

why I have and will continue to vote against such legislation.

It is now 62 months since the invasion of Iraq and 60 months since President Bush's "Mission Accomplished" pronouncement. It has been 16 months since the beginning of the troop surge that President Bush and his congressional allies believed would give the Iraqis breathing space to resolve their internal conflicts and assume responsibility for their own security.

The vast majority of Americans concluded a long time ago that this war was a mistake. It has strengthened al Qaeda and Iran. It is time to end the war responsibly and bring our Armed Forces safely home.

The death toll of brave Americans now stands at 4,072, with nearly 30,000 wounded, many with life-shattering physical and mental and emotional scars. More than one in three soldiers and marines returning from Iraq later sought help for post-traumatic stress disorder or other mental health problems. The toll on our military families is tremendous. More than 1.7 million Americans have served at least one tour in Iraq or Afghanistan. Four in 10 of these troops have served more than one war zone mission.

Our open-ended commitment in Iraq undermines our ability to meet challenges to our national security elsewhere.

We clearly have much work to do in Afghanistan, where the 9/11 attacks originated. We must also be concerned about the readiness of our Armed Forces in the event that a new threat arises elsewhere in the world. And then there is the toll the war continues to take on our ability to address our needs here at home.

More than 5 years into this war, we know that it will cost more than \$600 billion, but we still don't know what its final price tag will be or how much longer we will continue to pay it. We do know that our national debt is soaring, that our economy is either teetering on the edge or already in recession, and that the price of crude oil is approaching \$130 per barrel. In my hometown of Portland, unleaded gasoline has jumped to nearly \$4 a gallon, with heating oil now surpassing \$4 per gallon.

And we know that these fuel costs are draining family budgets throughout Maine and across America. Is there any question that our open-ended presence in Iraq contributes to these soaring costs? Is there any doubt that the money we are borrowing to pay for this war, largely from the Chinese and the Saudis, will leave our children an enormous debt to pay?

We are spending more than \$3,800 on this war every second. In the time since I began to speak, we've spent another million dollars. These are funds that we could use to fix our ailing health care system, to repair our crumbling infrastructure, to invest in education for our kids, to implement an energy policy to reduce our dependence

on foreign oil, fight climate change, create new jobs, and stimulate new technologies.

Mr. Speaker, more than 140,000 courageous and capable American forces remain in Iraq. They continue to serve with great ability and tremendous courage in the crossfire of a bloody, intractable religious civil war waged, in one form or another, for more than a thousand years.

We need much more than a change in mission for fighting the war in Iraq. Congress must change policy through a firm, responsible deadline to end it. As George Mitchell demonstrated in northern Ireland, only a firm deadline will compel the leaders of the warring factions to assume responsibility for their own security and their own future. And we need a plan to win the peace by engaging Iraq's neighbors to join us to create a stable, successful Iraq because that outcome is as vital to their long-term interests as it is to ours.

Enough is enough. Let's close the open-ended commitment President Bush and his allies in Congress have given to this war. Let's set a firm, responsible deadline and bring our troops safely home.

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, I stand once again before this House with yet another Sunset Memorial.

It is May 20, 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. That's just today, Mr. Speaker. That's more than the number of innocent lives lost on September 11 in this country, only it happens every day.

It has now been exactly 12,902 days since the tragedy called *Roe v. Wade* was first handed down. Since then, the very foundation of this Nation has been stained by the blood of almost 50 million of its own children. Some of them Mr. Speaker, died and screamed as they did so, but because it was amniotic fluid passing over the vocal cords instead of air, no one could hear them.

And all of them had at least four things in common. First, 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 one of their mothers, whether she realizes it or not, will never be quite the same. And all the gifts that these children might have brought to humanity are now lost forever. Yet even in the glare of such tragedy, this generation still clings to a blind, invincible ignorance while history repeats itself and our own silent genocide mercilessly annihilates the most helpless of all victims, those yet unborn.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps it's time for those of us in this Chamber to remind ourselves 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.

