

American who is deceased? This is immoral. It shouldn't be.

Then, finally, the alternative minimum tax, we should zero out the alternative minimum tax, which is putting a second tax burden on already over-taxed middle-class Americans.

Also, Sarbanes-Oxley, Sarbanes-Oxley has actually chased capital out of New York City over to London. We need to get that investment capital back in the United States.

That's a pretty simple plan. If we would stay here for the rest of the day, and if we would stay here tomorrow, as Members of Congress, we could very quickly and simply pass this common-sense legislation that has worked time and time again.

Don't just take my word for it, a woman from Minnesota—take a look at Harvard. Harvard did a study back in 2002 that examined 18 different world economies, and they showed the same thing. They said, what do you do to make economies work, and what do you do that makes economies not work?

Here is what you do, you lower the wages of government employees, you lower transfer payments, welfare payments, and you lower the tax rates. That's what you do, the study concluded, to make economies revive.

What you don't do is increase government spending. What you don't do is increase taxes.

What we have seen in the last 60 days is what you do to make an economy not work or bring more uncertainty into our economy.

The American people deserve a positive solution, and we have got one. Let's get to work, let's stay here, let's make it happen. Instead, what are we seeing happen? We are seeing more spending and higher taxes.

And what did the Federal Reserve try to do this week? They announced that they are going to do another \$1 trillion in purchases. And they just announced today another \$300 billion in buying up long-term Treasury securities. They have already lowered the interest rates to zero, so now they want to flood more money into the money supply, but this reduces the value of dollar.

There is so much we can do to change the economy. Let's get busy.

#### HONOR THE WISH ACT

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

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, today is the sixth anniversary of the Iraq war. We Americans need to remember all those who have made sacrifices because of this war, the 4,259 service men and service women who have given their lives in this conflict.

One of the soldiers who paid the ultimate sacrifice was Specialist Christopher Fox of Memphis, a constituent of mine, who was based in Fort Carson, Colorado.

Only 21 years old, he was on a second tour in Iraq, was due to be discharged from the Army in July of this year. He was looking forward to attending the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, possibly to play football and to study criminal justice. He hoped to be a police officer so his military training would not have gone to waste after he left the service.

But Specialist Fox did not make it home alive. He died in Iraq on September 29, 2008, of wounds sustained when he encountered small-arms fire while on patrol. On this anniversary of the war, we need to remember these sacrifices and do what we can to honor the memory and the wishes of the soldier who has given the ultimate sacrifice.

Specialist Fox wanted his mother figure, not his mother, who was deceased, but his mother figure, a woman who was awarded temporary custody when he was 17, to oversee his burial arrangements, as soldiers are asked to designate someone. Her name was listed on the form that he filled out to direct the disposition of his remains. However, because of current Federal law, it is prohibited that servicemembers designate nonrelatives to make those arrangements.

It is a travesty, Mr. Speaker, that our laws do not allow a soldier's wishes to be honored, especially for something as final, as simple, and as appropriate and meaningful as the disposition of their remains.

Someone who puts their life on the line in defense of their country should be allowed to have whomever they wish to make arrangements for their memorial service. I attended his memorial service in West Memphis, Arkansas. There were few people there. There were no other public officials.

It was unfortunate that even his mother figure wasn't able to make it, she was in Knoxville. But if she would have had the opportunity to make the arrangements, I think we would have seen something different.

It is with this experience that I, along with Congressman JOHN DUNCAN of Tennessee, where his mother figure lived and where he otherwise might have been buried, and DANA ROHR-ABACHER of California, Congresswoman WATSON and Congresswoman GWEN MOORE are filing the Honor the Written Intent of Our Soldier Heroes Act today, or Honor the WISH Act.

This bill will allow service men and women to designate whomever they want to direct the disposition of their remains. I hope my fellow Congress people will join me in sponsoring this act and help move it forward for passage. It seems only appropriate and fitting that we honor the wishes of our soldiers.

