

only to have those bills vetoed by President Bush. I hope that on the third consideration of this legislation to improve children's health that this bill will be signed into law.

The expansion of this program is even more important today as many workers are losing their health insurance and face great economic hardships during the recent recession. The Kaiser Family Foundation projects that the current unemployment level of 7 percent would increase Medicaid and SCHIP enrollment by 2.4 million people and an additional 2.6 million people would become uninsured. The number of uninsured will rise higher should the unemployment rates climb even further. This legislation would reduce the size of this uninsured population by expanding SCHIP to include an additional 4 million children who currently have no health insurance. Sending a child to the emergency room is not an alternative to having comprehensive health insurance. Especially at a time when millions of families are facing economic hardships, we must ensure that children have the care they need.

This bill would provide parity for mental health for children. I long have fought for mental health parity, and was pleased that last year we could improve mental health coverage for private insurance plans and Medicare. I am encouraged that we have now extended this to the SCHIP program.

According to the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, more than 45 million Americans lack health care coverage, including more than 16 percent of New Jersey's residents. Many of these Americans are children, the vast majority of whom come from working families. It is simply unconscionable that here in the United States of America millions of children are uninsured. The reauthorization and expansion of the SCHIP program presents an historic opportunity to put an end to the morally unacceptable fact that 8.6 million American children live every day without insurance. It is time for Congress to preserve and expand this program that has proven successful at insuring our nation's most vulnerable children.

The SCHIP program is strongly supported by our nation's governors who have managed the State-run programs over the past decade and understand that SCHIP allows States to cover low-income children who lack health insurance in families of the working poor. This bill also would provide the tools needed and create incentives for States to reach the millions of children who are eligible but not currently enrolled in the SCHIP program.

New Jersey uses its SCHIP funds to run a program called FamilyCare. Our State is a leader in extending FamilyCare eligibility. Currently, 150,000 children and approximately 100,000 low income-parents are enrolled in New Jersey's program. Without SCHIP, all of these residents of New Jersey would again be uninsured.

This legislation would allow States like New Jersey to continue to set income eligibility for SCHIP. Because the cost of living is so high in New Jersey, it is important that our State has the flexibility needed to establish realistic eligibility guidelines.

Additionally, this bill would allow New Jersey to continue to enroll parents along with their children. According to research by the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies of Sciences, one highly effective way of boosting coverage among low-income children is to

broaden health insurance to their parents. Currently, New Jersey is one of 11 States to cover low-income parents.

Because we are committed to balanced budgets and opposed to deficit spending, this bill pays for this historic commitment to our children with an appropriate increase in the Federal tobacco tax and by imposing restrictions on self-referral to physician-owned hospitals. According to the Campaign for Tobacco-free Kids, the 61 cent-per-pack increase in the cigarette tax that is included in this bill would result in substantially fewer youth smokers, as every 10 percent increase in the price of cigarettes would reduce youth smoking by approximately 7 percent. This would improve their health and result in longterm healthcare savings.

There are 11 million reasons to vote for this bill, each one a child who will move out of the ranks of the uninsured with the health care provided in the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act. A measure of a nation's greatness is how it treats its most vulnerable citizens. By making health insurance available for 11 million children, we live up to our moral obligation to keep children healthy and we make our society stronger.

BLACK JANUARY—JANUARY 19–20,  
1990

### HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 15, 2009*

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, few Americans have heard the term "Black January," yet it is imbedded in the memory of all Azerbaijanis. Black January marks the evening of January 19, 1990, when at midnight 26,000 Russian troops stormed the capital city of Baku with tanks. Armed with a state of emergency declared by the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet Presidium and signed by then President Mikhail Gorbachev, the incursion was intended to suppress a growing independence movement. The net result was the opposite. This incident inflamed Azerbaijani nationalism and contributed to the breakup of the Soviet Union.

Leading up to Black January, the national independence movement had reached a remarkable momentum with hundreds of thousands demonstrating for independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. Emerging democratic groups were leading the political agenda and were projected to succeed in upcoming Parliament elections in March 1990. The Soviet Union sought to "restore order" by indiscriminately firing on peaceful demonstrators in Baku, including women and children. The protesters were calling for independence from the Soviet Union and the removal of Communist officials. More than 130 people died that night and in subsequent violence, 611 were injured, 841 were arrested, and 5 went missing.

According to a report by Human Rights Watch entitled "Black January in Azerbaijan," "among the most heinous violations of human rights during the Baku incursion were the numerous attacks on medical personnel, ambulances and even hospitals." The report concluded that "indeed the violence used by the Soviet Army on the night of January 19–20 . . . constitutes an exercise in collective pun-

ishment . . . The punishment inflicted on Baku by Soviet soldiers may have been intended as a warning to nationalists, not only in Azerbaijan, but in other Republics of the Soviet Union."

