

ON FISA, PRESIDENT AND REPUBLICANS PLAY POLITICS WITH NATIONAL SECURITY

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

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Madam Speaker, while President Bush and congressional Republicans sit on the sideline demanding that this House rubber-stamp the Senate-passed FISA bill, House and Senate Democrats are doing exactly what's expected of us, working to iron out differences between different FISA bills passed earlier in the two Chambers.

Last November, the House passed the RESTORE Act that modernizes the FISA law by giving the intelligence community the tools it needs to track terrorists while protecting the constitutional rights of innocent Americans.

The Bush administration objects to our legislation because we oppose giving blanket immunity to telecommunications companies who turned over information about their customers. Today, our committees continue to review telecom documents so that we can ensure the companies' actions are thoroughly reviewed and they are held appropriately accountable.

Madam Speaker, despite the fear-mongering from the President, his own administration says the intelligence community still has access to all the information it did last month. We have time to get this critical legislation right, and that's exactly what we plan to do.

RESPONSIBLE SPENDING, NOT IRRESPONSIBLE TAX INCREASES

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, the budget season is upon us. Today, the Budget Committee will meet to mark up the 2009 budget resolution.

With a new year and new opportunity, I hope the majority does not resort to the Big Government policies of the past. That means no more tax increases for hardworking Americans. Taxpayers already pay enough out of their pockets to fund the Washington bureaucracy. They should not be asked to fork over more money to subsidize billions of dollars in new wasteful government spending.

Republicans and Democrats need to craft a budget that accurately reflects the needs of the American people, honors our obligation to be good stewards of taxpayer dollars, and above all, takes a realistic and proactive approach to reining in runaway entitlement spending. Future generations should not be forced to pay the price while the leadership here in Washington refuses to make the tough decisions.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th.

A NEW DIRECTION IN IRAQ

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

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Iran's vitriolic, anti-American, Holocaust-denying leader, just concluded the first ever trip to Iraq by an Iranian President. Many commentators in the Middle East hailed the visit as a diplomatic success for him. Before our invasion, no Iranian President would have dared to step foot inside Iraq. He was received by Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki not with one, but four kisses for luck at a staged press conference with Iraqi media.

I quote Ahmadinejad: "The Americans have to understand the facts of the region. Iraqi people do not like America."

After 6 years in Iraq, 4,000 American lives lost, tens of thousands wounded, and \$570 billion spent, this is what we have to show for it? Iran's anti-American leader being given the opportunity to try to humiliate us at a joint press conference with Iraq's leader?

Mr. Speaker, we are seeing the fruition of our strategic blunder in Iraq. The groundwork has been laid for a Shiite-dominated Iraqi theocracy, loyal to Iran and diametrically opposed to our strategic interests in the region. We can stay this course or chart a new direction that will end this failed policy and bring our troops home.

It's about time we chose a direction that is worthy of the patriotism of our troops and the sacrifices of their families.

FREEDOM IS WINNING IN IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN

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

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I got a sense of what we have to show for it in Iraq this weekend. I joined a bipartisan delegation that toured the metes and bounds of Iraq and Afghanistan.

In the course of 4 days, we took off and landed 20 different times in four different types of aircraft. The one inescapable conclusion, after years of difficulty and setback in varying degrees, is freedom is winning in Iraq and Afghanistan.

In northern Iraq, we saw firsthand the Kurdish region where security, political progress and economic growth are taking hold. In central Iraq, following the military surge, al Qaeda and insurgent violence are in steep decline. Violence across the country has been reduced in the last year by more than 60 percent. It is truly extraordinary.

And the political progress is taking hold. There has been a surge in opti-

mism in Iraq due to the passage of a de-Ba'athification law, and provincial elections could well be just around the corner this fall.

Later today, in words and pictures, I will detail our trip on my Web log at mikepence.house.gov. And I hope many of my constituents will take time to read it.

As we practice freedom here at home, Americans of good will should be encouraged to know freedom is winning in Iraq and Afghanistan.

PAUL WELLSTONE MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION EQUITY ACT

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

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to voice my support for the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act.

At the heart of this bill is the fact that there exists an unreasonable difference in the way society treats mental health conditions as opposed to all other health conditions. There are quite a few health professionals in Congress, and to all of us there is no distinction in the necessity of treating heart disease, bone disease, or mental health disease. They are all equally vital to our body's functioning, and that is our goal in this act.

We must finally put an end to the discrimination being practiced by insurers and others when they offer health coverage for some health conditions and not others. It's not fair to say we'll cover some parts of your health care, but we'll pick and choose which parts of your body to cover. That's bad for business. I know it's bad for health care.

I commend PATRICK KENNEDY and JIM RAMSTAD for their tireless work on this bill and seeing its coming to the floor. I encourage all of my colleagues to join me in supporting this excellent legislation.

LET AMERICANS KEEP THEIR OWN MONEY

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, it's springtime in the city, but the trees and flowers aren't the only things growing in Washington. Federal spending is going to grow as well because springtime means Federal budget time, and this year the American taxpayer may be asked to finance the largest budget in U.S. history.

Now, in order to pay for all these expensive pigs and piglets, the government has to find a way to raise money. One option is to borrow the money. Why don't we just borrow it from the Chinese like we did in the past. Or just go into deficit spending. Or Congress can raise taxes. Yes, that's right, tax

those among us that are making money. Punish success. Tax them. Take their money and give it to Uncle Sam, who will redistribute it to more government programs.

