

other States because it didn't spend CHIP funds.

Mr. Speaker, I'm grateful to the Members who voted to help children, 11 million in this country who are uninsured. I thank each of you. And our sympathies are with the people of Minnesota.

CHAMP ACT AND DEMOCRATIC EFFORTS TO ENSURE MORE CHILDREN HAVE ACCESS TO HEALTH INSURANCE

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the House approved the CHAMP Act, a comprehensive health care bill that sustains and strengthens both the Children's Health Insurance Program and Medicare. In one bill, we are insuring quality health care coverage for America's seniors and children.

Under the CHAMP Act, the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office estimates that 5 million children will gain health care coverage through the SCHIP program. Any time when the number of uninsured children is increasing, Congress should do everything in its power to provide health care services to more children.

The CHAMP Act strengthens the CHIP program so that we finally reach nearly every child who is eligible for health insurance. The CHAMP Act will also take care of seniors by protecting Medicare beneficiaries' access to their physicians, providing new preventive benefits, expanding programs, and assisting low-income seniors with out-of-pocket costs, and protecting rural communities' access to health care.

Mr. Speaker, by supporting the CHAMP Act, this House showed its commitment to assist this Nation's two most vulnerable groups, our children and our seniors.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3159, ENSURING MILITARY READINESS THROUGH STABILITY AND PREDICTABILITY DEPLOYMENT POLICY ACT OF 2007

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 601 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 601

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 3159) to mandate minimum periods of rest and recuperation for units and members of the regular and reserve components of the Armed Forces between deployments for Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived except those arising under clause 9 or 10 of rule XXI. The amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Armed Services now print-

ed in the bill shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions of the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Armed Services; and (2) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. During consideration of H.R. 3159 pursuant to this resolution, notwithstanding the operation of the previous question, the Chair may postpone further consideration of the bill to such time as may be designated by the Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from New York is recognized for 1 hour.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, for purposes of debate only, I am pleased to yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER). All time yielded during consideration of the rule is for debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material into the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New York?

There was no objection.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

First, Mr. Speaker, this morning I want to continue to express our great sorrow to the people of Minnesota on their tragic loss. In a way, they're almost victims of war. A Nation in perpetual war does not have the money to meet its infrastructure needs. And as we heard this morning, there are bridges that are in serious condition all over the United States. So I express my great sorrow for the families who are suffering and for all the people who have been lost.

Mr. DREIER. Will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. DREIER. I thank my distinguished Chair for yielding. I would like to join her in extending the thoughts and prayers of every Member of this institution to those, I know at this moment there are families who are waiting, living with this moment with the uncertainty as to whether or not their loved ones have survived the tragedy in the Twin Cities.

□ 0920

Last night, when our colleague, Mrs. BACHMANN, stood here to report this, it came as a huge shock. I agree completely with my colleague about the need to ensure that the bridges in our country are safe and secure as we deal with these challenges.

I thank my friend for yielding.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Thank you, Mr. DREIER.

Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 601 provides for consideration of H.R. 3159, the Ensuring Military Readiness Through Stability and Predictability Deployment Policy Act of 2007, under a closed rule. The rule provides 1 hour of debate, equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking member of the Committee on Armed Services. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill, except those arising under clause 9 or 10 of rule XXI. The rule considers as adopted the Armed Services Committee amendment in the nature of a substitute. The rule provides for one motion to recommit, with or without instructions.

Mr. Speaker, the war in Iraq has taken us into uncharted territory as a Nation and as a society. During the Vietnam war, 4 percent of the general population served in the military. During World War II, fully 12 percent of our people served. Forms of personal sacrifice and national service were to be found everywhere, planted in victory gardens or held in war bonds. Even during the Civil War, a conflict from a different age, more than one in ten Americans fought.

Never in our history has America fought a war of this magnitude, or one that is this difficult, with an entirely voluntary military force composed of only 1 percent of the general population. And while so much of what is going on in Iraq hearkens back to past conflicts, what is occurring within our society does not.

It is true that the historically high percentage of National Guard troops fighting abroad has spread the reach of this war farther than some anticipated. But for nearly all Americans the immediacy of the war has been dulled by distance. We have never been asked to sacrifice as people. We have, instead, been told to go about our lives as usual and ask merely to support the troops in a vague sense.

Within this mass of normality lies the lives of those Americans who have actually fought in Iraq, the mothers, husbands, sons, daughters and siblings who have been sent there and who have seen things that few of us can relate to or even imagine. They have been asked to fight in a conflict whose architects have largely receded from the public view, but not before the failures of these officials made themselves felt every time a soldier was forced to enter a battle without proper body armor or without a vehicle that would keep him or her safe. In a very real sense, the families of these soldiers have been asked to endure the same reality and forced to live every moment of their deployment with the fear that their loved one will be injured, or worse.

Despite it all, despite everything that the members of our military and their families have been asked to bear for year after year, the talk of what is to be done in Iraq is often clinical: We should increase troop numbers; we should lower them; we should place more troops here, send more troops

there. Troops are spoken of as if they were simply another machine to be moved about and to be used at our will.

Our soldiers are human beings. They are our fellow citizens. They have dignity. They have rights. They do not deserve to be cast around as the administration stumbles forward seeking to find a solution to a problem of its own creation.

Already, a flawed war plan has forced the members of our military to endure not just the brunt of battle but also to make up for miscalculation at home. Tours have been extended and then extended again in an unprecedented way. Previously unknown burdens have been placed on our men and women in uniform as a result. At a certain point, we as a society have to say enough is enough.

The legislation before us is supported by men like Senator JIM WEBB and Representative JOHN MURTHA for a reason: Former soldiers know what current deployment schedules are doing to our soldiers and to their families. It will restore some order to the process by prohibiting the deployment of any active military unit to Iraq unless that unit's soldiers have rested for at least as long as they have fought. It is a simple premise that was followed in virtually every war America has fought. It should be followed again today.

Mr. Speaker, this bill should not tie the hands of generals. If national security or the safety of our troops would be put at risk by shortened deployment, the bill's requirements can be waived. But the President will have to do so publicly and certify to Congress that his decision is vitally important. With everything our soldiers are asked to do, it is long past time that the President was forced to explain to Congress and to the American people why it is all necessary.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is about who we are as a society and about the values we hold. Our fellow citizens have been sent to fight in this conflict and have asked nothing from us in return. But we certainly owe them everything. We owe them our support, not in a rhetorical sense or in blind allegiance to the administration's claims but in a real sense, by making sure that they are given the proper training and armor, by making sure they are allowed to rest for an adequate amount of time between deployments.

