

our economy, and will provide real assistance to lower and middle-income families. I hope our friends in the Senate will act on this legislation this week.

□ 1015

SUPPORT OUR TROOPS

(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 City of Berkeley, California, recently disgraced itself by referring to brave marines with slander when the city council voted to tell the Marine Corps to close its recruiting station. As a veteran, as the son-in-law of a veteran, and as the father of four sons in the military, I know firsthand of the education and opportunities provided by military service while promoting freedom.

In response to Berkeley, Congressman JOHN CAMPBELL has introduced legislation that would remove \$2 million in secret earmarks for the City of Berkeley and instead send the money to the Marines. While I believe wholeheartedly in free speech, we owe respect to the very people who are sacrificing so much to defend our freedoms. I invite the Berkeley City Council to visit Beaufort, South Carolina, home of Parris Island, the naval hospital, and the Marine Corps Air Station to see how our patriotic community supports the brave men and women who serve as proud marines.

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

BUSH BUDGET IS MORE OF THE SAME MISSED OPPORTUNITIES AND MISPLACED PRIORITIES

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

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, we are here to talk today about the recent unveiling of the President's budget. I think we should give the President credit. At least he's consistent. Like all of his previous budgets, this one does several things. It leaves most Americans behind and puts this Nation further in debt.

At a time of a slowing economy and Americans increasingly struggling to make ends meet, the President focuses on \$1 trillion in tax breaks to the top 1 percent of Americans. While the wealthiest few continue to prosper under the President, the President cuts vital energy, education, and health care investments. At a time of rising energy costs, the President slashes low-income energy assistance programs. At a time of college costs skyrocketing, the budget eliminates nearly \$1 billion in grant programs. At a time of rising health care costs, the

President proposes devastating Medicare and Medicaid cuts that would reduce affordable access to health care for our seniors.

The one good thing that people know is the winds of change have been blowing. This Democratic Congress will restore these and put the priorities of American people first.

BUSH BUDGET AND HEALTH CARE MISSED OPPORTUNITIES AND MISPLACED PRIORITIES

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

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, at a time when more and more Americans are struggling to obtain affordable health care, the President's budget drastically slashes health care for seniors and low-income working Americans.

Today, 36 million seniors get health care coverage through Medicare. The President's budget takes a swipe at their pocketbooks by proposing to save nearly \$6 billion by increasing the monthly premiums that seniors pay.

If the President was concerned about seniors, he would instead go after the vast overpayments made by Medicare to private managed care plans. Instead, he has raised premiums on our seniors and focused his cuts on our Nation's hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, and other health care providers. The President also cuts Medicaid by \$33 billion over the next 5 years.

Today, Medicaid serves 55 million low-income and disabled Americans. Such cuts force cash-strapped States to either reduce benefits or cut provider payments.

Mr. Speaker, as our economy continues to face uncertain times, this is the worst time for the President to promote drastic cuts in Medicare and Medicaid.

Rest assured, the Democrats would not allow these cuts to become law. These provisions are as good as dead as they come to Capitol Hill.

DEMOCRATS HAVE WORKED IN BIPARTISAN FASHION ON STIMULUS PACKAGE

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

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, our economy is in trouble, and millions of hardworking American families are feeling the impact as we speak. Since 2001, the real income of a typical working family has fallen by \$2,500, and workers' wages have failed to keep up with the inflation for the fourth time in the past 5 years.

In December, the unemployment rate shot up to a 2-year high of 5 percent with over 900,000 more Americans looking for work over the same period last year. Stagnant wages are not only forcing families to squeeze more out of every dollar, but are also taking a toll on our overall economy. Retailers suf-

fered their worst December shopping season in 5 years, and consumer confidence fell this month to its lowest point on record.

Last week, the House approved a bipartisan economic package that will provide urgent relief to 117 million Americans. This is a fair economic package that gets money to the workers, the people who need it the most; and they are most likely to spend it on necessities like groceries and gas.

Economists estimate that each dollar of the rebate will lead to \$1.26 in economic growth. Mr. Speaker, economists also say we have to act fast. That's exactly what this House did, and I hope the Senate joins us.

DEMOCRATS WANT TO CONTINUE MOVING NATION IN A NEW DIRECTION

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today the House will address one of the most important issues in America's future, that is, the opportunity to give young people a chance for a higher education. H.R. 4137, the College Opportunity and Affordability Act, does just that. It is interesting, however, that the President's budget unfortunately does not recognize that opportunity, and it is in the business of cutting those opportunities for our young people.

The supplemental education opportunity grants for needy undergraduates is now being cut. So I hope that on the floor today we will make a statement to support our schools.

I represent Texas Southern University, a school that has been under siege by its Republican State government. A school that is historically black received moneys from the past administration and the desegregation settlements. But yet even today, it is not receiving the funding that it should receive from the State of Texas.

