

Now, the gentleman from Virginia said the President went over to the OPEC countries with hat in hand, and he did, and I'm sorry to see that. I'm sorry to see the President of the United States ask and get the response that he got, but that's driven because we have not opened up the energy supplies that we have in this country. We haven't moved ourselves towards energy independence. Instead, we're paying the Pelosi premium on gasoline.

And the gentleman from Wisconsin, when he spoke of \$65 a barrel oil and the last time this bill came up and \$3 gas, and today, by his numbers, and it moves pretty quickly, \$125 a barrel for oil and \$4 gas, and I wondered about this level of outrage then versus now. And so I just did a little math. At what percentage of the price of gasoline then, the last time an OPEC bill was here on this floor, what percentage of that was wrapped up in the cost of crude oil, oil at \$65 a barrel and \$3 gas? If you take a gallon of crude oil, the cost of a gallon of crude oil was 52 percent of the cost of that gallon of gas. \$1.55 a gallon was the cost of the crude oil. Today, the cost per gallon of crude oil, according to the gentleman from Wisconsin's numbers, which I don't dispute, is \$2.98 a gallon just to buy the crude oil. That relates out to 75 percent of the cost of a gallon of gasoline is tied up in the cost of the crude oil, if you rate it accordingly.

We're getting a better bargain now in relation to the cost of crude oil than we were then. It's a higher percentage of the overhead of our refineries and distributing companies. They are doing, I think, a good job of getting it here, but the oil markets are high. They are high because of the cheap dollar. They're high because we have sent the wrong message out there, and speculators are taking advantage of this. This sends another wrong message out there.

So if you're an OPEC country, what do you do? You can, as I said, provide the same or less oil on the market. One thing you might do is maybe pull some investments out of the United States to send another message, don't be trying to intimidate us from Congress; let us do some business. Or another thing that happens is that it erodes, Mr. Speaker, our relationship with those Middle Eastern countries. Those countries that are our allies, those countries that are our friends, those countries that we need strategically in that part of the world, and they need us, this makes it harder for us to work together strategically.

So everything in this Pelosi Congress has taken energy from the market. Instead, now we have legislation that outlaws cartels and would set it up so the Department of Justice could eventually bring suit and presumably freeze the assets ultimately of the countries that are invested here in the United States of America.

Because of the cartel in Congress, this cartel that says if it is green, it's

good; if it's energy, it's bad; a cartel of people in this Congress that believe that the cost of energy going up is a good thing because people will burn less gas; if they burn less gas, then somehow it saves the planet, you've convinced me. You've convinced me that a significant element of the Democrat Caucus really doesn't care about high energy prices except the higher the prices go, the less gas will be bought and burned and there will be less carbon emissions into the atmosphere. That's the wrong priority.

We need more energy on the market, not less. We've got to grow the size of the energy pie. That pie chart that shows the 360-degree circle, that's got the slices that are gas, diesel fuel, ethanol, biodiesel, solar, wind, hydroelectric, nuclear, coal, all of those, and one slice of the pie for conservation as well, Mr. Speaker, all of those things is what we need to do. More energy on the market, not less, not litigation.

We need to have a vote on ANWR, and I'd challenge the majority to produce that vote so the American people can understand where they stand.

I oppose this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume just to finally conclude by reminding you, Mr. Speaker, that this bill will just simply make sure that our antitrust laws apply to this oil cartel, just like they apply to every other industry. It is just one element in a strategy to try to get gas prices under control.

Mr. Speaker, I hope we will support this bill, just as much as we did a virtually identical bill last May 22 when 345 of our colleagues voted in favor, only 72 opposed, an overwhelming majority. Even the Republicans supported the bill last year. It's rollcall 398.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6074.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. KAGEN. 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 and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

LET OUR VETERANS REST IN PEACE ACT OF 2008

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3480) to direct the United States Sentencing Commission to assure appropriate enhancements of those involved in receiving stolen property where that property consists of

grave markers of veterans, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3480

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Let Our Veterans Rest in Peace Act of 2008".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND DECLARATION.