Mr. Speaker, we have a chance to live up to our responsibilities as a people today. I hope this body is ready to face that challenge.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would like to thank my very good friend from Rochester, New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER), the very distinguished Chair of the Committee on Rules, for yielding me this time. I am compelled to rise in the strongest possible opposition to this rule and the underlying legislation. Once again, the Demo-

cratic majority is running scared from openness and transparency because they know that their policies cannot withstand any scrutiny. They have shut off all meaningful debate, amendments and alternatives.

Mr. Speaker, I will say that no matter how intense, no matter how bitter, no matter how hate-filled the vitriol is that comes towards us, I will continue to strive to work in a bipartisan way to deal with this very important issue and other issues as well.

I think we evidenced that last night when we offered an amendment in the Rules Committee that would have allowed the Members of this body to replace this proposal with one that actually enjoys strong, bipartisan support. I am referring, of course, to the Iraq Study Group recommendations, the so-called Baker-Hamilton Commission.

This group spent literally months, Democrats and Republicans together. A former Member of this house as the Democratic leader, the former Secretary of State, James Baker, as the Republican leader, and an equal number of Republicans and an equal number of Democrats came up with bipartisan recommendations as to how we, as a Nation, could move forward.

Knowing that this sound and very responsible policy would very easily trump the inferior proposal that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are hoping to move on the floor today, they took the only route that they seem to know, and they have a great deal of experience at this, Mr. Speaker. They just shut down the process completely.

They seemed to know, Mr. Speaker, that, unfortunately, this very thoughtful work product, which is not supported by everyone, but it enjoys strong bipartisan support. Again, our former colleague, the very respected former Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs it is now called, it was the International Relations Committee and Foreign Affairs Committee before that, Mr. Hamilton, and the highly regarded Secretary of State, James Baker, came up with this package.

And what is it our colleagues did? With a very passionate statement made by our friend from Virginia, my classmate, Mr. FRANK WOLF, who was really the progenitor of this Iraq Study Group, working with a wide range of people to come up with just the establishment of the group, and now this work product has come forward, heralded by people all across this country, and what is it that they have done? They have chosen to take this inferior proposal and say, we are not going to even allow consideration of the Iraq Study Group.

Now, having precluded any real debate, they have nothing to fall back on but really cheap political ploys. The announcement was made several weeks ago that every single week leading up to Congress' adjournment for the month of August, we would have votes on Iraq.

One of the Democratic majority's favorite gimmicks is to give their ill-conceived bills grand-sounding names and shroud them in warm, fuzzy ideas that no one could possibly oppose.

Earlier this week, they rammed through the House is a massive giveaway to trial lawyers. And what was it called? The anti-discrimination bill.

Just yesterday, we considered a bill that slashes Medicare coverage for millions. What was it called, Mr. Speaker? The Children's Health and Medicare Protection Act. The audacity of cutting Medicare with a bill that has "Medicare protection" right in the title is, to me, absolutely staggering.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am proud that we, as Republicans, worked to address important issues with prudence and deliberation, issues that affect the quality of life and standard of living for all Americans. Unfortunately, my colleagues on the other side, we will witness it in just a few minutes once again, they resort to demagoguery and name calling and all kinds of other vitriol.

When we refuse to be suckered by their slipshod efforts and poor policies, they accuse us of being pro-discrimination, or anti-children's health, or any other awful-sounding label that they can come up with. They will make some great and fascinating political ads. As this season goes on, we will see some of them on YouTube, I am sure, and other places. And if you look at these votes on discrimination and on the issue of Medicare and children's healthcare, obviously, we will be hearing a lot about the things that have been done here on the House floor during the campaign season, which obviously is under way right now.

They will no doubt continue with this tired approach here today. We are going to hear about how the underlying bill before us today is about "troop welfare." We are going to hear about the "terrible strain" the war in Iraq has put on the members of our Armed Forces and their families.

I want to make sure it is absolutely clear that we are all, all, very concerned, Mr. Speaker, about the welfare of our troops. It is a bipartisan concern, and anyone who would argue that we are somehow not concerned about the welfare of our troops is barking up the wrong tree. We see with sobering clarity, Mr. Speaker, the magnitude the impact the war has on their families. No American deserves more support than those who put their lives on the line to protect each and every one of us, and no one is more determined to fulfill our commitment to these men and women than my Republican colleagues and I are.

That is precisely, precisely, Mr. Speaker, why I stand in opposition to both this rule and the underlying legislation. The Democratic majority can slap any old bill together and say it promotes troop welfare. But, Mr. Speaker, that does not make it so. And they can slap any old bill together and

accuse its opponents of undermining troop welfare. But that doesn't make it so.

The reality is that this bill undermines our military leadership, who are already committed to the welfare of our troops and their families. And to imply in any way that our Nation's civilian and military leadership is not committed to the welfare of our troops and their families is again a very specious argument.

The reality is that this bill undermines our military leadership who are committed to the troops; and, in fact, it opens up the potential to force troops to stay in the field longer, handle missions for which they are not prepared, and ultimately create greater risks for our men and women who are in harm's way.

Mr. Speaker, our Armed Forces are already working toward the goal of ensuring that every servicemember spends 2 years at home after each year in the field, and that Reservists get 5 years at home after each 1 year of deployment.

Mr. Speaker, the Marine Corps is already providing what this bill would mandate, time at home at least equal to time deployed. The Commandant of the Marine Corps must approve any deviation from this policy.

Let me say once again, Mr. Speaker, I don't understand why it is that we are here dealing with this issue when we could in fact pass the recommendations of the Iraq Study Group. We instead are doing something that the Marine Corps is doing right now. Again, the Commandant of the Marine Corps would have to approve any deviation from this policy.

What this bill does is to remove any flexibility that allows our military leaders to make deployment decisions that best provide for both troop welfare and, Mr. Speaker, something that we never hear discussed from our colleagues on the other side the aisle, and that is mission completion, completing our mission, making sure that we have success and victory. It adds another layer of bureaucratic red tape. Ironically, and tragically, it could actually force our commanders in the field to extend deployments and force our troops to take on missions for which they are not fully prepared.

Mr. Speaker, preventing our commanders from being able to task each unit to take on the mission for which it is best prepared and best trained would needlessly risk the lives of our troops.

I know that we all want the ultimate desire of every member of our armed services: that they be speedily and, as I said a moment ago, victoriously returned to the loving arms of their families and the accolades of a grateful Nation. But, Mr. Speaker, this bill is not, this bill is not the way to ensure that.

