

five-minute period, until such time as each member has had an opportunity to question each witness or panel of witnesses. Thereafter, additional rounds for questioning witnesses by members are within the discretion of the Chairman or subcommittee chairman, as appropriate.

(c) Questions put to witnesses before the Committee or subcommittee shall be pertinent to the measure or matter that may be before the Committee or subcommittee for consideration.

RULE 16. PUBLICATION OF COMMITTEE HEARINGS AND MARKUPS

The transcripts of those hearings and mark-ups conducted by the Committee, subcommittee, or panel will be published officially in verbatim form, with the material requested for the record inserted at that place requested, or at the end of the record, as appropriate. Any requests to correct any errors, other than those in transcription, or disputed errors in transcription, will be appended to the record, and the appropriate place where the change is requested will be footnoted. Any transcript published under this rule shall include the results of record votes conducted in the session covered by the transcript and shall also include materials that have been submitted for the record and are covered under Rule 19. The handling and safekeeping of these materials shall fully satisfy the requirements of Rule 20. No transcript of an executive session conducted under Rule 9 shall be published under this rule.

RULE 17. VOTING AND ROLLCALLS

(a) Voting on a measure or matter may be by record vote, division vote, voice vote, or unanimous consent.

(b) A record vote shall be ordered upon the request of one-fifth of those members present.

(c) No vote by any member of the Committee or a subcommittee with respect to any measure or matter shall be cast by proxy.

(d) In the event of a vote or votes, when a member is in attendance at any other committee, subcommittee, or conference committee meeting during that time, the necessary absence of that member shall be so noted in the record vote record, upon timely notification to the Chairman by that member.

(e) The Chairman of the Committee or a subcommittee, as appropriate, with the concurrence of the Ranking Minority Member or the most senior Minority member who is present at the time, may elect to postpone requested record votes until such time or point at a mark-up as is mutually decided. When proceedings resume on a postponed question, notwithstanding any intervening order for the previous question, the underlying proposition shall remain subject to further debate or amendment to the same extent as when the question was postponed.

RULE 18. COMMITTEE REPORTS

(a) If, at the time of approval of any measure or matter by the Committee, any member of the Committee gives timely notice of intention to file supplemental, Minority, additional or dissenting views, that member shall be entitled to not less than two calendar days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays except when the House is in session on such days) in which to file such views, in writing and signed by that member, with the staff director of the Committee. All such views so filed by one or more members of the Committee shall be included within, and shall be a part of, the report filed by the Committee with respect to that measure or matter.

(b) With respect to each record vote on a motion to report any measure or matter, and

on any amendment offered to the measure or matter, the total number of votes cast for and against, the names of those voting for and against, and a brief description of the question, shall be included in the committee report on the measure or matter.

RULE 19. PUBLIC INSPECTION OF COMMITTEE ROLLCALLS

The result of each record vote in any meeting of the Committee shall be made available by the Committee for inspection by the public at reasonable times in the offices of the Committee. Information so available for public inspection shall include a description of the amendment, motion, order, or other proposition and the name of each member voting for and each member voting against such amendment, motion, order, or proposition and the names of those members present but not voting.

RULE 20. PROTECTION OF NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION

(a) Except as provided in clause 2(g) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives, all national security information bearing a classification of secret or higher which has been received by the Committee or a subcommittee shall be deemed to have been received in executive session and shall be given appropriate safekeeping.

(b) The Chairman of the Committee shall, with the approval of a majority of the Committee, establish such procedures as in his judgment may be necessary to prevent the unauthorized disclosure of any national security information received classified as secret or higher. Such procedures shall, however, ensure access to this information by any member of the Committee or any other Member, Delegate, or Resident Commissioner of the House of Representatives, staff of the Committee, or staff designated under Rule 9(c) who have the appropriate security clearances and the need to know, who has requested the opportunity to review such material.

RULE 21. COMMITTEE STAFFING

The staffing of the Committee, the standing subcommittees, and any panel or task force designated by the Chairman or chairmen of the subcommittees shall be subject to the rules of the House of Representatives.

RULE 22. COMMITTEE RECORDS

The records of the Committee at the National Archives and Records Administration shall be made available for public use in accordance with rule VII of the Rules of the House of Representatives. The Chairman shall notify the Ranking Minority Member of any decision, pursuant to clause 3(b)(3) or clause 4(b) of rule VII, to withhold a record otherwise available, and the matter shall be presented to the Committee for a determination on the written request of any member of the Committee.

RULE 23. HEARING PROCEDURES

Clause 2(k) of rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives shall apply to the Committee.