Maybe Congress should try a novel idea: cut spending. Cut out useless programs. Tell special interest groups, no, they can't have taxpayer money for their special pork projects. Cut taxes. Let Americans keep more of their own money. Shock the country and shock the world, spend less this spring, cut taxes, and watch the economy grow because you cannot tax and spend your way to economic success.

And that's just the way it is.

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CALLING ON CONGRESS TO REMOVE INCENTIVES FOR OUTSOURCING OF JOBS

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

Mr. HALL of New York. Mr. Speaker, in the last few months, the economy has been battered. Wages have stagnated, and expenses continue to rise. Personal debt is skyrocketing, and investment for the future has become nonexistent. American families are once again paying the price for this difficulty. More and more employers are moving overseas to take advantage of cheap labor and complacent regulations in places like India.

Last month, this pernicious trend made its mark on my district when Watson Pharmaceuticals, the second largest employer in Putnam County, New York, announced that they were closing their facility and moving all their jobs to India.

The company has praised its workers. The CEO said there was nothing the workers could have done differently or better to save their jobs. But that does them no good. The pull of profits from outsourcing was just too much to ignore for another American manufacturer.

There is something very wrong when U.S. companies are only too happy to pick up and move overseas, abandoning their employees and the country and the country that has supported them for years. I hope this Congress acts swiftly to remove incentives for this kind of behavior and that CEOs of these corporations will show some patriotism and loyalty to our communities.

CONGRESS MUST FIX FISA PERMANENTLY

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, America's intelligence community has been without the tools it needs to monitor foreign terrorist communications for weeks. Last month, the Senate passed

a bipartisan bill that put the necessary tools in place, but for some reason the majority will not allow a vote in the House on this broadly supported bill.

The bipartisan Senate legislation had the votes of 21 Senate Democrats. It would have permanently fixed FISA and enabled our intelligence community to monitor foreign terrorists' electronics communications effectively.

The House's refusal to consider this legislation has created bureaucratic hurdles that made our intelligence gathering on foreign terrorists unnecessarily difficult. As Senate Intelligence Chairman JAY ROCKEFELLER said last month, America's intelligence gathering capability is being degraded.

The House should not adjourn until we have passed a permanent FISA fix that protects Americans and equips our intelligence community with the tools to thwart the plans of foreign terrorists. The American people expect and deserve no less.

THE ADMINISTRATION'S DECISION TO YANK A CONTRACT FROM AN AMERICAN COMPANY AND GIVE IT TO A CONSORTIUM DOMINATED BY EUROPE

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

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, Americans across the country are infuriated today that the administration yanked a contract away from Boeing, an American company, for our air tankers and gave it to a consortium dominated by Europe, and they're infuriated for several good reasons:

Number one, why are we giving a \$40 billion stimulus plan to France? It is our economy that is in danger.

Second, why, when we are suing this consortium for violation of international trade laws because of illegal subsidies, do we turn around and award them with a \$40 billion contract? One agency says they're illegal; the other agency's giving them \$40 billion of our taxpayer money.

Number three, and this was an insulting thing when I heard this award, the person making the award says, well, this is an American airplane. It's got an American flag on the tail. Well, you can't just go out and buy a one nickel sticker, slap it on an Airbus airplane and call it "America."

We have got to have a policy of procurement that's good for our economy and our security. We need to fix this disastrous administration decision.

PROTECT AMERICA—NOW

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

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, Americans are demanding action on an issue of paramount importance to our national security that is being carelessly ignored by this liberal majority.

Nearly 3 weeks, that's how long it's been since Democratic leadership allowed the Protect America Act to expire, removing essential tools from American intelligence officials.

Almost 3 weeks, that's how long it's been since Democrats unilaterally disarmed our Nation, leaving us more vulnerable to attack.

Americans will not be fooled by Democratic rhetoric that there's no threat or that we're prepared enough, safe enough with pre-9/11 intelligence gathering capabilities. They know we are not adequately prepared. They know we cannot be prepared when Congress, this House, takes crucial tools away from those who are charged with keeping us safe.

This careless and irresponsible course of action must not stand. Americans will not stand down and they won't give up until the House does what's right, does what the Senate has already done, and that is to protect the people and the stability of our great Nation.

Mr. Speaker, vote on the Protect American Act today.

EMBRYONIC STEM CELL RESEARCH

(Ms. DEGETTE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, embryonic stem cell research has the potential to cure diabetes, Parkinson's, paralysis, and so many other diseases and injuries. Over the past few months, we've seen some amazing new discoveries from adult stem cells and others from embryonic stem cells.

Some have claimed that the recent discoveries using induced pluripotent cells means that we no longer need to continue embryonic stem cell research. I disagree and so does the scientific community.

When we develop new tools, we don't throw out the old ones. Why should it be different when it comes to medical research? We need to support cell-based research in all types of venues. We need to find out what will not just be best for scientific advances but what will help with medical advances as well.

It's time that we develop a new framework for considering all forms of ethical stem cell research. We need to continue embryonic stem cell research as well as all other ethical forms of regenerative medicine research. And we need to have a central mechanism for ethics control over all of this research.

PROVIDING THE TOOLS TO PROTECT AMERICA

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

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, for more than 2 weeks, our national intelligence community has lacked the capability to track terrorists quickly.