The Democratic majority can keep playing these games. They can continue to claim that this bill will improve the quality of life of our troops

and their families. They can continue to accuse its opponents of callousness and indifference to servicemen and servicewomen. But I don't believe the American people will be fooled, Mr. Speaker. They are quite capable of seeing past clever bill titles and phony rhetoric.

This Democratic majority has got to learn that it takes more than demagoguery to lead this body and to lead this country.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to oppose this rule, as well as the underlying legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), whose compassion and conviction on this issue is probably unsurpassed in the House.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I thank the distinguished chairwoman of the Rules Committee for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 3159 is a very straightforward bill with a very straightforward message. Like its name implies, this is a bill to ensure that our military is ready to carry out combat and combat-related missions by having a stable, predictable deployment policy.

H.R. 3159 would require that our uniformed men and women, our military units, receive minimum periods of rest and recuperation between their deployments to Iraq. We have been hearing for over a year now about the strain on our active duty, Reserve and Guard units caused by multiple redeployments to Iraq and the ever-shrinking time at home provided by many units between deployments.

So why did this legislation work its way through the Armed Services Committee at this time? There is a very simple reason, Mr. Speaker, why this bill is so timely now. On May 9, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates announced a change to deployment policy. Secretary Gates changed the current policy for active Army units from 1 year at home for 1 year deployed to a policy of 15 months deployed for every 12 months at home.

Mr. Speaker, this is a change that is moving in the wrong direction. Rather than taking care of our troops, this change increases the stress and strain on our servicemen and servicewomen. This change has raised serious concerns about the sustainability and readiness of our active duty Army and whether such a reduced period at their home bases allows sufficient time for units and individuals to adequately train, equip, recover and reconstitute for the next deployment.

If anyone in this Chamber is not concerned about the physical, mental, emotional and logistical strain placed on every combat unit and individual subject to multiple deployments to Iraq, then I hope they will stand up during this debate.

□ 0940

We hear a lot of talk in this House about "supporting the troops." Only a handful of Members in this body have had to lay it on the line in Iraq. Only a handful had to bid their families farewell and face combat in Iraq.

For the rest of us, there is no sacrifice, no strain, no stress placed on us personally or on our families and loved ones.

Well, here is our chance to show that we genuinely do understand what we have been asking our troops to do in Iraq, that we genuinely do understand the toll that it takes on each of them individually, as a unit and as a service, that we genuinely do understand the sacrifice that we ask of their families, and that we will require the Pentagon to provide our uniformed men and women a minimum amount of time to recover from combat to reconnect with their families and to prepare again for a return to battle.

There are some in this Chamber who will yelp and yowl that this is just a ploy to end the war.

Mr. Speaker, as someone who is clearly on record as wanting to end this war as quickly as humanly possible, I can testify that this is not the case.

I opposed this war with every fiber of my being, but I strongly believe that for as long as this war endures, the bare minimum this Congress must do is take care of the troops who carry out this mission and make sure this war does not shatter our military from the strain of multiple deployments.

I urge my colleagues to support the rule and the underlying bill.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, as one who joins with my colleague from Worcester in stating that we all want to see this war end as quickly as we possibly can, and we want to see this mission be victorious, I am happy to yield 2 minutes to the former Governor of Delaware (Mr. CASTLE) who offered a very thoughtful amendment in the Committee on Rules.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman for yielding.

I do rise in opposition to what I consider to be a closed rule. I do support the underlying bill, but I object to the leadership's decision to prevent any substantive debate.

I offered an amendment yesterday that would have credited soldiers with one additional day of leave for every month that they are deployed in a combat zone. All members of the Armed Forces, including those serving the Guard and Reserve, receive 2½ days of leave time per month, regardless whether they are deployed in Iraq or back in the U.S. at their home base.

I developed this legislation, an extra day per month, not from anything out of my mind but in correspondence with a soldier who had been in the combat zone. We feel very strongly that spending time with family and loved ones after returning from deployment is essential to a soldier's mental health,

and that is why I prepared the amendment and introduced it.

We think that it is small step to help the troops, but this amendment was denied in the rule. For that reason, I oppose the rule as we have it.

But I am also very disappointed that this House continues to prevent consideration of the Iraq Study Group Recommendations Implementation Act. They are now getting close to 60 Members, almost evenly divided between Republicans and Democrats, who support the concepts in this.

My decision is that the time has come to have the discussion of the Iraq Study Group's recommendations on the floor of the House of Representatives, and I hope that can happen sooner rather than later.

Mr. DREIER. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. CASTLE. I would be happy to yield.

Mr. DREIER. I thank my friend for yielding, and I would like to congratulate him not only for his amendment, but also for the comments that the former Governor of Delaware has just offered on the work of the Iraq Study Group.

Again, this was a bipartisan effort that was launched by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF), who, as we all know, speaks passionately and eloquently on this and other issues.

We all want to see this war come to an end. President Bush stood right here in this Chamber in January delivering his State of the Union message, and he said the following: I wish this war was over and we had won.

So there is a shared goal of our trying to bring this war to an end as quickly as possible and to bring our men and women home to their families.

Frankly, I join my colleague from Delaware in stating that I believe that the opportunity for implementation, if not all, most of the work of the Iraq Study Group, this great bipartisan gathering, would go a long way towards achieving that goal to which both Democrats and Republicans claim to aspire.

So I would just like to thank my friend for his remarks, and I thank him for yielding to me.

Mr. CASTLE. In closing, I think both of these amendments are extremely important. I sometimes understand the writing on the wall when it comes to votes on rules, but I would hope that we in this House would consider the amendment that I put forward on the extra day leave in the Iraq Study Group recommendations sooner rather than later. I think it is an important way to move towards actually ending the war.

So I oppose the rule and urge Members to vote against the rule.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this closed rule.

While Members of this body will have differing views regarding the U.S. policy in Iraq and Afghanistan, we can all agree that the

American soldiers who have been deployed into these combat zones have bravely risked their lives in the service of their Nation. These men and women have done everything we have asked of them, and as we all know, many returning soldiers experience some form of post-traumatic stress.

Under the current Pentagon policies, all members of the Armed Forces, including those serving in the Guard and Reserve, receive 2.5 days of leave time per month—regardless of whether they are deployed in Iraq or back in the U.S. at their home base. My amendment would have simply credited soldiers 1 additional day of leave time for every month that they are deployed in a combat zone. For example, if a soldier serves 12 months in Baghdad, that soldier would be credited 12 additional days of leave to be used when he or she returns stateside.