30-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 half the time remaining before 5 p.m. as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to address the House, and I can share with you on this day of the State of the Union we all look forward to hearing what the President/Com-

mander in Chief has to share not only with the country but the world, and we hope that he will bring words of wisdom and unity to the House floor. This will be the President's seventh opportunity coming to the floor to share with us the needs of the Nation. And I hope that he speaks on behalf of the entire Nation.

As you know, the 30-Something Working Group has been coming to the floor for the last 3 years sharing with the Members about what was going on under the Capitol dome and what wasn't going on under the Capitol dome. And we come today in the spirit of bipartisanship, Mr. Speaker, and I would also like to continue to highlight bipartisanship, because that is what the American people have called for and that is what we have delivered.

And when I say "we," I am saying a majority of the Members of the House of Representatives, and you can sprinkle in some Republican votes in achieving that. And I am glad that on a number of votes as relates to the Medicare prescription drug price negotiating, all Democrats on the floor voted for that, 24 Republicans voted for it, too. They voted with their constituents.

The Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act, just about all the Democrats on the floor voting on behalf, 216 with 37 Republicans joining us on that vote, it was 253, which is a good majority of the House voting in the affirmative. That is bipartisan.

The Fair Minimum Wage Act, Mr. Speaker, that passed on January 10, which was a recorded vote, there were 315 years in the affirmative, all Democrats on the floor at that time voted for it, 82 Republicans joined Democrats in voting on that bill together, Mr. Speaker.

Again, in the implementation of the 9/11 Commission recommendations, which we all know, Mr. Speaker, was a bipartisan piece of work by individuals that were appointed by the President, the leadership, and the House and Senate at that time, with two bipartisan chairmen, one Republican and the vice chair was Democrat, all Democrats on the floor voted, 231, and 68 Republicans. That brought that vote to 299.

I think it is important, Mr. Speaker, as we continue to move on and as we look at the student loan vote, as we look at a number of the votes that have come here to the floor, a great vote today as relates to pensions for those that step out of the line, Members of the House that step out of line and Members of the Senate, that their pensions will be on the line. Not one vote against that measure.

In that spirit, I know, on behalf of the Democratic side of the aisle, the Speaker, majority leader, Democratic whip, the chairman of our caucus, the vice chair of our caucus, and other elected leadership within the Democratic Caucus are looking to continue this bipartisan spirit that we have adopted here.

As you know, in the 109th Congress, Mr. Speaker, I used to always share with the Members that bipartisanship is only allowed if the majority allows it. I think that on some issues we will see issues where we won't be able to see eye to eye and there will be some partisan votes on this floor. That is just the reality of life here in Washington, D.C., but it should not be the rule. It should be the exception. And I want to commend all of those Members that are moving in a bipartisan spirit.

Now, I must say the winds of bipartisanship are here on the floor. I am sad to report that on many of those votes the Republican leadership did not vote with the majority of the U.S. House of Representatives, including Republicans that did vote on those measures. I say this to promote a bipartisan spirit here when the State of the Union, when the President comes in and gives his speech tonight; when he comes to speak to the American people in the U.S. House, the U.S. Congress, Judiciary, all branches of the military that will be represented here tonight, Cabinet officers that will be represented here tonight, hopefully deliver a message that we can move forward as a unit, as all Americans, so something we can all grasp.

□ 1515

I think it is important to move in that direction.

Now, on our side of many of these issues, when I say "our side," I am saying the Democratic side where we have talked about six in 2006, where Republicans have joined us in those efforts because they wanted to vote for it all along but their leadership would not allow them to do that. We want to continue. We want to lead by example. We want the American people to know that we are leading on behalf of the country, not just one side versus the other. We do not want to create that kind of environment; but when it has to take place, it has to take place.

Tonight, Senator WEBB, Virginia, will be delivering the Democratic response to the President, and I think it is important if we can see eye to eye on a policy in Iraq because right now, as you know, a number of the Senators on the other side of the Capitol dome have disagreed with the surge policy or with the escalation of troops policy that we have now that the President has stepped forward with. Many Members of the House on both sides of the aisle disagree with that policy.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, a number of Americans spoke not only to Democratic candidates but to Republican candidates about a solution in Iraq versus just identifying a problem and continuing to add on to the unfortunate situation of U.S. troops losing their lives in Iraq.

I think it is also important for us to know that for us to work in a bipartisan way the President cannot continue to say, just because I have the power to deploy troops along with my advisers that I am going to do it. I

think a level of responsibility has to kick in.

Mr. Speaker, I was talking to a group earlier today, and I shared with them that the watch word for the 110th Congress should be "responsibility," responsibility on both sides of the aisle to make sure that we can fight our way out of the record deficit that we have now and to be able to stick with our pay-as-we-go rules that we put in place; to make sure that we govern on behalf of all the American people need it be young or old, rich or poor; that we govern on behalf of Americans and not on behalf of the special interests; and to make sure that our children's children and we have safe, clean water, air to breathe; and that we can provide health care.