The bedrock foundation of this Republic is the 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. Mr. Speaker, it is who we are.

And yet today another day has passed, and we in this body have failed again to honor that foundational commitment. We have 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. And it seems too sad to me, Mr. Speaker, that this Sunset Memorial may be the only acknowledgement or remembrance these children who died today will ever have in this chamber.

So as a small gesture, I would ask those in the Chamber who are inclined to join me for a moment of silent memorial to these lost little Americans.

Mr. Speaker, let me conclude in the hope that perhaps someone new who heard this Sunset Memorial tonight will finally embrace the truth that abortion really does kill little babies; that it hurts mothers in ways that we can never express; and that 12,902 days spent killing nearly 50 million unborn children in America is enough; and that the America that rejected human slavery and marched into Europe to arrest the Nazi Holocaust is still courageous and compassionate enough to find a better way for mothers and their unborn babies than abortion on demand.

So tonight, Mr. Speaker, may we each remind ourselves that our own days in this sunshine of life are also numbered and that all too soon each one of us will walk from these Chambers for the very last time.

And if it should be that this Congress is allowed to convene on yet another day to come, may that be the day when we finally hear the cries of innocent unborn children. May that be the day when we find the humanity, the courage, and the will to embrace together our human and our constitutional duty to protect these, the least of our tiny, little American brothers and sisters from this murderous scourge upon our Nation called abortion on demand.

It is May 20, 2008—12,902 days since *Roe versus Wade* first stained the foundation of this Nation with the blood of its own children, this in the land of the free and the home of the brave.

TO SECURE OUR BORDER

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

Mr. TANCREDI. Mr. Speaker, the U.S. Department of State recently issued a travel warning alerting American citizens about the deteriorating

security situation in Mexico. Violence has become so widespread and rampant that even the State Department is having difficulty papering over the problems with diplomatic language.

According to the travel warning, which was issued last month, a war between criminal organizations struggling for control of the lucrative narcotics trade continues along the U.S.-Mexico border. That's right, a war, and it's in our back yard. And the blood bath isn't only claiming Mexican casualties. According to the State Department, Americans have been among the victims of homicides and kidnappings in the border region. Dozens of U.S. citizens were kidnapped and/or murdered in Tijuana in 2007. There have been public shootouts during daylight hours near shopping areas.

And this conflict between drug cartels is not just a neighborhood turf war fought between dime store thugs with switchblades. According to the travel warning, the conflict between the Mexican Government and "heavily armed narcotics cartels has escalated to levels equivalent to military small-unit combat and have included use of machine guns and fragmentation grenades. Criminals are armed with a wide array of sophisticated weapons. In some cases, assailants have worn military uniforms and have used vehicles that resemble police vehicles."

And endemic corruption in Mexico's government is tipping the scales in favor of the cartels. Police and soldiers desert their posts to give traffickers inside knowledge about tactics and surveillance. And because of their history of corruption and abuse, the police and army are often less popular than the drug cartels who hand out cell phones and employ taxi drivers and youth as lookouts.

Several high-ranking police officials have been gunned down in Mexico this month. This includes Mexico's Acting Federal Police Chief, Edgar Millan Gomez, who was killed by the Sinaloa cartel. In another case, a Mexico City district police chief was the target of a bomb that exploded near the police headquarters. Saul Pena, who was to be named one of the five police chiefs in Ciudad Juarez on the border with Texas, was shot dead earlier this month, making him the 20th police official to be killed in Juarez this year.

Just yesterday, a new Juarez police chief quit his post after receiving death threats. And more than 100 of the city's 1,700-member police force have quit their jobs since January. Several Mexican police commanders have crossed into the United States and are seeking asylum, saying they are unprotected and fear for their lives. And who can blame them?

According to the Associated Press, "Police who take on the cartels feel isolated and vulnerable when they become targets, as did 22 commanders in Ciudad Juarez when drug traffickers named them on a handwritten death list. It was addressed to those who still

don't believe in the power of the cartels. Of the 22, seven have been killed, three wounded in assassination attempts. Of the others, all but one have quit, and city officials said they didn't want to be interviewed."