Although I am obviously the sponsor of this amendment, I cannot take credit for the idea. My staff developed this legislation after talking with a soldier who as we speak is deployed in a combat zone. Corresponding via e-mail, this soldier shared his experiences in combat and offered his opinion that many of the troops returning home after a deployment would benefit from being credited with additional leave time based on the number of months they served in a combat zone. This soldier noted that the opportunity to spend some time away from military life once returning stateside would be important in terms of both mental and physical recovery.

In fact, the Director of the U.S. Army Medical Command's Office for Behavioral Health has stated that 15 to 30 percent of troops returning home from combat experience post-traumatic stress or other mental health symptoms. While the Army Medical Command notes that this is not unusual after combat, it underscores that in addition to receiving treatment, it is critical for soldiers returning home from a combat zone to "spend time with family," "avoid a busy schedule," and "resume family routines" as soon as possible.

It is clear that my amendment would not solve every problem that troops face when they return stateside. Receiving appropriate diagnosis and treatment is also vital in dealing with post-traumatic stress. And this amendment is not meant to diminish the efforts of our military leaders to provide care for soldiers once they return to the U.S. The Army's Medical Command and its corresponding services have in many cases gone above and beyond the call of duty to diagnose, treat, and prevent post-traumatic stress disorder. Still, in many cases spending time away from military life and reconnecting with friends and family is the best way for individuals to prepare to resume their service in the military.

Mr. Chairman, my amendment recognizes the difficulties faced by soldiers who serve time in a combat zone and would assist them in their homecoming by providing additional leave time to help improve their transition. The men and women who have sacrificed so much to serve our Nation in combat have earned this additional time to spend with their loved ones. Unfortunately the rule before us prevented any substantive debate, including debate on my important amendment.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, does the gentleman have any other speakers?

Mr. DREIER. May I inquire of the Chair how much time remains on each side.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California has 16½ minutes remaining, and the gentlewoman from New York has 19½ minutes remaining.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to yield 3 minutes to my very good friend from Morristown, New Jersey, who is a hardworking member of the House Committee on Appropriations, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

While I support the military goals of this legislation, all of us do, I rise in opposition to this rule and this bill. We all want to see the dwell times for our troops expanded to meet Department of Defense standards, but this legislation would place handcuffs on our military commanders as they work to stabilize Iraq.

My colleagues, in many senses this is a political document, pure and simple. The dwell time requirements appear to be not so much efforts to improve the readiness of units and quality of life of servicemembers in our Armed Forces; rather, these requirements are designed to force a withdrawal and reduction of U.S. forces committed to Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The proof: This bill slaps deployment prohibitions only on forces destined for Iraq, but would allow those very same forces, regardless of dwell time, to be committed to combat in Afghanistan or anywhere else in the world where they might be needed.

Over the past few weeks, we have heard Members of the majority speak with varying levels of clarity about their plans to "end the war" or "bring the troops home." Of course, we all desire to bring the troops home. One even proclaimed the "war is lost."

But that is not the message we are hearing from Iraq today. Both General Petraeus and General Odierno have stated that initial assessments of the new strategy are encouraging as the Iraqi Army is taking a much more prominent role in the fighting.

In recent days, many of us have read the op-ed in the New York Times written by two self-described critics of the war effort. From John Burns, Baghdad bureau chief, New York Times: "I think there's no doubt that those extra 30,000 American troops are making a difference. They are definitely making a difference in Baghdad."

And from USA Today, "Coalition forces have uncovered more insurgent weapons caches in the first 6 months of this year than the entire previous year."

Mr. Speaker, we have seen an increase in security, a decrease in killing, fewer car bombs, lower levels of civilian casualties; all good things. And what is this House's response to this demonstrable progress? They would

offer legislation that would hamstring and handcuff our military commanders, short-circuit the training of Iraqi soldiers, and endanger further security progress.

Mr. Speaker, I have always said that I want our war fighters' deployments to be short and as safe as possible. I do want our troops out of Iraq and Afghanistan, and anywhere in the world where they are in harm's way, soon. But this is not the way to do it.

I rise in opposition to this, the rule, and to this type of thinking that endangers not only our soldiers but endangers the civilians that we are there to help.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, at this time I am very happy to yield 5 minutes to my good friend from Bridgeport, Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS), who next weekend will be making his 18th trip to Iraq. I know he shares my concern over the fact that, unfortunately, this rule fails to allow this House to consider the work of the bipartisan Iraq Study Group.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, this is a closed rule. It is a continuation of closed rules on an issue that should be a very open. We went into Iraq on a bipartisan basis; that cannot be denied. Two-thirds of the House voted to go into Iraq, three-quarters of the Senate voted to go into Iraq.

The Senate is allowing open debate on the issue of Iraq. There was the Webb-Hagel amendment, which is basically this underlying bill. There was the Hagel-Levin amendment, which talked about troops not being sent in for more than 12 months if they are in the Army and 7 months if they are in the Marines. That was an amendment I would have liked to have introduced to this bill. Why couldn't we have had a debate on it? If it doesn't make sense, and there would have been a number on my side of the aisle who would have voted against it, it would have defeated it. But we would have started to have some dialogue about the condition of our troops. That would be a healthy thing to have.

But the most important amendment that was presented was the effort by Mr. WOLF to have support for the Iraq Study Group. The thing that is astonishing is, when we voted about the Iraq Study Group a few weeks ago, only 69 Members in the Chamber voted against it, but it was attached to an appropriation. And being attached to an appropriation, we can't get the Senate to act until Lord knows when, probably after October when we are supposed to have our budgets done. We need another vehicle.

Mr. DREIER. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SHAYS. Absolutely.

Mr. DREIER. I thank the gentleman for yielding, Mr. Speaker.

I will say again that it really baffles me as to why this majority will not

allow us to have an opportunity to consider this bipartisan work product of the Iraq Study Group.

On the opening day, Mr. Speaker, the new Speaker of the House of Representatives stood and talked about this new sense of bipartisanship. We all know that the war in Iraq was the key issue in the November election. We know that the war in Iraq was the key issue in last November's election, and it is on the minds of all of our constituents. We are all concerned about the future that this war on terror holds for all of us, and that's why the Iraq Study Group was established.

Our former colleague, the former chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Lee Hamilton, the former Secretary of State, a Democrat and Republican led eight other Democrats and Republicans, highly regarded in this country, strongly partisan individuals, they came together with a bipartisan proposal. Unfortunately, the supposedly new bipartisan spirit that exists here in the House denies us a chance to even consider that.

No one demonstrates more passion on this issue than Mr. WOLF. When he made the arguments before the Rules Committee, they were very compelling and very strong as only FRANK WOLF can offer them. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, we have not seen a chance to do that.