Now, saying all of that, it cannot be my way or the highway. Mr. Speaker, the President has put forth a commission to look at Social Security more than two times, and at the end of all of those commissions, the President has come back and said we need to privatize Social Security. That is a my-way-or-highway approach to governing.

I think it is important that the President come to this floor tonight and the Congress respond in a way that we can work together, we can work together to make America better. We can work together to make sure that our troops in Iraq, hopefully more sooner than later, can be redeployed, and that we can call not only on the Iraqi Government but other countries throughout the world to take part in the security of that region. As long as we continue to have an escalation in troops without any questions asked, we are going to have problems.

Now, I am glad to be joined here by my good colleague and friend from the great State of Ohio, Niles, Ohio, and we have spent many an hour on the floor here talking about these issues, but I was sharing with the Speaker and with the Members the fact when the President comes here tonight that it is important that it is a message that all Americans can embrace, that we deal with the serious issues so that we can get on with the work of the American people, because shortly after he gives his speech, he is going to send his budget to Capitol Hill, and that is going to have a lot to do with the way this Congress is going to function in this first session of the 110th Congress.

Hopefully, we will be able to pass a budget that will work on behalf of the American people, but it cannot be a my-way-or-the-highway kind of approach that it has been in the past. That did not work well, even when his party had the majority here in the Congress. Imagine what will happen, and they do have the minority in this Congress.

But we are willing, Mr. Speaker, to work in a bipartisan way to make sure we can get something done. I think that is very, very important. I think that is what the American people are asking for, and I yield to my friend.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate how the gentleman has been focused on bipartisanship over the past several weeks since we have been here.

I agree with my friend from Florida on several issues. Just to go back a few seconds, to talk about what is going on in Iraq and what really the President's plan has been, and I think it is important that we remove this from any kind of partisanship.

As we have shown in the past couple weeks here, I mean, the votes that we have passed here have consistently been passed in a bipartisan way. Minimum wage, student loans, Medicare and negotiations, all of these have been passed in a bipartisan way. So the tone that Speaker PELOSI has set in this House has been a tone of bipartisanship.

The concern that we have in Iraq at this point with the troop surge is that this President does not have the support of the American people. He does not have the support of the Democratic Party. He is losing support among the Republican Party, and the former Chair of the Senate Committee on Armed Services, JOHN WARNER, has now come out against the President's proposal. The military, for the most part, is against this proposal. It seems like almost everyone who was in the Bush administration who had been in the military under this Commander in Chief and has left is now against what the President is saying. The Iraqi leadership is against it.

The only people who are for this is the administration, and I think it is important for us to recognize that we need to get out in a way that makes sure that we retain our dignity and that we redeploy. No one's talking about cutting and running, but redeploy in a responsible way and getting our kids out of harm's way, because this has been botched from the get-go.

But I think it is important, and I appreciate you consistently focusing. We have talked for 3½ or 4 years about if we get in charge we are going to do it in a bipartisan way, and we have been able to maintain that over the past couple of weeks, and I think it is important that we continue to go down that road.

If you look at, and I do not want to talk too long because I know my friend has an interest in joining, I want to look at the, Mr. Speaker, first 100 hours, at what we have been able to.

Okay. This has kind of gone in two different directions. Pass the minimum wage, reduce student loan interest rates, cut them in half, and allow the Secretary of Health and Human Services to negotiate down drug prices. So if you are an average family, those are three major steps forward where you are going to make more money, if you have a minimum-wage worker, where you have less student loans to pay because the interest rate is going to be cut in half, and the prescription drug prices that your parents and grandparents are paying will be a lot less. So

that is going to be significant savings in the short term.

But now we have our long-term program, and if you look at where the Democratic Party and Speaker PELOSI is pushing our agenda, we have investments into stem cell research, which is something that we passed in this Chamber just a few days ago, that we are going to invest into this new and great and vibrant industry and new sector of our economy that is not only going to reap tremendous health care benefits for our citizens but also provide jobs for our scientists and our researchers and funding the research and development and partnering with private sector people.

That is going to create an economic boom in the United States of America because once we pass it, if we can get it past the President, that is going to be a heck of a move on our part. I think it is going to be great for the American people, and it is going to be great for the next generation of people coming out of college and coming out of medical school and getting their Ph.D.s. We are going to have a whole other sector of the economy.

