

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to take an opportunity during this 1-minute to again congratulate my good friend and colleague, Representative PATRICK KENNEDY, and to pay tribute to the late Senator Paul Wellstone.

Any of us who represent people know that there are millions who are languishing in the darkness of mental health and mental health disease. And for once now we are moving a bill that deals with the idea that no one can be discriminated against in any health policy, whether it is increased financial cost, whether it is that they deny you the equal treatment that you would get if you had a broken leg, or whether or not it is a discrimination in the diagnosis.

This bill, H.R. 1424, gives you a new lease on life. It is the civil rights of mental health. And so, Mr. Speaker, I am hoping that we will eliminate from this bill the dastardly provision that does not allow our hospitals that may be owned by physicians in urban and rural areas serving the poorest of people to be eliminated through this bill.

Let us go forth with the Paul Wellstone bill and eliminate the distraction that undermines good health in America.

WE NEED AMERICAN TANKERS

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

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, I am outraged tonight that we are outsourcing our national security.

Today, in the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense, we heard testimony that the Department of Defense has modified the Buy American Act with a memorandum of understanding that exempts our allies in Europe from the same requirements we demand of U.S. manufacturers.

The results are that in the last three major contracts, we've lost them all to European manufacturers. Marine One, the replacement of the President's helicopter, went to a foreign manufacturer. The Light Utility Helicopter went to a foreign manufacturer. Last Friday, the Air Force announced that we are going to send the air refueling tanker to a foreign manufacturer.

Today, in testimony on the other side of the Capitol, Air Force Secretary Michael Wynne said in a subcommittee that, according to the news, the European-made A330 airframe selected for the new refueling airplane could be used to replace a fleet of air control surveillance and other special mission aircraft. That would mean 200 more aircraft and 40,000 more jobs going to Europe overseas.

Mr. Speaker, we've got to stop this today. Rebid the tanker contract because we need American tankers made by American companies with American workers.

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SUPPORT THE COLOMBIA TRADE PROMOTION AGREEMENT

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

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, U.S. relations with Latin America stand at a critical juncture.

Just last weekend after a successful attack by Colombian troops against the terrorist FARC, Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez expressed his outrage and ordered his troops to the Colombian border. He convinced Ecuador to do the same. There is evidence that Chavez has colluded with these terrorists and seeks to destroy the democratic government of Colombia.

The U.S. must support our ally at this critical time. And Congress has a unique opportunity to do just that by passing the Colombia Free Trade Agreement.

Colombia is our ally. They are committed to democracy. They are reducing violence in our country. They are fighting the terrorists in our backyard. This is not the time for America to turn our back on Colombia. We need a "yes" or "no" vote this year on this important free trade agreement.

RAISING CONCERN OVER THE AIR FORCE'S CONTRACT FOR TANKER AIRCRAFT FROM A FOREIGN MANUFACTURER

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I too want to join my colleague from the State of Kansas to raise concern about the recent announcement by the United States Air Force on the tanker contract.

National security is always a big concern. Having airplanes built by U.S. manufacturers and paid for by U.S. tax dollars is critically important. We want to continue to make sure that as we look at this contracting and bid-letting that everything was done according to our current rule of law and the processes designed by this House in legislation passed over this year. I promise to commit myself to the work of my colleague from Kansas to make sure that that all was done.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WELCH of Vermont). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

THE HOUSE ALSO SHOULD CONDEMN THE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN GAZA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, today I voted in favor of House Resolution 951 to condemn rocket attacks from Gaza into Israel and the death and fear those attacks have caused. These rocket attacks must be condemned, and they must be stopped. I've been to Sderot, and I have seen how these rocket attacks cause fear and suffering among the people there, where it is extremely difficult to carry on anything approaching a normal life. The residents of Sderot and now Ashkelon face a daily barrage of rockets, and that is intolerable. Terrorists are bombing citizens, not soldiers. There is nothing in Islam to justify hurting innocent civilians. Bombers cannot use religion to justify what they're doing, and I condemn it.

