

sharing to provide the States with the financial motivation they need to act. States could use those royalties to benefit their citizens as they see fit. At the same time, all Americans would benefit from lower energy prices. This is a real energy bill. This is what citizens expect and deserve from us.

Mr. Speaker, it's time to stop playing games and wasting time. Let's have a straight up-or-down vote on the American Energy Act and give Americans the relief they deserve. They can't wait any longer and they shouldn't have to.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Let me just note that the energy crisis must be addressed in a deliberative fashion, not by a bumper sticker's reading "drill here; drill now" approach that would have us drilling in the National Mall. We will have all of the bills but one that includes accountability and a bill that transitions us to a better future—we must wean ourselves from this addiction to oil.

So we will have a vote.

I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1500

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I agree with everything that Ms. BORDALLO just said in her comments, that we should have an energy policy that comes in a deliberative fashion, which means that the bills should be allowed to have committee process. They should be allowed to have public hearings. They should be allowed to have an open rule so that Members can amend them in committee or here on the floor. That is the deliberative process. Those are the rules that these people try to establish. That's the concept of the rules that these people try to establish so that we can go through this process.

Everything she said is exactly accurate, except we're not going to do that. We're going to have a bill written in secret and unveiled on the floor. And if it, by chance, has an open rule, I'll be the very first one to be surprised and will probably apologize.

But she is right. That is exactly, that is exactly what needs to take place.

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

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments. I will certainly be watching for transparency and accountability in this bill. And let us hope that this is included when we are debating on the floor. Mr. Speaker, I again urge Members to support the bill at hand.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Guam (Ms. BORDALLO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5293, 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. BISHOP of Utah. 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.

HONORING MILITARY SUPPORT GROUPS

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1200) honoring the dedication and outstanding work of military support groups across the country for their steadfast support of the members of our Armed Forces and their families, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1200

Whereas more than 1,700,000 members of the Armed Forces have been deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan since September 2001, and nearly 611,000 have been deployed more than once;

Whereas more than 782,000 members of our Armed Forces deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan are parents with 1 or more children, and nearly 35,000 troops have been separated from their children for 4 or more deployments;

Whereas as of May 3, 2008, 4,059 members of our Armed Forces have died and 30,004 have been wounded in action in Iraq, while deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom;

Whereas as of May 3, 2008, 491 members of our Armed Forces have died and 1,944 have been wounded in action in Afghanistan, while deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom;

Whereas members of our Armed Forces and their families deserve all the medical, financial, education, and moral support that our Nation can provide;

Whereas the spouses, children, family, friends, coworkers, and neighbors of members of our Armed Forces play a key role in the success of our Nation's troops;

Whereas Secretary of Defense Robert Gates has recognized the families and community members who support America's troops as "the power behind the power" and the Department of Defense has created the America Supports You program to recognize the efforts of those citizens and organizations;

Whereas military support groups play a crucial role in supporting every family member and loved one of members of our Armed Forces;

Whereas military support groups provide a variety of crucial services to members of our Armed Forces and their families, including financial assistance, employment assistance, tax return preparation, counseling, prayer groups, and sending care packages; and

Whereas military support groups provide a compassionate community and incalculable moral support to the hundreds of thousands of military families with loved ones at home and deployed overseas: Now, therefore, be it Resolved, That the House of Representatives honors the dedication and outstanding work of military support groups across the

country for their steadfast support of the members of our Armed Forces and their families.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Guam (Ms. BORDALLO) and the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Guam.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

I rise today in support of House Resolution 1200, honoring the dedication and the outstanding work of military support groups for their steadfast work on behalf of the members of the Armed Forces and their families.

Over 1.7 million military men and women have deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan since September of 2001, many of whom have been deployed more than once. These military men and women have left behind beloved parents, siblings and spouses. More than 782,000 children have had parents leave the confines of their home to serve the Nation nobly. These soldiers and their families face a daily struggle with constant and sustained deployments. Children are left to cope with the difficulties of a sustained deployment with one parent supporting the family, and some are even left with other family members.