In addition to the repealing of the corporate welfare, which I know you had talked a lot about on this floor the past couple of years, repealing the corporate welfare that we gave to the oil companies and the energy companies and putting that money into research for alternative energy sources, creating and pushing a whole other sector of our economy so that we do not depend on the Middle East for our energy, we got it right in the Midwest in the United States of America.

So we are stabilizing. We are taking care of people today. We are giving the American people a pay raise, cutting student loan interest rates in half, reducing the cost of prescription drugs now, and then in the future moving into these two major growth areas of alternative energy and stem cell research and into the health care industry.

I think Leader PELOSI and Mr. HOYER and Mr. CLYBURN and Mr. LARSON and Mr. EMANUEL have all set an agenda for the Democrats in the House to do some good in the short term and then to open up these other areas of the economy in the long term.

So with that I would be happy to yield back to my good friend, my dear friend from Florida (Mr. MEEK).

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Well, I think it is important that we have a real discussion back and forth on this very issue.

We talked about the President coming to the floor and hopefully bringing about and, well, promoting bipartisanship, coming to the floor and saying there are some good things that have happened here; you know, hey recognize the historical moment of having the first female Speaker in the history of the country; but secondly, dealing with some of the major issues.

I understand, Mr. Speaker, in his speech on Iraq he is going to say what

he says and says he sent the escalation troops. He is going to stick with it or my way or the highway. It is the wrong approach and it is going to inflame the American people and Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle.

Also, I would like to say, even when it comes down to the issue of the minimum wage, I know that the President has said, well, you know, I like the minimum wage but there are some things that I would like to do. That is fine, but as far as I am concerned, when it comes down to the bill, signing it, he needs to be overjoyed to sign it because that is what the American people want. It is not just Democrats. I mean, the American people want to see folks that are making \$5.15 an hour to make \$7.15 or greater because when they make more, the American people make more, salaried workers, because their pay is going to go up.

I see Mr. RYAN has something there he is going to go a little further into it. Stem cell research, folks may have issues here and there, but the bottom line is the American people have spoken in many of these Senate races and many of these House races, and they have spoken because they want their loved ones to have a better chance in beating some of the terminal cancer that is out there right now and diseases that so many Americans are suffering through and their family members are trying to fight through those issues.

The bipartisan 9/11 Commission, Mr. Speaker, why fight on the commas and the periods saying that, well, we believe that we are already doing that. Well, apparently you must not be doing it because the 9/11 Commission has given you Ds and Fs in those areas that you say that you are already doing it.

So not just because we got to the cafeteria first we get an opportunity at the only oatmeal cookie that is left. It is the fact that we have to secure America. This goes beyond I thought of this first or I thought of this second.

The American people said they want the full implementation of the 9/11 Commission, and that is what we gave them. The majority vote here in this House and will be a majority vote in the Senate and will have the opportunity to go to the White House and hopefully the President will implement those recommendations, it is to make America safer. It is not because it was not your original thought to do it, and I am hoping that he comes to the floor and embraces that on behalf of all of our safety.

I do not think that I need to advise the President in any way, but I think that on behalf of all of us, if we are going to continue the spirit that we have started and bipartisanship and having the least friction as possible, especially on issues that we should not even be debating on, the issues that I have outlined, they are not even issues that are brand-new issues. These are issues that have been talked about in committee, talked about it in commissions, even as it relates to campaigns to get to Congress.

The issue of the investment on Big Oil, the billions of dollars in subsidies, and now we have reversed and put them in the clean, renewable energy, that should not even be a debate.

□ 1530

It should not even be, well, I agree with it or I don't agree with it. You should agree with it, because we need it more now than ever.

One of the big issues now, Mr. RYAN, when it all boils down to redeployment of our troops in Iraq, all of this is a vicious circle of irresponsibility in the past, or a lack of responsibility, and making sure that we are able to carry out not only diplomatic responsibility, but legislative responsibility and oversight.

I think the reason we have had the escalation in troops, Mr. RYAN, is prior to the lights being illuminated or the committee rooms being illuminated to have hearings on what we should do in Iraq, how we should work in a diplomatic way in Iraq, what kind of leadership should we have in Iraq, now that is happening with the confirmation of a new general to take over the command in Iraq.

I think it is important, Mr. RYAN, that we move in the direction that we have been moving in, and that is in a bipartisan direction, that is in a direction that the supermajority of American people agree with. Let's get those things off the table. Let's start fine-tuning these issues of six in '06. I think some of the Republican leadership just has issues with the fact it is part of six in '06 and "we have to be against it, because we didn't do it when we had the opportunity to do it."

I can care less about what happened in the last Congress. I do care about what is happening in this Congress, Mr. RYAN, and what is happening in the future Congresses. Because when folks woke up at 7 o'clock in the morning on a Tuesday morning and voted for representation, they voted for leadership, they voted for bipartisanship, they voted for a Washington, D.C., especially under the Capitol dome, Americans coming together, because we are all Americans, coming together on behalf of the greater good.