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

(Mr. FLAKE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### ALLEGHENY NATIONAL FOREST

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I bring a serious economic concern from my district today. In the northwest corner of my district in beautiful rural Pennsylvania lies the Allegheny National Forest, established 86 years ago when the Federal Government purchased 513,000 acres that it encompasses.

By agreement in 1923, the subsurface mineral rights in the forest did not convey with the purchase, and oil and natural gas have been harvested ever since. Because of the value of timber harvested and the oil and natural gas produced, the ANF serves as the economic engine of the region, providing good-paying, family-sustaining jobs for many in the oil, natural gas, timber and forest products industry.

In addition, the ANF is not taxable, since it is owned by the Federal Government, making the municipal governments even more reliable on the development of oil, natural gas and the timber in it. Mr. Speaker, what's important to note here is that the Federal Government entered into an agreement with the owners of these subsurface minerals, an agreement which has been honored for 86 years.

Unfortunately, that process has come to a halt. In reacting to lawsuits brought by environmental groups, Forest Service and Justice Department lawyers, who most likely have never stepped foot in the Pennsylvania ANF, are now managing the forest, instead of dedicated ANF Forest Service professionals, who despite many challenges over 8 decades, have carried out their duties admirably.

So when the Forest Service does not issue new permits to proceed with harvesting oil and natural gas, people lose their jobs and the local economy suffers. To demonstrate that this is much more than a legal battle between the Forest Service and environmental groups, I will read a part of one of my many communications I have received from constituents.

"With local drilling being slowed to a virtual halt, we have seen the 'ripple effect' significantly decrease our business. The timber industry is in the worst shape that we have ever seen, and now loggers are not even needed to clear right-of-ways for roads, locations and pipelines.

"For the first time in 30 years we have had to reduce our workforce and contribute to the nearly double-digit unemployment rate."

I find it to be the height of hypocrisy that the Secretary of Energy recently asked OPEC not to decrease its oil production, while at the same time our

government is taking actions to prevent the production of our own oil and natural gas. Importing 60 percent of our oil and sending \$700 billion to foreign, often unfriendly countries should dictate government policy that promotes the production of our own oil, not the opposite.

If the Allegheny Defense Project, which is run out of Portland, Oregon, more than 3,000 miles from the beautiful Pennsylvania ANF, continues to use the legal system and their environmental shield to stop the legitimate and environmentally safe harvesting of timber, natural gas and oil from the ANF, or any other forest, I ask that they consider the effect of such efforts on the communities, families and individuals who depend on the safe and sound harvesting of those commodities to keep their jobs and to pay their bills.

Oil and gas production is western Pennsylvania. It's part of our life. It's what we do. It's where Colonel Drake sunk the world's first commercial oil well 150 years ago this year. The safe and environmentally sound harvesting of our resources in the Allegheny National Forest has been going on for decades. There is no reason it should be delayed or stopped now, especially during a recession.

Mr. Speaker, it has been 63 days since the Forest Service has issued any permits for new oil and gas wells in the ANF. This is unacceptable.

I trust that the Forest Service and the Department of Agriculture will resolve this problem quickly so that our community can get back to work producing our own oil and natural gas. And, if not, I will return to this floor and continue to do all I can until it is resolved.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. FOXX addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. KAPTUR addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. SCHIFF addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### BONUS MYSTERY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Indi-

ana (Mr. LATOURETTE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. LATOURETTE. I want to thank our leader for giving us an hour to talk about something that happened today, this week, that really has us befuddled.

Mr. Speaker, I like a good mystery. I just finished reading another Agatha Christie last night, "Black Coffee," and it wound up being the personal secretary to the manor and Lord, who poisoned him with cyanide.

□ 1615

But it took me until the last couple of pages until I figured it out that this Edward Raynor had in fact poisoned his boss.

