabilize the Middle East.

Today Congress will debate a plan which stands in stark contrast to the delusional policies of the Bush administration which have sapped our military readiness, strengthened al Qaeda, wasted our resources and betrayed the trust of the American people.

There is a way forward, and we must be bold, courageous and strategic. Without leadership in the White House, we must continue to exercise leadership in the people's House. And I assure the American people that we will.

MISSING OR CAPTURED AMERICAN SOLDIERS

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. You know, we shouldn't even be discussing surrender in Iraq today because 2 months ago today, three American soldiers were captured in Iraq. Tragically, the body of Private First Class Anzack was found a few days later in the river. DOD has changed the status of Specialist Jimenez and Private Fouty from unknown to missing/captured. Considering that the military found their IDs in an al Qaeda safe house, I'm sure they're being mistreated. And I hope and pray that they can stay alive until we can rescue them.

As a former prisoner of war for nearly 7 years in Vietnam, I know what these guys are going through. We must find them, and we must bring them home. Naysayers in Washington should not be talking about pulling the plug on our troops in Iraq when we have our own men missing in action who need to be rescued.

SCHIP

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

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, in our Energy and Commerce Committee, we're

pushing ahead to grant health care coverage to millions of children, a program called SCHIP. Unfortunately, the President's proposal to reauthorize SCHIP is woefully inadequate. His funding level won't even cover the children currently enrolled in the program. Nationwide, 6 million children are covered by the SCHIP and another 9 million are uninsured. If there was ever a question of where our priorities are, it should be with strengthening and modernizing the SCHIP program.

I've just come from a meeting with our Governor, Eliot Spitzer. New York operates a separate stand-alone program under SCHIP, Child Health Plus. As of December 2006, nearly 400,000 children were enrolled and receiving comprehensive health coverage in the program. Our stand-alone SCHIP program has increased enrollment by over a quarter of a million children since the start of the program.

Nationwide, we have to remember that the SCHIP program is a critical part of our health care safety net, providing health coverage to more than 4 million low-income children who do not qualify for Medicaid. SCHIP has served New York and our country well, and I will continue to work to improve access for children's health care coverage.

ELIMINATING INFECTIONS FROM MEDICAL DEVICES

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

Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, at least half of all cases of hospital-acquired infections are associated with medical devices. These medical devices include items ranging from tongue depressors to catheters and heart valves.

These preventable infections infect 2 million patients per year and end up costing 90,000 lives and over \$50 billion annually. These are unacceptable costs for patients, taxpayers and Congress.

Up to this moment this morning, we already have over 1 million cases, you can see on this chart, 47,000 deaths and a cost of over \$26 billion, and that's just as of today.

Yesterday we passed the Medical Device User Fee Act which included an amendment in there that I placed in that allows for the government, the GAO, to study these issues. They note that even after rigorous cleaning and sterilization, virus and bacteria still exist on reused medical devices.

Manufacturers, providers and facilities should take measures to reduce the rate of infections. I urge my colleagues to refocus our Nation's health care system on patient choice, patient safety and patient quality and join me in working on these things together where we can save lives and save money for our Nation.

STRATEGIC RESET

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

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, today I will vote for the Responsible Redeployment from Iraq Act. I agree with the 70 percent of Americans who want our troops out of Iraq. And I agree with the comprehensive report called "Strategic Reset" from the Center for American Progress, written by three authors, one of whom is Lawrence Korb, former Assistant Secretary of Defense.

They write, "The current Iraq strategy is exactly what al Qaeda wants, the United States distracted and pinned down by Iraq's internal conflicts, trapped in a quagmire that has become the perfect rallying cry and recruitment tool for al Qaeda. The United States has no good options, given the strategic and tactical mistakes made in Iraq since 2002, but simply staying the course with an indefinite military presence is not advancing U.S. interests."

Today we will vote to change the course to bring our troops home by April of 2008. I will proudly vote in favor of that bill.

WAR IS NOT WON BY EVACUATION

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker: "Many people think the best way to escape war is to dwell upon its horrors and to imprint them vividly upon the minds of the younger generation. They flaunt the grisly photographs before their eyes. They fill their ears with tales of carnage. They dwell on the ineptitude of generals and admirals. They denounce the crime and the folly of human strife."

These words of Winston Churchill in 1934 stressed upon the people of Great Britain that the cynics, who don't believe some things are worth fighting for, should not have their way. They ignore the victories and accomplishments and, instead, focus upon setbacks.

War is hard. It has always been hard. Congress will once again debate a timetable retreat for American troops to leave Iraq. The timid will want to turn their back on the enemy and leave a desperate people and a nation floundering; all this because war is hard.

Retreat tells the enemy that if they wait America out, we will bow out of the fight.

Mr. Speaker, Churchill also remarked, "war is not won by evacuation."

And that's just the way it is.

WORK-FAMILY POLICIES

(Mrs. MALONEY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, a new report that just came out by the Government Accountability Office shows that the United States lags far behind other industrialized countries in providing policies that help families balance the competing demands of work and family responsibilities.

Critics argue that implementing such policies here could have a negative impact on the economy, but many countries with strong work-family policies are among the world's most competitive economies in the world and have unemployment rates that are the same or lower than the United States.

More and more businesses are finding that doing right by workers is good for the bottom line. Paid parental and sick leave, flexible work schedules and access to child care provide a boost to worker productivity, retention, and recruitment that outweigh the cost of implementing such policies.

U.S. workers, businesses, and the economy would benefit from stronger work-family policies.

"A copy of the GAO report is available on the JEC website at <http://www.jec.senate.gov/Documents/Hearings/06.14.07%20Work-Life%20Balance/GAO%20-%20Kay%20Brown%20Testimony%20--%20FINAL.pdf>."

THE GROWING ECONOMY

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

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, this week, news reports came out indicating our Federal budget deficit has continued to drop and our economy continues to grow due to tax relief policies passed by Congress in 2001 and 2003.

In spite of that good news, Democratic leadership in Congress is discounting advancements made possible by this tax relief by trying to slap U.S. taxpayers with a \$400 billion tax increase that will slow our economy and its current progress.

Additionally, Democrats piled \$6 billion in new spending onto January's omnibus budget bill to finish the 2007 appropriations process, passed a budget for 2008 that is \$20 billion more than the President's budget request, and added billions in extra spending to the few appropriations bills the House has passed.

Raising taxes hurts American families, discourages innovation and hinders job creation. Let's work together in this Congress to make tax relief permanent and continue to grow our economy. Together, this Congress can foster further prosperity and build a better, brighter future for our country.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Ms. Wanda Evans, one of his secretaries.