That is what they are counting on. That is what we should give them. The majority of the Members of the House should give that to them. When I am speaking of the majority members of the House, I am talking about Republicans too. I am talking about all of us coming together on their behalf.

So, to hear these issues tonight, it is going to be very, very important. The President has a choice. If he wants to come to the floor, Mr. Speaker, and continue to give the same speech that he has been giving in the past, it will be very, very unfortunate. But if he comes to the floor tonight talking about how he would like to work with the Democratic Congress and work with the Democratic leadership and the Republican leadership, and the same

thing over in the House and the Senate, work in a bipartisan way, if he used the words “bipartisan Congress,” I think he will be more successful in passing legislation that we can all come together on and that we do have an input in it, because we will have input in it, and we should not dig in and deny the American people of this great opportunity, Members, to see advancement in health care, to see some advancement in the issue of Iraq and Afghanistan at the same time, and to see some level of advancement in having clean air for our children and renewable fuel here in America, investing in the Midwest versus the Middle East.

I yield to my friend from Ohio.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Well, I appreciate that. This is something you mentioned about being bipartisan and working in a bipartisan way. I think what has happened here has been very successful, and I think this kind of illustrates it.

A couple of the things that the Democratic leadership and the Democratic Caucus, with some help from the Republicans on the other side, have been very successful. This is what has happened just in the first 100 hours, should this all become law.

You look at the minimum wage being raised. It means \$4,400 a year for the average minimum wage worker. So over the next 5 years, the average person will make another \$22,000 because of what happened here in this Chamber, led by Speaker PELOSI in a bipartisan way with a handful of Republicans who were able to do that, 80 or 90, I think.

College loan interest rates cut over 5 years will save about \$1,473. Total earnings and savings for a family over 5 years will be \$23,473.

This is bread and butter stuff. This is what will be implemented if we can get it through the other side and signed by the President. This is good stuff. This is what we can do in a bipartisan way.

So, I think this kind of stuff is important to move the country forward. When we do that, I think we open up a lot of opportunities for a lot of people around the country, and really around the world, because of the opportunity that we would provide here. This is the kind of bipartisan agenda that we want to continue with.

We are joined hereby a rising star already making a name for himself down here in Congress, our good friend from Connecticut, Mr. MURPHY.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Thank you, Mr. RYAN. I am only making a name for myself by associating myself with the works and deeds of Mr. MEEK and Mr. RYAN.

You are exactly right. As you know, I am able to join you here as a second time as a new Member of this Congress.

What we were charged with doing was really taking back this House and this place for people who are struggling every day to make ends meet. The cost of tuition since 2001 has gone up 41 percent, while we know wages have essentially remained stagnant, the min-

imum wage staying exactly where it has been for the last 2 years, while the cost of everything from food to school to gas goes up exponentially.

What we are doing here, piece by piece, is really restoring that American dream, that idea your kids might be able to do better than you, that your grandkids are going to live in a world with a greater quality of life than you were able to live in. The first 100 hours were about doing that, and, as I know you both have remarked, doing it in a bipartisan way, doing it in a way in which the votes that came before in the first 2 weeks drew an average of 60 Republican votes.

As Mr. MEEK was saying as I walked into the Chamber, I think the President tonight will find a very receptive Democratic side of the aisle if he seeks to embrace that same type of middle-class/working-class agenda that we have made really the central feature of this place for the last 2 weeks.

Mr. RYAN, if I might, I wanted to talk just for a moment about health care, because we are going to hear something from the President that, unfortunately, we have heard for the last several years. We have heard that the President wants to focus on the rising costs of health care, the trouble that middle-class families are finding in trying to find insurance.

It is about time on the issue of health care that this administration starts to meet words with action. We have seen a lot of verbal compassion, but we haven't seen a lot of meaningful reform from this administration, as the profits being made by those who would make money off of this health care system are in record numbers today. We are seeing on the other side record numbers of families falling into the ranks the uninsured.

Tonight we are going to hear a proposal that will essentially lop off families who are receiving good insurance and put them into the ranks of those families that have very bad insurance or are underinsured. Essentially the President is going to propose tonight to make health care cheaper and worse, whereas the Democrats, we know we can find a way to make health care cheaper and better.