I will be introducing legislation that will ensure that historically black colleges, Hispanic-serving colleges cannot be undermined by State government funding when they come under the supervision of the Department of Education. Our bill is a good bill. It's a step forward.

Mr. President, I hope that you will recognize that we cannot cut the opportunities of young people.

THE CASE FOR BIPARTISANSHIP

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

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, last week this House came together in a bipartisan fashion to address the economic uncertainty that many of our citizens are facing. President Bush worked with both Democratic and Republican leaders of the House to develop an economic stimulus package

that is timely, targeted, and temporary. That plan, which was passed here in the House last week, will help jump-start our economy by putting tax rebates in the hands of 117 million hardworking middle- and lower-income workers.

We should be proud of the bipartisanship that made this compromise package possible. I would hope that we could bring that same bipartisanship to bear on the continuing war in Iraq.

Last month, the Iraqi defense minister said that his country will not be able to take full control of its security until 2012 and will not be able to defend its borders from outside threats until at least 2018. Democrats do not believe that American troops should be on the ground in Iraq for another decade and neither do the American people. The status quo cannot continue.

I would hope that we could continue to work together to bring this war to an end.

URBAN VIOLENCE

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

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to speak about an issue that is very close to my heart personally as a father and American and as a Member of Congress. There is a plague across this Nation that has taken the lives of hundreds of thousands of American citizens, and it is disturbing and upsetting that there is no public outcry over the destruction that it leaves in its path. The plague is urban violence.

Mr. Speaker, over the Christmas break I was shocked by a piece of news that I saw on "Nightline" which detailed how medics who are sent to Iraq are honing their skills by working in urban hospitals attending to gunshot victims.

The documentary went on to say that over 75 African American and Latino males are killed in our inner cities on a daily basis. Over 75 Latinos and American males are killed on a daily basis in American streets, a number that dwarfs the number of fatalities, Iraqi and American, that are suffered in the war zone.

Mr. Speaker, we must break this silence and stop this violence. It is time to stop the killing, stop the violence.

EXPANDING PROSPERITY BY PASSING THE COLLEGE OPPORTUNITY AND AFFORDABILITY ACT

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, one of the best ways to expand prosperity for more Americans is to make college more affordable. Today, an education at a private university is close to \$50,000 a year, and things aren't much

better at public universities where prices have shot up 40 percent above inflation in the last 7 years alone.

This Democratic Congress has worked to eliminate some of the sticker shock. Last year we passed the College Cost Reduction Act of 2007, which was the single largest increase in college aid since the GI Bill. But we are not done.

Today we will vote on the College Opportunity and Affordability Act, which will make college more affordable and accessible. The bill encourages colleges to rein in price increases and to provide consumers with helpful information so they can make the best decisions on which school to choose.

The legislation also simplifies the Federal student aid application process, expands college access and support for low-income and minority students, and increases aid for our veterans and military families.

Mr. Speaker, let's continue to strengthen our Nation's future by passing the College Opportunity and Affordability Act today.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4137, COLLEGE OPPORTUNITY AND AFFORDABILITY ACT OF 2007

Ms. SUTTON. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 956 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 956

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4137) to amend and extend the Higher Education Act of 1965, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived except those arising under clause 9 or 10 of rule XXI. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Education and Labor. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule.

SEC. 2. (a) It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Education and Labor now printed in the bill. The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived except those arising under clause 10 of rule XXI.

(b) Notwithstanding clause 11 of rule XVIII, no amendment to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution and amendments en bloc described in section 3 of this resolution.

(c) Each amendment printed in the report of the Committee on Rules shall be considered only in the order printed in the report,

may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole.

(d) All points of order against amendments printed in the report of the Committee on Rules or amendments en bloc described in section 3 of this resolution are waived except those arising under clause 9 or 10 of rule XXI.

SEC. 3. It shall be in order at any time for the chairman of the Committee on Education and Labor or his designee to offer amendments en bloc consisting of amendments printed in the report of the Committee on Rules not earlier disposed of. Amendments en bloc offered pursuant to this section shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for 10 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Education and Labor or their designees, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. The original proponent of an amendment included in such amendments en bloc may insert a statement in the Congressional Record immediately before the disposition of the amendments en bloc.

SEC. 4. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 5. During consideration in the House of H.R. 4137 pursuant to this resolution, notwithstanding the operation of the previous question, the Chair may postpone further consideration of the bill to such time as may be designated by the Speaker.

SEC. 6. House Resolution 941 is laid upon the table.

□ 1030

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOLDEN). The gentlewoman from Ohio is recognized for 1 hour.

Ms. SUTTON. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS). All time yielded during consideration of the rule is for debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. SUTTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members be given 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on House Resolution 956.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

Ms. SUTTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

House Resolution 956 provides for consideration of H.R. 4137, the College Opportunity and Affordability Act of 2007, under a structured rule. The rule provides 1 hour of general debate controlled by the Committee on Education and Labor.