Mr. SHAYS. I thank the gentleman for making this point. The bottom line is: In this Chamber, only 69 Members voted against having the Iraq Study Group revisit Iraq so they could come out with a report that could complement, either agree with or disagree with, what General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker are going to conclude.

It seems to me it would be in the best interest of both Republicans and Democrats to find areas where we can agree, where we can work together. I cannot, for the life of me, understand why this Democratic Congress is opposed to bringing the Iraq Study Group up for a vote.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I do so to say that just this week we all saw a great deal of attention focused on an op-ed piece written in the New York Times by two of the harshest critics of the war in Iraq. I am referring, of course, to the Brookings Institution Fellows Michael O'Hanlon and Kenneth Pollack. And I saw Ken Pollack with Wolf Blitzer on CNN the other day saying he did not write the headline in the New York Times which talked about this is a war we might win. He did stand by every word in that piece that was written, and I am going to ask to include that piece in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

[From the New York Times, July 30, 2007]

A WAR WE JUST MIGHT WIN

(By Michael E. O'Hanlon and Kenneth M. Pollack)

WASHINGTON.—Viewed from Iraq, where we just spent eight days meeting with American

and Iraqi military and civilian personnel, the political debate in Washington is surreal. The Bush administration has over four years lost essentially all credibility. Yet now the administration's critics, in part as a result, seem unaware of the significant changes taking place.

Here is the most important thing Americans need to understand: We are finally getting somewhere in Iraq, at least in military terms. As two analysts who have harshly criticized the Bush administration's miserable handling of Iraq, we were surprised by the gains we saw and the potential to produce not necessarily "victory" but a sustainable stability that both we and the Iraqis could live with.

After the furnace-like heat, the first thing you notice when you land in Baghdad is the morale of our troops. In previous trips to Iraq we often found American troops angry and frustrated—many sensed they had the wrong strategy, were using the wrong tactics and were risking their lives in pursuit of an approach that could not work.

Today, morale is high. The soldiers and marines told us they feel that they now have a superb commander in Gen. David Petraeus; they are confident in his strategy, they see real results, and they feel now they have the numbers needed to make a real difference.

Everywhere, Army and Marine units were focused on securing the Iraqi population, working with Iraqi security units, creating new political and economic arrangements at the local level and providing basic services—electricity, fuel, clean water and sanitation—to the people. Yet in each place, operations had been appropriately tailored to the specific needs of the community. As a result, civilian fatality rates are down roughly a third since the surge began—though they remain very high, underscoring how much more still needs to be done.

In Ramadi, for example, we talked with an outstanding Marine captain whose company was living in harmony in a complex with a (largely Sunni) Iraqi police company and a (largely Shiite) Iraqi Army unit. He and his men had built an Arab-style living room, where he met with the local Sunni sheiks—all formerly allies of Al Qaeda and other jihadist groups—who were now competing to secure his friendship.

In Baghdad's Ghazaliya neighborhood, which has seen some of the worst sectarian combat, we walked a street slowly coming back to life with stores and shoppers. The Sunni residents were unhappy with the nearby police checkpoint, where Shiite officers reportedly abused them, but they seemed genuinely happy with the American soldiers and a mostly Kurdish Iraqi Army company patrolling the street. The local Sunni militia even had agreed to confine itself to its compound once the Americans and Iraqi units arrived.

We traveled to the northern cities of Tal Afar and Mosul. This is an ethnically rich area, with large numbers of Sunni Arabs, Kurds and Turkmens. American troop levels in both cities now number only in the hundreds because the Iraqis have stepped up to the plate. Reliable police officers man the checkpoints in the cities, while Iraqi Army troops cover the countryside. A local mayor told us his greatest fear was an overly rapid American departure from Iraq. All across the country, the dependability of Iraqi security forces over the long term remains a major question mark.

But for now, things look much better than before. American advisers told us that many of the corrupt and sectarian Iraqi commanders who once infested the force have been removed. The American high command assesses that more than three-quarters of the Iraqi Army battalion commanders in

Baghdad are now reliable partners (at least for as long as American forces remain in Iraq).

In addition, far more Iraqi units are well integrated in terms of ethnicity and religion. The Iraqi Army's highly effective Third Infantry Division started out as overwhelmingly Kurdish in 2005. Today, it is 45 percent Shiite, 28 percent Kurdish, and 27 percent Sunni Arab.

In the past, few Iraqi units could do more than provide a few "jundis" (soldiers) to put a thin Iraqi face on largely American operations. Today, in only a few sectors did we find American commanders complaining that their Iraqi formations were useless—something that was the rule, not the exception, on a previous trip to Iraq in late 2005.

The additional American military formations brought in as part of the surge, General Petraeus's determination to hold areas until they are truly secure before redeploying units, and the increasing competence of the Iraqis has had another critical effect: no more whack-a-mole, with insurgents popping back up after the Americans leave.

In war, sometimes it's important to pick the right adversary, and in Iraq we seem to have done so. A major factor in the sudden change in American fortunes has been the outpouring of popular animus against Al Qaeda and other Salafist groups, as well as (to a lesser extent) against Moktada al-Sadr's Mahdi Army.

These groups have tried to impose Shariah law, brutalized average Iraqis to keep them in line, killed important local leaders and seized young women to marry off to their loyalists. The result has been that in the last six months Iraqis have begun to turn on the extremists and turn to the Americans for security and help. The most important and best-known example of this is in Anbar Province, which in less than six months has gone from the worst part of Iraq to the best (outside the Kurdish areas). Today the Sunni sheiks there are close to crippling Al Qaeda and its Salafist allies. Just a few months ago, American marines were fighting for every yard of Ramadi; last week we strolled down its streets without body armor.

Another surprise was how well the coalition's new Embedded Provincial Reconstruction Teams are working. Wherever we found a fully staffed team, we also found local Iraqi leaders and businessmen cooperating with it to revive the local economy and build new political structures. Although much more needs to be done to create jobs, a new emphasis on microloans and small-scale projects was having some success where the previous aid programs often built white elephants.

In some places where we have failed to provide the civilian manpower to fill out the reconstruction teams, the surge has still allowed the military to fashion its own advisory groups from battalion, brigade and division staffs. We talked to dozens of military officers who before the war had known little about governance or business but were now ably immersing themselves in projects to provide the average Iraqi with a decent life.