I simply look forward, Mr. RYAN, to engaging the President on that debate and trying to convert he and his administration to the new-found wisdom we found in this Chamber to put middle-class families rather than those lobbyists and corporate interests first.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his remarks. The President only has a couple years left, Mr. Speaker, and I hope he really uses this as an opportunity to try to reengage Congress and reengage the American people and have some bold initiatives too. And not just the rhetoric. Because we went through and our staffs went true and were comparing everything that the President had said in previous State of the Union addresses and then what the reality is, and

you can pick an issue, and we will give you the Web site and you can go and check it all out. So a very skeptical Congress will be here listening tonight.

But I hope in regards to health care that we can really focus. Of course, we want everyone covered. But if you think about it, we actually have a universe health care system right now, but it is just run through emergency rooms. It is run in the most inefficient, ineffective way that you could possibly set up a health care system. So it is really not even a system, but it is just health care kind of.

What we need to do is try to get some of this investment on the front end, make sure our kids through SCHIP have access to health care, and that we are reaching out and communicating and pulling in people who may qualify for some of these programs but don't actually sign up for them. What is the outreach going to be? Because as we are competing a global economy, as we have talked 1 million times on this floor, we only have 300 million people in the United States of America. We are now competing against China, who has 1.3 billion, India who has a billion, and everyone else on the globe. We only have 300 million.

So we have to make our best efforts count, because we need all 300 million on the field playing for us, especially these young kids who are coming up through the ranks. That is why I think it is important when we are talking about the minimum wage and we are talking about making sure that student loan rates are cut in half so we can have more kids go to college, and then we pass the stem cell bill, so we are creating not only a compassionate kind of research that is going to go on and save people's lives and improve their quality of life, but that is creating jobs in a whole new sector of the economy that right now we are not doing exactly what we should be doing.

Then we also repeal the corporate welfare and we take the 13 or 14 billion and we are going to pump that into alternative energy, create a whole other sector for alternative energy sources.

So you put all this stuff together that we are able to do that, that is bold leadership. These are the kind of initiatives that we really need in the country, and Speaker PELOSI has provided us with that leadership.

So I hope in regards to health care, we get some bold tax credits. How about a bold program where all Americans are going to be covered and where we are going to put the money, instead of managed disease, prevent diseases from happening and investing in these young people so that they are healthy, educated and then create opportunity for us.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I think it is very important, Mr. RYAN, to really talk about many of the issues that are facing the right here, right now Congress, right here, right now. Not, well, what we would like to do pie-in-the-sky. Something realistic.

Mr. MURPHY, I can tell you that it is very important that when we look at the issue of Iraq, that we have a real discussion. The President is going in the opposite direction of the American people at this point. I mean, in November, that is what happened. The President is moving in this direction, the American people are going in the opposite direction. He could be going this way, they are going that way. I mean, it is just that simple.

I don't know who the advisers are in the White House or what have you, but when you have generals that have been in the field at the double digit numbers saying that we are headed in the wrong direction as it relates to the strategy that the administration has, you have Colin Powell. Goodness gracious, the Secretary of State, the former I guess two Joint Chiefs of Staff, the head of the military, to say an escalation in troops in a civil war is a wrong thing to do.

We have been saying in November and even now saying that the principal mission of our forces should be training of the Iraqi troops. Now, that is "we are going to start training."

Well, we have been saying that from the beginning. That is a strategy to re-deploy hopefully one day. Not "we will work it out sometime in the near future." The issue of the logistics and force protection and counterterrorism activities, those are the things that we should be involved in versus patrolling the streets of Baghdad. Patrolling the streets of Mosul. That should be the Iraqi force's responsibility right now.

The beginning of phase, to be able to re-deploy our troops, that has to happen. We have military bases, Mr. RYAN, we have been there. We have military bases that are the size of some U.S. cities in Iraq where troops can be trained, Iraqi troops can be trained, along with getting some of our allies to take part in that.

So for us to have what we talk about so much here on this floor, a bipartisan approach towards some of these major, major issues, we are going to have to move in that direction.

To try to make tax cuts permanent for the super wealthy, that is the opposite direction as it relates to being able to provide some sort of relief for the middle-class and small businesses in this country. We have already said, Mr. MURPHY, that we are going to operate in a pay-as-you-go atmosphere. What does that mean? Mr. RYAN, you know how over the years we have said we want to break this down, Mr. MURPHY, so that everyone can understand what we are talking about.

That means if you are going to pay for something, if you are going to spend money, then you have to show how you are going to pay for it. Not just saying a chicken in the pot for everyone. Well, how much does it cost? That is not important, because we will just ask our country, we will just ask Japan, China, the U.K., the Caribbean, Taiwan, Korea, Canada and Germany

and OPEC nations to pay that for us and we will just owe them. We don't have to pay it any time soon, but we will owe them. We will be indebted to countries even to countries that we have been with war with in the past.