Military men and women and their families make tremendous sacrifices every single day to serve and protect our country. These heroes deserve all the medical, the financial, the educational and moral support that our Nation can provide them. Military support groups, with that mission in mind, work diligently to provide essential support and services to the members of the Armed Forces and their families. They provide a compassionate community of supporters to military families, whether their loved ones are at home or abroad. Whether it's finding a job, replacing a broken oven in a home, or offering moral support by sending care packages to soldiers abroad, our American military support groups and their volunteers work tirelessly to serve the men and women who serve to protect our way of life.

The positive impact that military support groups have on our soldiers and their families is invaluable. As Secretary of Defense Robert Gates recognized, the families and community members who support America's troops are "the power behind the power." You can go to the America Supports You Web site which lists the hundreds of military support groups across our country. The Web site also has many

stories of dedication, hope, kindness and generosity.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 1200 is our way, in Congress, of honoring the commitment and the outstanding work of military support groups and their volunteers across the country for their unwavering support of America's troops and their families. We honor their selfless service to American troops and their loved ones. As a cosponsor of House Resolution 1200, I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this very important resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let me begin on a personal note. I just want to say what a great pleasure it is for me, Mr. Speaker, to manage this bill and the series of bills with my good friend from Guam whom I sit on the House Armed Services Committee with and the Natural Resources Committee with and whom I've been to Iraq three times with. I know of nobody that cares more about our military and men and women in uniform than my good friend from Guam, so it's wonderful to be with her in this particular venue today.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 1200, a resolution authored by Congresswoman BETTY SUTTON of Ohio. This resolution commends a large group of selfless and dedicated people, many of whom are volunteers, in organizations that provide support to the families and children of the deployed members of the Armed Forces, as well as to servicemembers themselves.

Our military families face extraordinary demands and stresses, Mr. Speaker, and challenges related to the service of their loved ones. To ease these burdens, military support groups provide a variety of crucial services ranging from financial and employment assistance to counseling and community support.

These military support groups take on various forms, whether they be Federal, State and local government efforts, or whether they are the many nonprofit, charitable and private efforts that have continuously and unselfishly supported the members of our Armed Forces and their families ever since September 11, 2001.

Among the approximately 1.8 million family members of the 1.3 million active duty personnel, the needs are many and supporting those needs is a matter of military readiness.

The support challenge is made more complex because virtually all the families of the National Guard troops and reservists reside in civilian communities spread across this Nation. Yet numerous agencies, Mr. Speaker, and groups have taken on the challenge to provide help and support, particularly during extended periods of mobilization and deployment.

Our military forces could not have sustained the stress of repeated deploy-

ments and combat without the outstanding assistance, dedication and outstanding work over the years of these military support groups.

Let me add on a personal note, if I may, Mr. Speaker, my grandfather and father were both career military personnel. And like many people in this Chamber, I have many members of my family, uncles, cousins, my own brother, who served at various points in the military. All of them would tell you that they have received valuable support for both themselves and their families repeatedly from private and charitable groups that are designed to support the men and women that wear the uniform of the United States. Our citizens do that, not simply because it's the expedient thing to do, but because it's the right thing to do, and it's an expression of the appreciation of the American people for the men and women who sacrifice to defend them that these sorts of contributions take place. Today's resolution is a fitting way to celebrate and thank such organizations.

I urge my colleagues to support House Resolution 1200.

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

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to my friend and colleague, the original sponsor of this important resolution, the gentlelady from Ohio (Ms. SUTTON).

Ms. SUTTON. I thank the gentlewoman for her leadership on this issue, and I thank the gentleman from Oklahoma for his eloquence in speaking to it as well.

I rise today, Mr. Speaker, in support of House Resolution 1200, a resolution I introduced to honor some of the unsung heroes of our Nation. They are our military support groups.

All across our great Nation and throughout the world, our troops and their families are making incredible sacrifices for our country. Since 2001, more than 1.7 million members of the Armed Forces have been deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. And many of these brave men and women are being sent back for numerous tours of duty, and each time they represent our country with honor and a proud sense of duty. And we must never forget the incredible service they provide for our great Nation.

We, as Members of Congress, must do everything in our power to ease the burden their service places on them and their families.