Outside Baghdad, one of the biggest factors in the progress so far has been the efforts to decentralize power to the provinces and local governments. But more must be done. For example, the Iraqi National Police, which are controlled by the Interior Ministry, remain mostly a disaster. In response, many towns and neighborhoods are standing up local police forces, which generally prove more effective, less corrupt and less sectarian. The coalition has to force the warlords in Baghdad to allow the creation of neutral security forces beyond their control.

In the end, the situation in Iraq remains grave. In particular, we still face huge hur-

dles on the political front. Iraqi politicians of all stripes continue to dawdle and maneuver for position against one another when major steps towards reconciliation—or at least accommodation—are needed. This cannot continue indefinitely. Otherwise, once we begin to downsize, important communities may not feel committed to the status quo, and Iraqi security forces may splinter along ethnic and religious lines.

How much longer should American troops keep fighting and dying to build a new Iraq while Iraqi leaders fail to do their part? And how much longer can we wear down our forces in this mission? These haunting questions underscore the reality that the surge cannot go on forever. But there is enough good happening on the battlefields of Iraq today that Congress should plan on sustaining the effort at least into 2008.

I will say that as one reads the O'Hanlon-Pollack article, it is clear that there are many very important challenges that lie ahead in Iraq. But the fact that we have seen a quelling of the violence in the al-Anbar Province, as we look at the difficulty that we face, but the fact that we've seen Sunni leaders unite with us in fighting al Qaeda, we, I believe, are making progress.

War is a very, very ugly thing, and this war is no exception. No one can say exactly what the outcome will be, but I do know that the cause of freedom is worth fighting for, and I do know that these constant attempts to prevent this House from looking at, working on, and considering the work of the Iraq Study Group, the bipartisan work product of the Iraq Study Group, is just plain wrong, so I am going to continue to strongly oppose this rule and these continued efforts to politicize our quest for victory and bringing our troops home.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, despite our great respect and affection for those who have brought their amendments to the Rules Committee yesterday, it is well known in this House and in the country that the Democrat majority intends to bring the war to a close as quickly as possible and as quick as it is practicable to do so.

To reinstitute the Iraq Study Committee, to refinance it, put it back together, wait for a report would take far longer than we frankly are willing to give.

But this bill before us today, the underlying bill before us, is humane. And it says, for goodness sake, don't redeploy troops over and over and over again unless they have had at least as much time at home to rest as they have had in combat.

This is a different kind of combat, Mr. Speaker. Soldiers before have always been given recreation and rest after intense combat. Not this time. The soldiers in Iraq and all the military people of Iraq face almost instantaneous death every moment of the day and night without any respite at all. We are seeing the results of that

brought home with the posttraumatic stress syndrome which is rising so rapidly.

In addition to that, we are demanding at last, because we didn't have the opportunity before by not being in the majority, that these troops be equipped properly.

The New York Times said on a front page story recently that 80 percent, Mr. Speaker, of the marines that died in Iraq would have lived, those with upper body wounds would have lived with the proper equipment. How can we live with that?

□ 1000

We know now that instead of sending useless Humvees that were of no use at all to them against the IEDs, if we had always sent MRAPs, a technology we have known for 30 years, heaven knows how many of the nearly 4,000 who died would have been saved and how many of the more than 30,000 who have been wounded would have been spared that.

That weighs heavily on the conscience of those of us in the House of Representatives, and it angers the people that we represent.

We've talked to the parents of those who have been sent back two, three, four times. I have talked to one father who told me as his son was being deployed for the fourth time; if he gets killed, I will kill somebody. The anguish of these parents is palpable; and, as I stated before in my earlier statement, we don't fight this war. The 1 percent of the military people and their families are fighting this war. We've been asked for no sacrifice of any kind.

How glib it is for us to stand on this floor and say, leave it to the generals and look how well they're doing. The number of generals who have resigned their commission so that they could speak out against this carnage and this despicable war that was unplanned and planned by people who have left the scene cannot go on any longer.

And I will tell you that we have to go and look families in the face, and there are a number of times that I've gone to services, and my position on the war is well-known, and I've wondered if the families, how they would accept my presence. I have never been to a single one where they didn't say to me, bring them home, bring them home.

For heaven's sake, Mr. Speaker, if it's not just for that alone, those of us here have that obligation to bring them home.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume; and I will say again to my colleagues that, as we look at this challenge, this is a very difficult one. It is one that we seek to address in a bipartisan way, Mr. Speaker, Democrats and Republicans coming together.

Now, our former colleague, Mr. Hamilton, co-chairman of the Iraq Study Group, has made it very clear that the

work product which was unleashed, turned over last December, is still applicable today. This notion of saying that we need to look at bringing this group back together, I don't have it with me here, but I have one downstairs in my office. We have the volume, the work of the Iraq Study Group, that we've all gotten copies of; and all we're asking, Mr. Speaker, is that this bipartisan work product be able to be voted on and supported here.

Now, what is it that we have before us? We have a closed rule. And I'm saddened greatly to report to the House, by virtue of this closed rule having come from the Rules Committee, reported out last night, we have by far exceeded the doubling, the doubling of the number of closed rules in this Democratic majority than we had in the Republican majority at this time at the beginning of the last Congress. It saddens me.

Again, I will say that, Mr. Speaker, while we hear about this great new day, a sense of openness, transparency, accountability, what is it that we've gotten? We may not have been perfect when we were in the majority, but under this new majority that promised all of these great things to the American people, we have gotten now more than twice as many closed rules in the first 7 months of the year than we had in the first 7 months of the 109th Congress, and I just think it's a sad commentary on where we are.

Now to the issue at hand, Mr. Speaker. As we look at the challenge that the families of those loved ones face, I would like to share the remarks of some of the families that I have heard.

There is a young man who was killed tragically in the battle of Fallujah. His name is J.P. Blecksmith from San Marino, California. His father, like J.P., was a Marine; and after his son was tragically killed, Ed Blecksmith said to me, he said, David, if we don't complete our mission in Iraq, my son J.P. will have died in vain. And he said, we need to do everything that we possibly can to ensure victory.

And I will tell you that what we're doing here today under this closed rule, I believe, creates the potential for undermining the success that, as was pointed out and as I said in my last statement, is outlined in the remarks in the article in the New York Times, the op-ed piece written by Ken Pollack and Mike O'Hanlon, and there's another statement that was made.

I met a woman just a couple of months ago. Denise Codnot is her name. She came here to Washington, and she walked into my office, Mr. Speaker, and her son Kyle was killed in Iraq, 19 years old. He was in the Army. And she looked me in the eye and said, my son wasn't killed in Iraq. My son proudly gave his life, proudly gave his life for the cause of freedom. And she said to me, we must do everything within our power to ensure success and victory.