□ 1545

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I appreciate that, because that is exactly what happens is you don't have the money, there was no pay-as-you-go in the last several Congresses, runaway spending, borrowing money from China. What does that mean? Well, here is our budget priorities for 2007 prior to Democrats taking office, budget into the billions of dollars. This red bar here is just interest on the money that we borrowed. This is not paying it down; this is just paying the interest on it. You know, you get your mortgage and you get your car loan and you open it up and you have got a 5 or \$600 payment. You see \$300 of it is actually going to the payment and the other stuff is interest, and it breaks your heart.

This is what the country is doing. But compare that to what we are doing, this is education, homeland security and veterans. This is going back to China; this is going back to some of those other countries.

And then you look and you see China says the test they did in space does not signal an intent to militarize space. You can't get the real facts on China's military budget, but they are buying a ton more ships. That is where that money is going.

I think it is important to make that point because it is not just money that just goes and floats out and the Federal Reserve tries to find it somewhere. It is going to China, it is going to the Middle East, it is going to OPEC countries.

And then we are funding both sides of the war on terror because we are buying all the oil, making them money. It gets back to the terrorists. And then we have a war in the Middle East and we pass almost \$500 billion already that we are spending from our side already on the war in Iraq.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I am going to yield to my friend from Connecticut here in one second. Great point. I am glad that you put a period at the end of that dot.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. That is why we are friends, stuff like that.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Thank you, Mr. RYAN.

The real issue here is, gentlemen, even before I have an opportunity to get a copy of the President's speech, Mr. Speaker, and even before our great Sergeant at Arms stands there and says, Madam Speaker, for the first time in the history of the country, the President of the United States, even before that happens, I guarantee you, gentlemen, that this health care proposal that the President has is going to end up being to the American middle-class taxpayer, a person that wants health care, money out of this pocket,

taking money out of this pocket and putting it hopefully in the other, with some coming out to pay for it.

There will be no real program that will benefit the middle class in achieving health care. It would have to almost be, Mr. Speaker, an atmosphere to where for a person to get a true benefit, they would probably have to go out and get a tax attorney to understand their opportunities, their lucky-ducky opportunities that we hear so much about here on Capitol Hill.

I think it is important, Members, that we break this thing down before we leave Washington this week to make sure the American people know exactly the direction that the administration wants this Congress to move in, because there has to be a discussion. And it has to be open-ended, Mr. MURPHY. He needs to say, Listen, I have this health care initiative; I would love to have a discussion with the Congress on how we can make this possible for the American people.

Now, I can tell you right now, the superwealthy have an advocate in the administration in making their tax cuts permanent; I am talking about the superwealthy. I am talking about the folks who are not worried about if they are going to be able to get health care. They already have it.

We are talking about those 47 million Americans that are stuck right now, and the thousands of small businesses that once provided a level of health care; but let's not make it so technical so that only a few can benefit. Some of the earned income tax credits are not taken advantage of, Members, because when you are punching in and punching out every day and you have to go pick up your kids, and if you have got to take them to the doctor, you are making a career decision, that is the reason why the emergency room is so convenient because the boss person doesn't want to let that working parent or parents off to be able to take care of his health care needs.

So this is a huge issue. But at the same time, I think it is important, Members, that we keep in the frame here this issue of Iraq. It has to continue to surface; we have to deal with it; and the American people are counting on us to provide leadership.

I yield to the gentleman from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. I thank Mr. MEEK.

There are already reports that the words we may get tonight are going to give a little short shrift to the issue of Iraq. If the President wants to put forth a plan that is so unpopular that it is not backed by his own military leaders, it is not backed by our civilian foreign policy expert, it is not backed by the American public, well, then he should also have the courage to talk about it, to defend it, to put it before us. But knowing that it is unpopular, we may not hear too much about it tonight.

To get back to, Mr. MEEK, your point on health care, let us be honest about

what is going to be proposed tonight, how we are going to save money on health care. It is not by investing more in prevention; it is not by moving people out of emergency rooms and putting them into real programs and care. It is taking people who have good insurance and making their good insurance bad insurance. It is going out and taking folks who have had the great benefit of working for an employer that provides a comprehensive package of benefits, and it is becoming less and less likely these days that even good employers out there can afford to give a robust package of benefits.

What the President is going to propose today is that for families that have had the good fortune to find a good insurance plan, they are going to tax that employer. They are going to make it less likely that you are going to get good insurance anymore. So we are going to get a proposal today which is going to actually result in worse health care for a lot of families.

I guess the point here is that, you know, again, if we are going to listen to the words that come from this administration, we heard in last year's State of the Union that we need to confront the rising cost of care, strengthen the doctor/patient relationship and help people afford the insurance coverage we need, if we want to talk about that, then we need to do something about that. And how we do something about that is not by taking the haves and putting them into the column of the have-nots. It is by keeping the haves where they are on health care and taking the have-nots and giving them that same level of health care.