In the days after the invasion, thousands of Azerbaijanis surrounded Communist Party headquarters demanding the resignation of the republic's leadership. The Baku City Council demanded that Soviet troops be withdrawn. The Soviet legislature in Azerbaijan condemned the occupation as "unconstitutional" and threatened to call a referendum on secession unless Soviet troops were withdrawn within 48 hours. And, Azerbaijani oil tankers blocked Soviet naval vessels from reaching the Baku harbor.

Soviet troops were eventually withdrawn from Baku, but political control was maintained for almost another 2 years until Azerbaijan's parliament declared independence in October 1991. The Republic of Azerbaijan has maintained its independence for more than 17 years, despite lingering economic and social problems from the Soviet era and the military occupation of 20 percent of Azerbaijan by Armenia. Today, Azerbaijan has developed into a thriving country with double digit growth, in large part due to a freely elected president and parliament, free market reforms led by the energy sector, and, most importantly, no foreign troops on its soil.

While January 20 has been inauguration day in the United States every 4 years since 1937, in Azerbaijan it is the day on which Azerbaijani citizens stood up to Soviet equipment and martyrs gave up their lives for freedom from communism and dictatorship. Indeed, January 20, 1990, in Baku, Azerbaijan, the fate of the Soviet empire was sealed.

THE SAFE COMMISSION: LETTERS  
TO TREASURY SECRETARY  
PAULSON

### HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 15, 2009*

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, I continue to be deeply concerned about America's mounting deficit spending and Federal debt and have been working for the past several years to engage this administration in embracing a bipartisan plan to reverse course and get our country on a sound and sustainable financial path.

I introduced the SAFE Commission concept for the first time during the 109th Congress on June 7, 2006. In the 110th Congress I teamed with JIM COOPER, and we introduced the bipartisan SAFE Commission legislation again. A similar Senate effort was led by Budget Chairman KENT CONRAD and ranking member JUDD GREGG.

Following the SAFE bill's introduction, I reached out to Treasury Secretary Paulson about getting our fiscal house through more than a dozen letters from July 12, 2007, to April 10, 2008, updating the administration on progress that was being made with the bill. I submit for the RECORD a sample of that correspondence.

I have been encouraged with the growing support for the SAFE proposal from leading newspaper editorials to think tanks to syndicated columnists to business organizations. I

remain deeply disappointed that this idea was not embraced by Secretary Paulson. I hope that the Obama administration will understand the urgency for bipartisan action to address this nation's long-term budget challenges, especially as we deal with the current financial crisis, for the sake of our children and grandchildren.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC, July 12, 2007.

Hon. HENRY PAULSON,  
Secretary, Department of the Treasury,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY PAULSON: As you know, Senator VOINOVICH and I reintroduced the Securing America's Future Economy (SAFE) Commission Act in January. I wanted to follow up with you and share the enclosed letter I wrote to the president asking that the administration embrace this idea.

I think about our children and grandchildren and it is disheartening that critical issues are falling by the wayside because Congress today is so polarized. I believe that a bipartisan commission operating outside the halls of Congress that would mandate action is the answer to getting our fiscal house in order and diverting financial crisis in this country.

The SAFE Commission bill has 32 cosponsors to date. I am committed to continue working with my colleagues to enact this legislation on a matter of such importance to our nation's future.

Best wishes.  
Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,  
Member of Congress.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC, August 3, 2007.

Hon. HENRY PAULSON,  
Department of the Treasury,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY PAULSON: I read your recent comments about reaching the statutory debt limit as early as October. I have always voted for the limit increase but am seriously considering voting against it this year because of the lack of leadership by the administration in taking steps to change the country's current financial path. I truly believe that this administration has the ability to change our course.

I am not writing to you today as a Republican or a Democrat, but as a father and grandfather. Lawmakers on both sides of the aisle understand the enormity of this issue and the impact that will be felt for generations to come. It's disheartening that the partisan political divide in Congress is so consuming that issues with such high stakes continue to languish.

That's why I have introduced the Securing America's Future Economy (SAFE) Commission Act, which would establish a bipartisan commission and put everything—entitlement, tax policy, and other federal spending—on the table for review.

This administration can offer hope and start to remedy our fiscal prognosis, brightening the horizon for our children and their children. It is critical that they have all the opportunities the Greatest Generation made possible for you and me. Our grandchildren should set ambitious goals, and believe that hard work will be met by opportunity.