One incredible source of support and assistance for our troops and their families are military support groups. All across our country, servicemembers and their families and friends have formed these crucial support networks.

Military support groups offer a variety of important services to members of our Armed Forces and their families. From providing financial assistance, employment assistance and tax return preparation, to offering counseling and prayer groups, sending care packages

and writing letters, support groups serve a vital purpose within the military family and within our communities.

My bill, House Resolution 1200, honors the dedication and outstanding work of military support groups across this country for their steadfast support of the members of our Armed Forces and their families.

I'm very proud, Mr. Speaker, that one of these support groups, Family and Friends Connected, is based in Akron, Ohio, in my congressional district. This group was started by one of my constituents, Saundra Hunt. With a daughter in the Air Force and a son in the Marine Corps, Saundra knows more than a thing or two about the need to support our military families. And so, on November 9, 2001, Saundra established Family and Friends Connected to bring military families together. And on the second Friday of every month, military families and friends from all over northeastern Ohio come together to support one another. They come from Akron and Barberton and Canton and Cleveland; they come from Cuyahoga Falls, and Copley and Dover and Hartville, Hudson, Stow and Tallmadge and Wadsworth. They come together to find common support.

I want to take a moment and recognize Saundra, who took her own family's experience and used it to make a positive impact on the lives of others in the same situation. Saundra dedicates a listening ear to military families, and is available to them at every hour, day or night. Because of her endless commitment and compassion, there is an obvious love for her within the group.

I've had the honor and privilege of attending one of their meetings, and I can attest firsthand to the dedication and the uplifting camaraderie of those who participate in Family and Friends Connected.

Saundra and the Family and Friends Connected are just one example of the many support groups across the country that have provided endless amounts of time, energy and compassion to our military families. These are people who truly understand what military families go through, and they provide very real comfort and support for one another.

The kindness and understanding these groups provide to our servicemembers and to each other is nothing short of inspirational. It is such an important service for our Nation's military families and yet, Mr. Speaker, they ask for nothing in return. They do it because of a love of country, a respect for service, and an understanding of the sacrifices that our military families so selflessly make. Their unwavering emotional and material support helps to fortify our military, allowing them to carry out the missions our Nation asks of them.

We, in Congress, must always honor our brave servicemen and women, in word and in deed. Likewise, we should

honor those who dedicate themselves to their support. That's why I introduced this important resolution to honor these amazing groups. They did not ask for any recognition for their service, but we can all agree that they deserve to be honored for all they do for our military families and for our country.

I ask for your support of this critical resolution honoring our military support groups.

□ 1515

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield such time as he might care to consume to my good friend from Georgia (Mr. PRICE).

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. I thank my friend from Oklahoma for his leadership on this and so many issues and for yielding me time.

This is an important issue, an important bill. So many of us have worked with groups within our districts all across this Nation who have had family members volunteer, serve, defend our liberty and freedom around the world, many of them on multiple tours of duty. So helping the families and recognizing their sacrifices is extremely important. They fight to defend our liberty, they fight to defend our freedom, they fight to defend our way of life, and yes, they fight to defend our ability to stand on this floor and debate and deliberate the major issues of the day.

Which is why it is with some significant regret that I discuss the issue that is the most important issue facing Americans today at home, and that is the issue of the economy and increasing gas prices and energy policy, and sadly say to my colleagues that the freedom and the liberty and the processes that our military men and women risk their lives to protect are sadly not being honored here on the floor of the House.

We heard with great fanfare last week the Speaker and the Democrat leadership announce to the Nation that they had reached a compromise on energy policy, an issue that we have been, on my side of the aisle, demanding an appropriate deliberative process and a fair and open debate for these many months.

But the Speaker announced they had reached a compromise. The problem, Mr. Speaker, as you well know is the compromise within their own minds, within their own caucus, which is why it saddens me to recognize that the men and women who are fighting to defend our freedom and our liberty and fighting for the ability of our democracy to long survive, and yet we have a process of democracy that's been so distorted it would not be recognized certainly by our Founding Fathers and likely not by any civics class across this Nation.