The Congress finds and declares that—

(1) every cemetery should do all it can to protect each grave marker, headstone, monument, or other object, intended to permanently mark a grave;

(2) every citizen of the United States should be watchful and mindful of desecrations of any gravesite and report any such suspected behavior to local, State, or Federal law enforcement authorities; and

(3) all citizens, including veterans, have earned the right to rest in peace.

SEC. 3. DIRECTION TO THE SENTENCING COMMISSION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Pursuant to its authority under section 994 of title 28, United States Code, the United States Sentencing Commission shall review and, if appropriate, amend the Federal sentencing guidelines and policy statements to ensure the guidelines and policy statements provide adequate sentencing enhancements for any offense involving the desecration, theft, or trafficking in, a grave marker, headstone, monument, or other object, intended to permanently mark a veteran's grave.

(b) COMMISSION DUTIES.—In carrying out this section, the Sentencing Commission shall—

(1) ensure that the sentences, guidelines, and policy statements relating to offenders convicted of these offenses are appropriately severe and reasonably consistent with other relevant directives and other Federal sentencing guidelines and policy statements;

(2) make any necessary conforming changes to the Federal sentencing guidelines; and

(3) assure that the guidelines adequately meet the purposes of sentencing as set forth in section 3553(a)(2) of title 18, United States Code.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) and the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

□ 1600

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and exclude extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, Memorial Day is a solemn time when we, as a Nation, commemorate the ultimate sacrifice that our brave men and women in uniform have made for us. Sadly, there are

those who, despicable as it may be, desecrate the grave sites of these heroes. In cemeteries across our Nation, thieves have even looted the metal parts of grave markers and sold them for scrap metal.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3480, the Let Our Veterans Rest in Peace Act, which will protect and honor the final resting places of our Nation's veterans. This bill will ensure that penalties are in place so that these despicable thieves are appropriately punished and would-be thieves are effectively deterred.

Specifically, the bill directs the U.S. Sentencing Commission to review its guidelines in order to provide a fitting sentence for all offenses involving the desecration of, theft of, or trafficking in a grave marker, monument, headstone, or other object that had permanently marked a veteran's grave site.

I commend our colleague, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARNEY), for his leadership in this unfortunately necessary measure.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation, particularly as we prepare for the solemn observance of Memorial Day. These veterans have sacrificed greatly for us, and they deserve no less than the highest honor and dignity for their final resting places.

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

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 3480, the Let Our Veterans Rest in Peace Act, provides increased penalties for the desecration of the graves of America's fallen soldiers.

It is fitting that we consider this bill today on the eve of Memorial Day, a national holiday to honor those who died in defense of our country. Sadly, last Memorial Day weekend in Washington State, the graves of 97 war veterans were desecrated. American flags honoring those men and women were burned or replaced with homemade swastika flags.

Last year, in Luzerne County, Pennsylvania, over 700 markers were stolen from the graves of American soldiers. These bronze plaques and flag holders were placed at every veteran's grave as a memorial to honor their service. In Texas, the grave of Purple Heart recipient Lance Corporal Jeremy Burris was desecrated only 2 days after his burial. Flower arrangements, personal notes, and flags decorating the grave site were torn down and destroyed. All of this destruction to steal and sell wire flower stands.

In Georgia, a bronze statue depicting a Marine's boots, rifle and helmet was ripped out of the ground at the grave site of Corporal John Stalvey. Other graves have also been vandalized to steal the bronze plates traditionally placed on the grave sites of fallen service men and women.

With the price of bronze on the rise, thieves are stealing these markers to

sell as scrap metal. The cost of brass markers has risen to \$28 each. Some counties cannot afford to replace the metal markers, so they are being forced to turn to cheaper aluminum markers.

Whether these acts are motivated by greed or protest, destroying the grave of any person, let alone those who have died fighting for our country, is inexcusable, and these crimes must be met with swift and strong punishment.

Mr. Speaker, the desecration of these graves not only disrespects the men or women that rest there, it dishonors those serving in our Armed Forces today. H.R. 3480, the Let Our Veterans Rest in Peace Act, directs the U.S. Sentencing Commission to review and amend its sentencing guidelines to provide a sentencing enhancement for any offense involving the desecration or theft of, or trafficking in, grave markers of veterans.

Our Nation's fallen heroes fought and died for their country, for our country, and their memories deserve better. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

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

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlelady from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE), a member of the Judiciary Committee.