This war on terror has been very painful for us, Mr. Speaker, very, very

painful for everyone involved, especially the families of those men and women in uniform. But we know there is an interconnectedness of this war on terror, and that is the reason that on this rule we are going to continue our quest to deal with modernization of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act.

Now, I know that my colleagues last night in the Rules Committee, we passed out a special rule that will allow for consideration of possible negotiations that would take place on this issue, but, Mr. Speaker, we have been waiting since April of this year when the statements began to come forward from the Director of National Intelligence, Mike McConnell; from the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, Michael Hayden; from the Secretary of Homeland Security, Michael Chertoff, the three Michaels I call them, who have come forward with this urgent plea for us to take the very antiquated, three-decade-old, three-decade-old 1978 Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act and modernize it.

I am going to move, Mr. Speaker, to defeat the previous question, and I would like to yield 1½ minutes to my colleague from Albuquerque, New Mexico (Mrs. WILSON) whose legislation will be made in order if we are successful in defeating the previous question.

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico. I thank my colleague from California.

This is something we've been trying to get addressed since April, since the Director of National Intelligence came to this Congress and said we need to fix the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act. There are things we should be listening to that we are not listening to, that we are missing, and it is hurting the security of this country. It continues to imperil the security of this country, and it is only because we are now forcing the Democrats to deal with this publicly that we may be making progress on this issue.

I am disappointed, though, to hear some of my colleagues in this House suggest in these negotiations that we should have a judge overseeing foreign intelligence collection overseas that does not involve any Americans. That has never been the role of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court. The whole point in making these changes is to make sure that we don't have counterterrorism analysts who are very valuable, highly trained people, expert in languages in regions, in organizations, spending their time developing probable cause statements for foreigners in foreign countries who are communicating with other foreigners. There's absolutely no reason for any court to be involved in that kind of an effort.

Speed matters. It matters in a war on terrorism where terrorists are using our communications networks in order to try to kill us. It is vital, absolutely vital that we fix the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act before the House adjourns for the August recess.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gen-

tleman from Florida, a member of the Rules Committee and a member of the Intelligence Committee, Mr. HASTINGS, to assure everyone that the FISA bill is on the calendar for this week.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

You know, for over a year now the Intelligence Committee and Members of this body have been in negotiations with the administration regarding FISA. When I hear my colleague talk about it, I know that, in the realm of the American public, she's persuasive enough to make it appear that there's something that's happening that is dreadful and America's about to be attacked because we don't have sufficient information that we are receiving from those persons who would do us harm overseas.

The simple fact of the matter is that JANE HARMAN, the former Chair of this committee, and BUD CRAMER have been actively involved. It is not as if nothing has been going on with reference to FISA.

I don't have that same fear. I serve on the same committee that she does. I have every reason to believe that the negotiations are not causing this country to not receive the information that is necessary; and if anyone would argue that this Nation's FISA program is not under courts at this particular time and that the issue is that the administration wishes to move it from under the courts, then I would have them to know that there needs to be greater discussion.

One of the things that has happened is some of the stuff we can't talk about is being nuanced, and I rather think that that is not the way to go about trying to change a law. Yes, it's important that we receive the information about those who are going to do us harm, if they can. And, yes, it's important that we be able to intercept their foreign-to-foreign communications. But to give the general impression that there is this necessity that it be done yesterday is not what the reality is.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I understand that I only have 1 minute remaining, and I know that my colleague from Albuquerque would very much like to have an opportunity to be heard on this issue. I have some closing remarks. I wonder if the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Rules has any time she might yield to the gentlewoman from Albuquerque to respond.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time I have left?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from New York has 13½ minutes remaining.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I yield 30 seconds to the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Mrs. WILSON).

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from New York for her graciousness.

I would just tell my colleagues that the Director of National Intelligence, Michael McConnell, has said we are

missing things we should be getting. In classified session in this House yesterday, he was much more specific about just what the magnitude is of what we are missing.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I'm planning to close, if the gentlewoman from New York has no further requests.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I have no other speakers.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I think it's been very, very clear here this is a closed rule. It's outrageous that we have continued down this pattern of closed rules; and we were promised, the American people were promised much better than that. The underlying legislation is legislation that the administration just announced the President would veto if it were to pass. We should be debating the work of the Iraq Study Group, the bipartisan package; and, unfortunately, with this closed rule, we're denied a chance to do that.

I also believe that my colleague from New Mexico, while debate seemed to be very personal among members of the Intelligence Committee, it comes down to the very strong statements that have been made by the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Director of National Intelligence and the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. We need to immediately modernize the three-decade-old Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act.

So I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on the previous question so that we'll have an opportunity to make in order the very thoughtful legislation that has been introduced by our colleague from Albuquerque, Mrs. WILSON.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I again want to assure my colleagues that FISA is on the calendar before we go home, which may be the middle of next week. We're not going to leave here without getting that fixed.

Let me also state that, in addition to the dreadful, awful loss of our service persons and the terrible wounding and mangled 30,000 or more, there's another cost to this war, Mr. Speaker. A new estimate is that the war in Iraq will cost the taxpayers of the United States \$1 trillion. We are spending at the rate of \$10 billion a month. Obviously, this is money that we don't have.

We're borrowing mainly from four sources, the first one being China, Japan, South Korea; and, Mr. Speaker, as this debt piles up, it will take generations for our children, our grandchildren, our great-grandchildren and our great-great-grandchildren simply to pay off.

So let me stop as I began, to again express my sorrow to the people of Minnesota and make it clear that the spending on this war, which is rife with corruption, I do need to say, that in addition to 160,000 military persons in Iraq, we have 185,000 contractors, spending tax money at an enormous rate. We are beginning for the first time in 6 years, as we've taken the ma-

jority, to really look at where that money has gone and try to ferret out the corruption, the cronyism, the unbid contracts and all of the other scandals that have gone on there.

Just this week again we learned that millions of dollars spent in construction to turn things over to the Iraqi people is unacceptable to the people of Iraq because of the shoddy workmanship. This is a scandal of major proportions, Mr. Speaker. It really is important that we bring this to an end and try to clean up and maybe hopefully get our international reputation back to some degree.

But the most important thing is that this bill says simply this: Our soldiers need rest. How dare we send people into the battle day after day, night after night, without saying from this House and from this government that what we want for them is what the military always had in the past, an opportunity to rest and renew? It's not only critical for them personally, but it's critical for the units in which they serve that they are in top form. The fact is that we could do that quite simply here just today with this bill and also make certain that we don't ever again send one of them out on one of those roads to patrol unprepared, untrained and unprotected because we failed to spend the enormous amount of money on the right kind of equipment.