We can absolutely do that without adding cost to the system, because those have-nots, as Mr. RYAN said, end up getting care. They just end up getting the most expensive, the most unfortunate type of care, that being crisis care. We can do a better job on that.

And, Mr. MEEK, as you said, we can make sure that we continue to have that discussion on Iraq, which may be missing tonight.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. One of the issues, you know, the more you talk, the more you see how all this just really ties together. This is health care costs and tying in a way to the minimum wage. The average family health care premium in 2005 was \$10,880; and the salary of a full-time year-round minimum-wage worker was less than that, \$10,700. So you will work as a minimum-wage worker 40 hours a week for an entire year and not even be able to pay for your full health care bill.

Now, in the United States of America, there is something wrong with that. There is something wrong with the wage of the minimum-wage worker, and there is obviously something wrong with the cost of health care in the United States because of this kind of backward system that we now have that just basically treats diseases and is not focusing probably like it should in preventing a lot of these things from happening.

And I think the more we reach out through the SCHIP program to make sure that these families who are qualified for children's health care know that they are qualified, to get them signed up, because at the end of the day it is the right thing to do, it is the compassionate thing to do, but at the end of the day it is going to save everybody a lot more money, too.

If we can get these kids at a young age and make sure they are treated, evaluated, they know the direction that they are going in, they know the medical history of both parents so that they can be treated accordingly.

I appreciate what you are saying and I appreciate you bringing up the issue of health care.

I know we are running down here; the clock is ticking, Mr. MEEK. I would be happy to yield to you in order to get us down the road here of wrapping things up. I appreciate all the comments that have been made here, and I appreciate our young friend being here with us, who is probably older than me.

I yield to our fearless leader from Florida.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I think in light of bipartisanship, I know we split the hour, and I see my colleague on the Republican side is already here, in the light of bipartisanship, we will yield back our 10 minutes that we have left on our time to get off on a good note here.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, for any Members who want to, also to their constituents, if they want to look at some of these charts we have, www.speaker.gov/30something, get on the Web site, send us an e-mail at 30somethingdems@mail.house.gov, you will get a chance to look at all these charts.

I appreciate our friend from Connecticut joining us. I look forward to our President's speech tonight and hope it is inspiring and filled with good information and good public policy that we can work on in a bipartisan way.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO CERTAIN STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

Mr. RYAN of Ohio (during the Special Order of Mr. MEEK of Florida). Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Democratic Caucus, I offer a privileged resolution (H. Res. 85) and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 85

Resolved, That the following named Members be and are hereby elected to the following standing committees of the House of Representatives:

(1) COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES.—Mr. Wexler (to rank immediately after Mr. Donnelly).

(2) COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY.—Ms. Wasserman Schultz (to rank immediately after Mr. Davis of Alabama).

(3) COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY.—Mr. Kanjorski (to rank immediately

after Mr. McNerney), Ms. Hooley (to rank immediately after Mr. Kanjorski).

(4) COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS.—Ms. Millender-McDonald, Mr. Jefferson, Mr. Shuler, Mr. Gonzalez, Mr. Larsen of Washington, Mr. Grijalva, Mr. Michaud, Ms. Bean, Mr. Cuellar, Mr. Lipinski, Ms. Moore of Wisconsin, Mr. Altmire, Mr. Braley of Iowa, Ms. Clarke, Mr. Ellsworth, Mr. Johnson of Georgia, Mr. Sestak.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be considered as read and printed in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H. RES. 78, PERMITTING DELEGATES AND THE RESIDENT COMMISSIONER TO CAST VOTES IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Ms. SLAUGHTER (during the Special Order of Mr. MEEK of Florida), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 110-3) on the resolution (H. Res. 86) providing for consideration of the resolution (H. Res. 78) amending the Rules of the House of Representatives to permit Delegates and the Resident Commissioner to the Congress to cast votes in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPUBLICAN PERSPECTIVE ON 110TH CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. I thank the gentlemen for yielding their time back and doing it in the spirit of bipartisanship.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that now that the 100 hours is out of the way and we are to the point of having the State of the Union, that we will see this body return to a format of regular order and regular process and rules that we have had in place and have respected and this body has abided by through the course of this great Nation. That would, indeed, be welcomed.

In the 100-hour agenda we have seen the majority party take action on some of the issues that they had chosen to address. Their 100-hour agenda has included legislation on student loans that really is not going to do anything to make loans more accessible and available to those students that are trying to get into college. It is not going to reduce the cost of college while it is there. And it will take effect