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. I thank the distinguished gentleman from Virginia.

It is of great necessity that we rise today to stand against this horrible and devastating act, and that is, the desecration of our veterans' or our fallen soldiers' graves. So I rise in support of H.R. 3480, the Let Our Veterans Rest in Peace Act of 2008, in honor and tribute to Jeremy Burris of Texas, whose grave site was desecrated.

Might I also suggest that on the eve of the commemoration of Memorial Day, when we acknowledge and honor and pay tribute to our fallen soldiers, this is enormously important legislation. Because the desecration of veterans' graves is becoming so pervasive, States have acted by replacing the stolen markers with aluminum markers instead of the brass and bronze markers they once used. How insulting, how low. And so it is important that this Congress say to the American people, and those who would do such dastardly deeds, we will accept it no more.

With the price of aluminum sharply on the rise, it is expected that aluminum that is being utilized instead of the bronze may also be stolen. So this important legislation is asking for enhanced penalties to make a very strong statement that this is an intolerable act and an unacceptable act.

As we mourn our most recent dead, those who have fallen in Iraq, how much more can families tolerate to know that they buried their loved ones, and then someone desecrated their graves?

It is important that this legislation pass today to recognize again the great debt of gratitude and the great debt of appreciation that we owe our fallen soldiers.

As the great British leader, Winston Churchill, famously stated, "Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few."

We owe, many of us, all of us, so much to the few who have fallen on behalf of this great Nation. And so I support, enthusiastically, the legislation sponsored by our good friend, Representative CARNEY from Pennsylvania, the Let Our Veterans Rest in Peace Act of 2008. Let this be an important statement that we will not tolerate the continuation of such desecration.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3480, the "Let Our Veterans Rest in Peace Act of 2008."

This important piece of legislation is an effort to stop the theft of Veterans' grave markers. Increasingly, these grave markers are being sold to scrap yards and recycling centers as scrap metal. The bill directs the Sentencing Commission to review and enhance the laws that currently protect Veteran grave markers.

Because the desecration of veterans' graves is becoming so pervasive, States have acted by replacing the stolen markers with aluminum markers instead of the brass and bronze markers they once used. However, with the price of aluminum sharply on the rise, it is expected that these will soon be stolen also.

The May Our Veterans Rest in Peace Act of 2008 will bring attention to this issue and increase penalties for this crime so that thieves no longer consider robbing grave markers for scrap metal as easy money and will think twice about desecrating the tombstone of a fallen war veteran.

I firmly believe that we should celebrate our veterans after every conflict, and I remain committed, as a Member of Congress, to ensuring that we respect our fallen veterans. Veterans have kept their promise to serve our Nation; they have willingly risked their lives to protect the country we all love. We must now ensure that we keep our promises to our veterans.

Currently, there are 25 million veterans in the United States. There are more than 1,633,000 veterans living in Texas and more than 32,000 veterans living in my Congressional district alone. On this Veterans Day, I hope we will all take the time to show appreciation to those who have answered the call to duty. As the great British leader Winston Churchill famously stated, "Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few."

With the approval of legislation on June 1, 1954, November 11th became a day to honor American veterans of all wars. Later that same year, on October 8th, President Dwight D. Eisenhower, himself a decorated veteran of war, issued the first "Veterans Day Proclamation" which stated in part: "In order to insure proper and widespread observance of this anniversary, all veterans, all veterans' organizations, and the entire citizenry will wish to join hands in the common purpose." It was with that enduring spirit that America celebrated the first Veterans Day.

We must always remember the debt that we owe our fallen veterans that have paid the ultimate sacrifice. From the four surviving World War I veterans known to be living in the United States, to the over 300,000 veterans of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom we expect to see by the end of 2008. Our gratitude must continue to be unwavering to our fallen soldiers and veterans.

In the words of President John F. Kennedy, "As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them." It is not simply enough to sing the praises of our Nation's great veterans; I firmly believe that we must demonstrate by our actions how proud we are of our American heroes.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation. I believe it is necessary for the Nation to act now so that we all can pay respect, tribute, and homage to the lives of the fallen armed services veterans who have fought to keep America free and have fought to make sure that all people and nations partake in the universal freedoms that we find so important in this country. These individuals have given so much and have paid us the ultimate sacrifice: the sacrifice of their lives. The least that we can do, is ensure that these veterans rest eternally in peace and that their grave markers are not stolen for the profit of a few. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, again, I support this bill in its entirety. It is a time that has come. I urge its adoption.