The Zetas, an infamous group of soldiers turned drug hit men are perhaps the most notorious of the drug enforcers. In Mexico, they hang banners above bridges offering jobs, good-paying family benefits to soldiers and police who desert their posts and join the narcotraffickers. The message the drug cartels are sending, Mr. Speaker, is clear: "Join us or die."

Many Americans might be shocked to learn that many of the Zetas receive their advance training courtesy of the American taxpayer. And the Bush administration is poised to make the problem worse by providing an additional \$1.4 billion in assistance for this purpose. With just \$1.4 billion in taxpayer aid, the argument goes, we can train Mexican police and military to better fight the armed elements of the drug cartels.

But we've been there before. Our border patrol agents in Texas and California have already seen U.S.-provided Humvees and other equipment being used by drug cartels and by rogue units of the Mexican military assisting the smugglers.

Mr. Speaker, handing out another \$1 billion in taxpayer money to a Mexican government so rife with corruption so we can watch the scenario repeat itself makes about as much sense as dropping cash out of helicopters. A better use of the \$1.4 billion, Mr. Speaker, would be to secure our own border before any more of this violence spills over to our country and across that dangerous frontier which is separating us from Mexico.

□ 1815

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.)

FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A further message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 4008. An act to amend the Fair Credit Reporting Act to make technical corrections to the definition of willful noncompliance with respect to violations involving the printing of an expiration date on certain credit and debit card receipts before the date of the enactment of this Act.

RECOGNIZING REVEREND KENNETH E. MARCUS

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

tleman from Georgia (Mr. SCOTT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Madam Speaker, let me first begin by paying just a few words to our beloved Senator EDWARD KENNEDY, who is at this very moment, as we know, fighting for his life.

Senator KENNEDY is beloved by all of us. He is truly the lion in the Senate. Our prayers are with him and his family at this great hour of need.

Madam Speaker, let me just say one word very quickly. This is Memorial Day, and all of us will be visiting our troops. I know I along with other Members of Congress and our entourage will be going over to Europe and into the Middle East to see firsthand about our troops, and I can't think of a better way to celebrate and commemorate Memorial Day than to be over with our troops as they are in harm's way.

Now, Madam Speaker, let me rise to give recognition to an extraordinary American and Georgian and a constituent in my district, in the 13th District of Georgia, and that is Pastor Kenneth E. Marcus, who is now celebrating his 20th anniversary as pastor of the Turner Chapel AME Church in Marietta, Georgia, in Cobb County, in the heart of my district. Let me just say a few words about this outstanding individual.

Reverend Marcus was born in Trinidad in the West Indies. He came to this country in 1975. Then he went to Morris Brown College and got his bachelor's degree from Atlanta University. And, Madam Speaker, it was there as a college student that Reverend Marcus received the word and the call from God to preach. He then immediately went to Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, where he received his master's degree in divinity. And he started off his career in Athens as his first assignment at the St. Luke/Nimno Circuit in Athens, Georgia. Then he moved on to the Greater Smith Chapel AME in Atlanta, Georgia. And then in 1988 this extraordinary Georgian Reverend Kenneth E. Marcus was appointed pastor of the Turner Chapel AME Church in Marietta, Georgia.

And let me just say, Madam Speaker, to show you the significance of this individual, when he was appointed there at Turner Chapel in 1988, there were just 150 members of that church, and now today, just 20 years later, that church has a membership of over 6,000 people. That in and of itself is testimony to the great leadership and the contribution of this outstanding pastor. And this church that he started, he started in a high school gymnasium in Cobb County, and now today Turner Chapel is in an extraordinary cathedral, a modern edifice of extraordinary magnitude which now seats 3,000 members. This is just the testimony of this great, great pastor.

They have over 100 ministries that are serving us throughout Georgia and in some parts of this Nation. And we are so proud of Reverend Kenneth E.