Well, who would have thunk that we would have a real live mystery here on Capitol Hill. But we have one. And we're going to talk about a variety of things relative to AIG and the stimulus package and these bonuses that have been paid out that really have people's anger up, at least in Ohio—the phone calls I'm getting. We'll hear from other Members.

But here's what happened. A few weeks ago, the President of the United States indicated he wanted to put forward a stimulus bill and, unlike some commentators, I want President Obama to succeed. I think he's doing the best job that he can.

He entrusted the leadership of the House and Senate to write the bill. The bill was a little over 1,000 pages. I think it was 1,117 pages long. We were nervous because it was spending \$1 trillion. When I say my Republican colleagues and I were nervous, it proposed to spend \$1 trillion rather quickly. We asked early in the week before the vote, Do you think we could read the bill before you ask us to sign on to spending \$1 trillion?

So we had a little motion here on the floor and every Member of the House—every Republican, every Democrat—said: You will have 48 hours to read this bill before we ask you to decide whether it's a good piece of legislation or a bad piece of legislation.

Well, it left the House, it left the Senate, and it went to a conference committee which, Mr. Speaker, I know you know, but others may not know; that's where we send some guys and gals over from the House, they send some over from the Senate. They get together, they work out the final product and then they bring it back to the House and Senate for a vote.

Well, something happened on the way to the vote in that we weren't given 48 hours to read the bill. We were given 90 minutes to read the bill. We made the observation that that's 90 minutes to read 1,000 pages, and a lot of us read pretty quickly, but that was a big challenge. So could you please not ask us to do this, because when you do something that quickly, somebody's going to be embarrassed.

That leads us to our mystery. Today, we had some legislation where there

was a lot of gnashing at teeth and pulling of hair, saying that AIG are crooks, somebody called them traitors, so forth and so on, and they shouldn't have gotten these bonuses.

Well, when the bill left the Senate, there was an amendment in the bill offered by a Democratic Senator from Oregon, WYDEN, and a Republican Senator from Maine, OLYMPIA SNOWE, that said there were not going to be—if you took money for the bailout and you're an institution, you couldn't give these crazy bonuses to people. You couldn't give them \$18 million, \$20 million worth of bonuses. That seemed pretty reasonable.

Well, when it went into this meeting, all of a sudden that language came out and this language that I have put up on the easel here was inserted.

For those who want to read it, it's title 7, section 111, subparagraph 3, subparagraph iii.

Now, unlike the Wyden-Snowe language that said we weren't going to do it, this language specifically says that any bonuses, any executive compensation, any million-dollar golden parachute, any retention pay that was agreed to before February 11, 2009—guess what? It wasn't covered. So the bill specifically authorized the payment of these bonuses.

Well, as we warned, and we are not happy that our prediction came true, but there were some people this week that were embarrassed by that. So we passed a bill to tax these bonuses at 90 percent. Stupid idea. But we wouldn't even have had that discussion if somebody, somebody put this paragraph into the bill that specifically allowed the taxpayers of this country to go ahead and pay for these bonuses at AIG. So we do have a Who Dunnit.

From our social studies we know that there are 435 Members of the House of Representatives and there are 100 Senators. I had a piece of paper with the breakdown, and I've misplaced it, but I think after the last election there are 178 Republicans in the Chamber and there are 247 Democratic Representatives. Over in the Senate, there are 41 Republican Senators, 58 Democratic Senators, and we can clear somebody of this mystery already because the Minnesota Senate race has not resolved so we know that Al Franken or Norm Coleman didn't put this paragraph into the bill.

During the debate today I asked the distinguished chairman of the Financial Services Committee, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, if he did it. And he said no. So we're going to cross BARNEY FRANK off the mystery list. Now we are down to only—well, let me say this. I didn't do it. So we are down to 533.

I'm joined by other Members here today.

Mr. MCCOTTER. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. MCCOTTER of Michigan, did you put this into the bill?

Mr. MCCOTTER. Through the Chair to the gentleman from Ohio, I was not