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

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I hope that the House will pass the legislation.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SALAZAR). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3480, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

MAKING TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS TO PROVISION GRANTING SPECIAL IMMIGRANT STATUS FOR CERTAIN IRAQIS

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 2829) to make technical corrections to section 1244 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, which provides special immigrant status for certain Iraqis, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

The text of the Senate bill is as follows:

S. 2829

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS TO PROVISION GRANTING SPECIAL IMMIGRANT STATUS FOR CERTAIN IRAQIS.

Section 1244(c) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Public Law 110-181) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking "each of the five years beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act" and inserting "fiscal years 2008 through 2012"; and

(2) in paragraph (3)—

(A) in subparagraph (A)—

(i) in the subparagraph heading, by striking "ONE THROUGH FOUR" and inserting "2008 THROUGH 2011"; and

(ii) by striking "one through four" and inserting "2008 through 2011"; and

(B) in subparagraph (B)—

(i) in the matter preceding clause (i)—

(I) in the subparagraph heading, by striking "FIVE AND SIX" and inserting "2012 AND 2013";

(II) by striking "the fifth fiscal year beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act" and inserting "fiscal year 2012"; and

(III) by striking "the sixth fiscal year beginning after such date" and inserting "fiscal year 2013"; and

(ii) in each of clauses (i) and (ii), by striking "the fifth fiscal year" and inserting "fiscal year 2012".

SEC. 2. AUTHORITY TO CONVERT PETITIONS DURING TRANSITION PERIOD.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Homeland Security or the Secretary of State may convert an approved petition for special immigrant status under section 1059 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006 (8 U.S.C. 1101 note) with respect to which a visa under such section 1059 is not immediately available to an approved petition for special immigrant status under section 1244 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Public Law 110-181) notwithstanding any requirement of subsection (a) or (b) of such section 1244 but subject to the numerical limitations applicable under subsection (c) of such section 1244, as amended by this Act.

(b) DURATION.—The authority under subsection (a) shall be available only with respect to petitions filed before October 1, 2008.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) and the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, we owe a duty to protect foreign nationals who provide val-

uable service to our soldiers, diplomats, and other government officials overseas. Often these individuals risk their lives and those of their families to assist and protect our endeavors and our people. It's only right that we give them the assistance and protection that they need.

When we pulled out of Vietnam, Vietnamese citizens who worked for our government, as well as their families, were at great risk of being killed if they remained in Vietnam. To protect them, we gave them the opportunity to resettle in the United States. That was the right thing to do then and it is the right thing to do now for those who help us in Iraq.

This bill addresses two problems that currently interfere with our ability to protect those who deserve our protection. The first is a drafting error in the new Special Immigrant Visa Program that we enacted in January for Iraqis whose lives were at risk because of their valuable service to our government. The visas under this program were supposed to be available beginning this fiscal year, but the drafting error has rendered these visas unavailable until the next fiscal year. In the interim, we can't help those who need our help. Many of those could die because of this drafting error. This bill would correct the drafting error to ensure that these visas can be immediately accessed.

S. 2829 also serves to assist several hundred Iraqi and Afghan translators who, because of the error, continue to apply for visas under the older program. Although many of their applications have been processed and approved, they can't come to the United States because of a cap at 500 visas in the program that has already been reached.

Despite having the support of the Department of Defense, the Department of State and the Department of Homeland Security, these translators are without recourse and remain in danger. This bill addresses the problem by creating a 4-month transitional period under which the administration can allow persons with approved petitions in the old program to use one of the 5,000 visas in the new program.

We have all seen in the news that those who have chosen to help us in our efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan are truly risking their lives for our Nation's interests. They are targeted by insurgents for having helped us, their families are targeted, and this bill helps us protect them.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

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

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Now I must oppose this legislation, Mr. Speaker. It amends flawed legislation enacted this year that unjustifiably bypassed the normal committee process.