federal contracting process so that taxpayers' money can be protected from waste, fraud, and abuse. The effect of this legislation would change federal acquisition law to require agencies to limit the use of emergency no-bid contracts and to increase transparency and accountability in federal contracting in an effort to protect the taxpayers' money.

An estimated $10 billion in Iraq reconstruction spending has already been wasted and the waste will continue until legislation such as H.R. 1362 makes it a requirement for agencies to limit the use of these abuse-prone contracts. Congress has held multiple hearings over the abuse that has occurred regarding such waste in federal contracting and now we must act. Waste and fraud occurred not only with Iraq reconstruction contracts but also in connection with Hurricane Katrina recovery efforts.

Reports of government contractors defrauding the Coalition Provisional Authority of tens of millions of dollars in Iraq reconstruction funds have surfaced and this Administration has done little to try to recover the money. It is time to clean up fraud in Iraq and elsewhere.

I wholeheartedly support H.R. 1362 to change our current federal acquisition laws to require agencies to limit the use of abuse-prone contracts. I applaud this beneficial legislation and urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 1362.

THE SAFE FACILITIES ACT OF 2007

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 20, 2007

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, last night I introduced legislation, the "Safe Facilities Act of 2007," H.R. 1574, to promote and protect increased safety measures at chemical security plants. Specifically, my legislation would prohibit any federal law, regulation or agency from preempting any State chemical facility safety stipulation which may be more rigorous then the new federal regulations.

As you know, Madam Speaker, last fall Congress passed the Homeland Security Appropriations Act of 2007 which granted the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) the authority to draft "interim final regulations" regarding plant security. While these standards are a necessary baseline for nationwide consideration, the federal regulations must represent a floor, not a ceiling, by which States may structure their own security standards. Federal regulations should not be written in such a way to undermine exiting State statues, which in cases like New Jersey are current and robust.

While I agree with some of the implementation provisions outlined in the interim regulations, my legislation repeals the provision allowing the federal law to preempt the state law. It is particularly difficult to find merit in the Department's plan to preempt state standards since the authorizing statute, Public Law 109–295, was intentionally silent on this issue. The very fact that the legislation did not include a specific preemption should be taken as the signal of Congressional intent to allow states to implement stricter standards if they act to do so. Federal laws should provide a framework for state laws, buttressing and enhancing existing state statutes not eradicating or replacing laws which in some cases may be more protective.

As you are well aware, September 11, 2001 changed the life of every single American—including the life of every resident in New Jersey. Nearly 700 New Jersey residents lost their lives including many from the 4th Congressional District which I represent in central Jersey. Regrettably, the most densely populated state in the Union is also well acquainted with bio-terror attacks including the subsequent anthrax attack at the U.S. Postal facility in Hamilton, also in my Congressional District. With over 100 major chemical facilities in the State of New Jersey, lawmakers, experts in the field of science, and residents alike are keen to the importance of securing New Jersey's vital infrastructure which could potentially be used as a weapon by a terrorist.

Immediately following the attacks in 2001 and in preparation for the "worst case scenarios" in the event of another terrorist attack, New Jersey established the Domestic Security Preparedness Task Force to develop the best security practices and encourage each chemical facility in the state to evaluate security threats and plant vulnerabilities as well as the consequences of a chemical release. In 2005, the best practices became mandatory for New Jersey's facilities. All of New Jersey's facilities are now required to prepare a site-specific, risk and vulnerability assessment, emergency incident prevention and response plan and require worker participation in their security assessments. In addition, 43 chemical facilities subject to the Toxic Catastrophe Prevention Act (TCPA) state program are also required to explore the feasibility of inherently safer technologies as part of state security and preparedness plans.

New Jersey is no stranger to danger when it comes to vulnerabilities in a post 9/11 world. We are acutely aware of the terrorist threat and thus we will not be passive in our fight to prevent future catastrophes. The Garden State is the first state in the Nation to implement vigorous plant security practices and continues to research and develop strategies to improve and enhance current standards and regulations. The federal government has no business undermining the efforts of New Jersey, or any State for that matter, in providing the greatest level of protection for our citizens.

TIBET

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 20, 2007

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to call to the attention of my fellow committee members an important motion passed by the House of Commons of the Parliament of Canada on February 15, 2007 and a motion currently under consideration of the Senate of the Parliament of Canada.

The motions are part of an international initiative by the Canadian Parliamentary Friends of Tibet, under the leadership of Senator Consiglio di Nino of the Parliament of Canada, to encourage legislators from around the world to urge the government of the People's Republic of China to reach a final and lasting agreement with the Dalai Lama over the situation in Tibet. The initiative is an important step in bringing a peace to the Tibetan people within the context of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the People's Republic of China.

The following is the text of the motion passed by the House of Commons and of the Parliament of Canada on February 15, 2007:

That, in the opinion of the House, the government should: Urge the government of the People's Republic of China and the Representatives of Tibet's government in exile, notwithstanding their differences on Tibet's historical relationship with China, to continue their dialogue in a forward-looking manner that will lead to pragmatic solutions that respect the Chinese constitutional framework, the territorial integrity of China and fulfill the aspirations of the Tibetan people for a unified and genuinely autonomous Tibet.

The following is the text of the motion currently under consideration by the Senate of the Parliament of Canada:

That the Senate urge the government of the People's Republic of China and the Dalai Lama, notwithstanding their differences on Tibet's historical relationship with China, to continue their dialogue in a forward-looking manner that will lead to pragmatic solutions that respect the Chinese constitutional framework, the territorial integrity of China and fulfill the aspirations of the Tibetan people for a unified and genuinely autonomous Tibet.

COMMENDING WALTER KEITH SINGLETON FOR OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO HIS COUNTRY

HON. JOHN S. TANNER

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 20, 2007

Mr. TANNER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize a west Tennessean who was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor 40 years ago for the ultimate sacrifice he and his family made in service to our country. Sergeant Walter K. Singleton of Shelby County was killed in action in Vietnam on March 24, 1967, at the young age of 22.

Sgt. Singleton was a proud Marine who, when coming under fire from the enemy, gave his own life to protect the lives of his comrades.

The heroism, gallantry and courage Sgt. Singleton demonstrated on the enemy battlefield 40 years ago represents the selfless service that millions of our Nation's finest have given to the United States Armed Forces. The sacrifice he and his family made is what makes this country great.

Madam Speaker, I hope you and our colleagues will join me in honoring Sgt. Walter K. Singleton for his patriotism and recognize the 40th anniversary of the day he received the Congressional Medal of Honor for bravely giving his life in service to his country.