Because the way in which this energy bill supposedly—I don't know who's seen it—supposedly will be brought to

the floor in less than 24 hours is through a closed process, through a secret process behind closed doors; not an open deliberative process, not a democratic process. Dare I say, Mr. Speaker, not an American process.

This is an important bill to recognize the sacrifices of American families all across this Nation whose loved ones stand today and have continued to stand to fight for liberty and freedom. But it saddens me greatly, Mr. Speaker, to not have that process and that fight and that valor honored here on the floor of the House of Representatives in a way that recognizes the history of our Nation, the appropriateness of the deliberative process, the imperative of democracy, the recognition that each and every one of us represents the same number of Americans.

So I support this bill, but I am so saddened and distressed by what appears to be a recurrent theme among this current leadership, and that is not to recognize the imperative of democracy and debate and deliberation in this, the greatest House, the people's House.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Expressions of approval or disapproval from the gallery are not allowed.

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

Mr. Speaker, I represent Guam, a small little island in the Pacific where we have today more active National Guardsmen reservists serving in Afghanistan and Iraq per capita than any other State in the Union.

Just last month I led a codel to Pakistan, Kuwait, Afghanistan, and Iraq and found 181 National Guardsmen and reservists from Guam deployed in Afghanistan serving in the most dangerous provinces in that country.

I want to speak to this bill because on Guam, because of the numerous soldiers deployed all over the world today, the support group is exceptional, made up of family and friends. I have visited their headquarters, and it's made up of housewives, families, and friends all supporting our soldiers. And I want to go on record to say that I applaud our soldiers and families on Guam for their dedicated support and loyalty, and I go on record as supporting this bill.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I have no further requests for time, and I am prepared to close after my colleague has yielded back his time.

I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, I will try to be brief.

I want to, again, commend my good friend from Guam and say in the opportunities we've had to travel abroad I notice how fervently she seeks out servicemen and women from her country and with what great warmth and gratitude she's always received. And it's a reminder of what an exceptional place she represents and what exceptional people have chosen her from amongst themselves to defend them here.

I want to also express my personal appreciation for the types of groups, again, that were singled out in this resolution by our good friend, Ms. SUTTON. Frankly, we all could sit here and name many, many groups in our respective districts that put American men and women in uniform ahead of everything else. I want to mention just one, if I might, Mr. Speaker.

In my home State of Lawton, Oklahoma, is where Fort Sill is located. It's the home base of the field artillery. And Fort Sill has a very unique organization called literally the Armed Services YMCA of Lawton/Fort Sill. It, for decades, has performed support services for family. Every year there is a huge breakfast and, frankly, a community drive to solicit private dollars to support its efforts to help men and women in uniform and service families.

And I've heard repeatedly, as I go down to these, instances where families would show up from deployment desperately needing things; you know, perhaps young families not able to furnish the apartments they were in, needing support. That support's always given generously by fellow soldiers, but more importantly, even by the men and women of Lawton, Oklahoma.

Again, I commend my colleagues for bringing this resolution. I urge its support.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I want to go on record to thank the co-manager of the bill today, Mr. COLE, a good friend of mine whom I've traveled with on numerous occasions, and I truly appreciate the kind words that he has noted of Guam and, of course, his own State.

And as he said, each Member going on these congressional delegation trips is always meeting with their troops, and this is one of the great pleasures, shall we say, of the trip, not only to investigate and see how we are doing and how our troops are treated, but to meet with troops from our district.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my gratitude to all the support groups, families, and friends of our men and women in the armed forces. By supporting those who support them, we honor the sacrifice and courage of our women who have served and are currently serving in our Armed Forces.

Since September 2001, more than 1,700,000 members of the Armed Forces have been deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan, and nearly 611,000 have been deployed more than once. More than 782,000 members of our Armed Forces deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan are parents. Sadly, nearly 35,000 troops have been separated from their children for 4 or more deployments.

Many of our men and women in the armed forces have given the ultimate sacrifice to secure the freedoms of others. As of May 3, 2008 over 4,500 died and over 32,000 wounded while deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan).

The members of our Armed Forces and their families deserve all the medical, financial,