It's time, Mr. Speaker. We owe it; and I'm ashamed that all these years, that for the past 6 years, no oversight, not any, no hearings, have been held on this war. No hearings have been held on where all of that money has gone, and we're just beginning now to scratch the surface.

But the first obligation that we have, far more than money involved, the largest obligation we have is to the men and women that we say would you please set your life aside and go and fight. We owe them everything in the world that we can give them.

I'm happy that we have put a lot of money this year on our side into the Veterans Administration, and certainly it's for traumatic brain injury which we see so much of it and that the Veterans Administration is in no way equipped to handle. We have enough money now in the bills so we can send them to the places where they can get the very best help available. But young men and women that are 18, 19, 20 years old, maimed for life. And Mr. Speaker, it is time some intelligence here in the House reigned.

The material previously referred to by Mr. DREIER is as follows:

AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 601 OFFERED BY MR. DREIER OF CALIFORNIA

At the end of the resolution, add the following:

SEC. 3. That immediately upon the adoption of this resolution the House shall, without intervention of any point of order, consider the bill (H.R. 3138) to amend the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 to update the definition of electronic surveillance. All points of order against the bill are waived. The bill shall be considered as read.

The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate on the bill equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence; and (2) one motion to recommit.

(The information contained herein was provided by Democratic Minority on multiple occasions throughout the 109th Congress.)

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Democratic majority agenda and a vote to allow the opposition, at least for the moment, to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's *Precedents of the House of Representatives*, (VI, 308-311) describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as "a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge." To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that "the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition" in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: "The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition."

Because the vote today may look bad for the Democratic majority they will say "the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever." But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the definition of the previous question used in the *Floor Procedures Manual* published by the Rules Committee in the 109th Congress, (page 56). Here's how the Rules Committee described the rule using information from *Congressional Quarterly's "American Congressional Dictionary"*: "If the previous question is defeated, control of debate shifts to the leading opposition member (usually the minority Floor Manager) who then manages an hour of debate and may offer a germane amendment to the pending business."

Deschler's *Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives*, the subchapter titled "Amending Special Rules" states: "a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate." (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon."

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools

for those who oppose the Democratic majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

□ 1020

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2272, AMERICA COMPETES ACT

Ms. SUTTON. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 602 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. Res. 602

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 2272) to invest in innovation through research and development, and to improve the competitiveness of the United States. All points of order against the conference report and against its consideration are waived. The conference report shall be considered as read.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Ohio is recognized for 1 hour.

Ms. SUTTON. For the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS). All time yielded during consideration of the rule is for debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. SUTTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials into the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. SUTTON. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Ms. SUTTON asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SUTTON. Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 602 provides for the consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 2272, the 21st Century Competitiveness Act. The rule waives all points of order against the conference report and its consideration and considers the conference report as read.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 602 and the underlying conference report on the 21st Century Competitiveness Act. Too often, we hear that our Nation is struggling to properly educate our students in math and science, and as a result we are falling behind in this world. This is unacceptable to me, and it should be unacceptable to this Congress.

But today we have the chance to change this. Today we make a true commitment to our future. Today we can make it clear that we support American innovation and understand the vital need for our Nation to remain competitive in the global economy.

The 21st Century Competitiveness Act will help ensure that our students, teachers, businesses and workers are prepared to continue to keep this country at the forefront of research and development. Our bill increases funding and makes improvements for the National Science Foundation, the National Institutes of Standards and Technology, and at the Department of Energy Office of Science. The bill increases funding for science, technology, engineering and math, also known as STEM research and education programs.

This bill also allocates funding for the Manufacturing Extension Partnership. These MEP programs leverage Federal, State, local and private investments to stimulate new manufacturing processes and technologies. It's through these new processes and technologies that we can ensure American manufacturers have the tools to compete effectively and efficiently against overseas manufacturers.

The MEP program has proven to be remarkably effective in my home State of Ohio where small and midsize manufacturers face limited budgets, lack of in-house expertise and lack of access to the newest technologies. MEP assistance provided training, expertise and services tailored to the critical needs of Ohio's small and midsize manufacturers.

Through this assistance, many manufacturers in Ohio have increased productivity, achieved higher profits, and remain competitive by providing the latest and most efficient technologies, processes and business practices. In 2006, in fact, as a direct result of MEP assistance, my State enjoyed over \$150 million of new investment and over \$500 million in increased or retained sales. Companies in Ohio participating in the MEP reported cost savings of over \$100 million.

Through the continued funding of this vital program, we can bring these vast benefits to even more small manufacturers across the country. Our efforts here today are vital to stopping the offshoring and outsourcing as well that may have hurt many communities in my home State of Ohio and all across this Nation.

This Congress can send a strong message today that we want to ensure that our Nation is prepared for the future.

Let's pass this rule and the 21st Century Competitiveness Act.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. HASTINGS of Washington asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I want to thank the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. SUTTON) for yielding me the customary 30 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, this rule will allow the House to consider a conference report that incorporates several similar measures that have passed the House and Senate authorizing funding for scientific research and increasing the number of students majoring in math, science, engineering and foreign languages.

The several bills that passed both Houses were approved by overwhelming bipartisan votes. The authorization level for all of these bipartisan bills combined a total \$24 billion in the House. I am concerned, however, that the conference report today contains over \$43 billion in overall authorizations, nearly double.

It is vital that the United States continue to grow more globally competitive in the areas of scientific research and technology. Federal and private investment in supporting research and development is essential to the health of our economy and our competitiveness as a Nation.

We must plan for the future by areas of basic research and science today.

However, there is also something we must do today, and that is update our Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act laws. This body has missed several important opportunities to consider changing our laws to account for technological advances, and now we are faced with a limited time remaining before Congress recesses for the August district work period.

You can all agree or disagree that our FISA laws need to be updated. All I will be asking my colleagues to do is to vote "no" on the previous question so that Members will have the opportunity to debate and consider fixing our outdated FISA law that currently requires our intelligence community to ask a judge permission before listening to telephone conversations of foreign terrorists in foreign countries who threaten our Nation's security.

Let me be clear also. If the previous question is defeated, the America COMPETES conference report will still be on the floor today. This is not an attempt whatsoever to delay this conference report. It is only an attempt to bring this issue to the floor as soon as possible, but, more importantly, before the Congress recesses.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SUTTON. Mr. Speaker, before I yield, I just want to make it clear, as has been stated on this House floor