But this resolution is not enough. If we want to be morally consistent, we must condemn rocket attacks on Israel and also condemn the humanitarian crisis in Gaza too. The 1.4 million inhabitants of the Gaza Strip exist in a state of dreadful isolation, quite literally cut off from the world. Basic supplies and necessities are at a minimum. Ninety percent of the industry has closed down. Unemployment is rampant, and poverty and disease are endemic. Only a few weeks ago, the people of Gaza broke through walls to buy groceries in Egypt. I regret the resolution we voted on today did not devote adequate attention, in my view, to the plight of the people of Gaza.

To suggest that this is the Gazans' just desserts for voting the wrong way in the Palestinian legislative elections in January 2006 does nothing to improve the quality or alleviate the human suffering on either side of the border. We in Congress need to show compassion for the people of Gaza, Sderot, and Ashkelon and the tremendous human suffering they are undergoing. Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert says he does not want the humanitarian crisis in Gaza to continue, and the Bush administration should do all it can to help him meet that commitment.

This resolution criticizes one of the leading advocates for stability and peace in the region: Egypt. The Egyptian Government has made it clear that it is doing all it can to close off smuggling. What's needed is a greater degree of cooperation with Egypt. This resolution does nothing to advance that cooperation. We need to engage Egypt, not pass resolutions that publicly offend or diminish our relations with them. Absent strong evidence that Egypt is complicit in allowing weapons smuggling to occur, I am not in favor of Egypt bashing.

I understand Egypt is doing what it can to control the border despite restrictions on its security forces imposed by Egypt's peace treaty with Israel. If Egypt had direct contact or diplomatic channels with all parties involved in the conflict, the United

States should prevail upon Egypt to help effect a prisoner exchange, stop the rocket attacks on Israeli citizens, and improve the humanitarian conditions for citizens of Gaza.

It's a fortunate coincidence that the Secretary of State is in the region right now, and I am supportive of her taking an active role in resolving this conflict. Beyond resolutions and expressions of sympathy, we need real actions from the Bush administration to solidify and advance the commitments of leaders in the Middle East to a lasting peace through the two-state solution envisioned well before Annapolis. I ask my colleagues here in the House to join me in urging the Secretary of State to highlight the humanitarian needs of ordinary citizens of Gaza alongside the fear and death among ordinary Israelis as she seeks to mediate the situation so tragic for all involved.

Finally, as a Member of Congress, I am concerned about the resolution's references to Iran. Now, I agree that Iran is playing a negative role in the region, but we have seen what the Bush administration has done with past congressional resolutions. I want to repeat that there is nothing in the resolution that should be construed as a justification for military action. I remain opposed to military action against Iran. We need to start a bilateral dialogue. That has been and will continue to be my position. The most effective way to stop Iran's harmful activities is to engage them directly.

Mr. Speaker, though I wholeheartedly condemn the rocket attacks on Israel, I urge my colleagues to consider the suffering of all of the people, including the people of Sderot, Ashkelon, and Gaza.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. POE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE GROWING U.S. NATIONAL DEBT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, last night I spoke on the floor about my concern that allied countries have only paid \$2.5 billion of the \$15.8 billion they pledged to help rebuild Iraq. While many of Iraq's oil-rich neighbors are not making good on their promises, the United States has already spent \$29 billion to help rebuild Iraq, and Congress has approved an additional \$16.5 billion.

Unlike the United States, which is borrowing money from foreign governments to pay its bills, many of Iraq's neighbors are running record surpluses. While oil is at a record high of nearly

\$104 a barrel, American taxpayers are facing prices of more than \$3 at the pump. Last night on the floor, I heard Congresswoman MARCY KAPTUR talk about the possibility of gas going to \$4 a gallon. And Congressman TODD TIAHRT spoke about the Air Force's recent decision to award a multibillion contract for a new tanker aircraft to a foreign firm. He made the point that our government is putting the United States at an economic disadvantage by awarding contracts for a French tanker built by Europeans rather than an American tanker built by an American company with American workers.