We have a moral obligation to address the long-term fiscal challenges ahead.

I know you are a good person and want what is best for America. With your leadership and vision, progress can be made.

Best wishes.  
Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,  
Member of Congress.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC, October 22, 2007.

Hon. HENRY PAULSON,  
Department of the Treasury,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY PAULSON: Just wanted to update you on the SAFE Commission legislation since I reintroduced the bill with Jim Cooper three weeks ago.

The measure has gained bipartisan support with over 40 cosponsors—split evenly between Democrats and Republicans from members of the Republican Study Committee to three of the four Blue Dog Coalition co-chairs I believe that support for this measure will continue to grow.

You may have read that the first baby boomer signed up for promised Social Security benefits last week. Our nation's "long term" deficit problem has arrived.

We should be concerned that last Monday the U.S. dollar hit an all-time low in the wake of a major housing recession and enormous trade deficits. We should care that the value of the dollar has been dropping against the Canadian dollar, the Euro and the Japanese yen.

What will it take for us to address these issues?

The SAFE Commission fits into what this administration claims to stand for and will ensure sound financial footing for generations to come. I have enclosed information on the bill since its reintroduction including a list of current cosponsors.

Please give serious consideration to the SAFE Commission Act.

Best wishes.  
Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,  
Member of Congress.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC, October 25, 2007.

Hon. HENRY PAULSON,  
Secretary, Department of the Treasury,  
Washington DC.

DEAR SECRETARY PAULSON: As meritorious as the Administration's argument is with regard to the \$21 billion in discretionary spending it is relatively insignificant compared to the massive entitlement spending problem. It is like comparing a mouse to an elephant.

Our SAFE Commission bill represents all that the Administration says it cares about, including more than 50 bipartisan cosponsors (see list).

Failing to address this issue is like driving a car toward the edge of a cliff with no brake pedal.

Best wishes.  
Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,  
Member of Congress.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC, November 1, 2007.

Hon. HENRY PAULSON,  
Department of the Treasury,  
Washington DC.

DEAR SECRETARY PAULSON: I am deeply troubled that this Administration is missing an opportunity to do something so powerful for our children and grandchildren.

Best wishes.  
Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,  
Member of Congress.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC, November 14, 2007.

Hon. HENRY PAULSON,  
Department of the Treasury,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY PAULSON: As a follow up to our conversation last week about the SAFE Commission. I want you to know that Roy Blunt has also signed onto the bill.

The Cooper-Wolf SAFE Commission has over 50 bipartisan cosponsors including Republican leadership in the House (see enclosed).

We are waiting for the Administration to support this effort to rein in entitlement spending.

Best wishes.  
Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,  
Member of Congress.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC, December 5, 2007.

Hon. HENRY PAULSON,  
Department of the Treasury,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY PAULSON: Enclosed is a letter I recently received from Ben Bernanke about our nation's fiscal imbalance, reiterating: "... if early and meaningful action is not taken, the U.S. economy could be seriously weakened, with future generations bearing much of the cost."

Your administration deserves credit for its work in the past to address the entitlement reform issue. Our parents told us that if at first you don't succeed, try, try again. I am asking that the SAFE Commission be that second try.

Best wishes.  
Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,  
Member of Congress.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC, January 17, 2008.

Hon. HENRY PAULSON,  
Department of the Treasury,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY PAULSON: Between July 19 and December 10, 2007, I wrote to you nine different times about the unsustainable financial path our country is on, and the bipartisan SAFE Commission as a potential way forward to rein in entitlement spending. I have respectfully asked for the administration's support because of the critical importance of taking action now.

I am disappointed that the administration is missing this opportunity to bring about a renaissance in America, giving hope to future generations and ensuring that our children and grandchildren can live in a world where hard work will be met by opportunity.

Best wishes.  
Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,  
Member of Congress.

SGI PRESIDENT DAISAKU IKEDA

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 15, 2009

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Speaker, Whereas, SGI President Dr. Daisaku Ikeda visited Chicago in 1960, witnessed the discriminatory mistreatment of an African-American boy in Lincoln Park, and made a vow in his heart, "I promise you that I will build a society truly worthy of your love and pride!"; and

Whereas, this year marks 49 years of Dr. Ikeda's dedication to the peace and happiness of all humanity through peace, culture and education; and pledge to construct a peaceful world where individuals from all walks of life feel safe and secure while developing their fullest potential for the sake of their families and the greater good of society; and

Whereas, on January 19th we honor and celebrate a noble and heroic life of Martin Luther King Jr., whose legacy was to secure not