Mr. Speaker, all of these issues tie into my concern over America's economic future. Our national debt is growing by \$1.4 billion a day and nearly \$1 million by the minute. The total current debt is more than \$9 trillion, which means almost \$30,000 in debt for each man, woman, child, and infant in the United States. And as our debt climbs, we are borrowing money from foreign governments to pay our bills.

It is obvious that our current fiscal policies are not sustainable. On February 26, 2008, during a hearing of the Financial Services Committee, I had an opportunity to question a panel of top economists about when our country's current financial practices will get beyond a point of no return. Dr. Mark Zandi, chief economist for Moody's Economy.com, responded that this point of no return will come "once we get into the next President's term." He continued to say that if we're not successful in addressing the economic questions currently facing our Nation, "we've got a significant problem."

I've read a lot of history books, and most recently I read Pat Buchanan's book "Day of Reckoning." I agree with his assessment that "no world power has long survived the levels of debt and dependency America is incurring."

If America does not get its priorities straight and get a handle on its spending, we will not be able to survive as a great Nation.

Mr. Speaker, because it is urgent that we turn our economic situation around, I hope that the Congress and the next President will take this issue seriously. Out of fairness to the American taxpayers and future generations, we can no longer delay the need to pay down our debt and work towards sounder economic policies.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will ask God to continue to bless our men and women in uniform and ask God to please bless their families and ask God to please continue to bless America.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

SUNSET MEMORIAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FRANKS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, it is March 5, 2008, in the land of the free and the home of the brave, and before the sun set today in America, almost 4,000 more defenseless unborn children were killed by abortion on demand—just today. That is more than the number of innocent American lives that were lost on September 11th, only it happens every day.

It has now been exactly 12,826 days since the travesty called Roe v. Wade was handed down. Since then, the very foundation of this Nation has been stained by the blood of almost 50 million children. And all of them had at least four things in common.

They were each just little babies who had done nothing wrong to anyone. And each one of them died a nameless and lonely death. And each of their mothers, whether she realizes it immediately or not, will never be the same.

All the gifts that these children might have brought to humanity are now lost forever.

Mr. Speaker, those noble heroes lying in frozen silence out in Arlington National Cemetery did not die so America could shred her own Constitution, as well as her own children, by the millions. It seems that we are never quite so eloquent as when we condemn the genocidal crimes of past generations, those who allowed their courts to strip the black man and the Jew of their constitutional personhood, and then proceeded to murderously desecrate millions of these, God's own children.

Yet even in the full glare of such tragedy, this generation clings to a blind, invincible ignorance while history repeats itself and our own genocide mercilessly annihilates the most helpless of all victims to date, those yet unborn.

Perhaps it is important for those of us in this Chamber to remind ourselves again of why we are really all here.

Thomas Jefferson said, "The care of human life and its happiness and not its destruction is the chief and only object of good government."

The phrase in the 14th amendment capsulizes our entire Constitution. It says: "No state shall deprive any person of life, liberty or property without due process of law." Mr. Speaker, protecting the lives of our innocent citizens and their constitutional rights is why we are all here. It is our sworn oath.

The bedrock foundation of this Republic is that clarion Declaration of the self-evident truth that all human beings are created equal and endowed by their creator with the unalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Every conflict and battle our Nation has ever faced can be traced to our commitment to this core self-evident truth. It has made us the beacon of hope for the entire world. It is who we are.

And yet another day has passed, Mr. Speaker, and we in this body have failed again to honor that foundational commitment. We failed our sworn oath and our God-given responsibility as we broke faith with nearly 4,000 more innocent American babies who died today without the protection we should have given them.