

Currently, approximately 13 million people in North Korea suffer from malnutrition, and over 2 million North Koreans have died of starvation since 1995. In addition, over 200,000 men, women, and children are imprisoned in political prison camps in North Korea.

North Korea is controlled by a dictatorial regime where human rights and personal freedoms are nonexistent. The region suffers from an extremely weak economy and is dependent on the international community even for its food. Unfortunately, about 30 percent of all the international aid that is provided to North Korea goes to the country's military and its elite, and very little of that ever gets to the real people of North Korea.

Under the current regime, universal human rights do not apply to the people of North Korea, and freedom remains a foreign idea for the men and the women of this repressive country.

I call on my colleagues in Congress and the Obama administration to take action to improve the deteriorating human rights crisis in North Korea.

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ENERGY

(Ms. MARKEY of Colorado asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. MARKEY of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because we are at a crossroads in the way we power America. Breaking our dependence on foreign oil will not only create new domestic jobs, but it will ensure our economic recovery is sustained for future generations.

The American Solar Energy Society recently released a report that stated in 2007, the renewable energy and energy-efficiency sectors created 9 million jobs in the United States and over \$1 trillion in revenues. In my home State of Colorado alone, the energy-efficiency field added 81,000 jobs in 2007, and we all know it is cheaper to use less energy than to make it.

Innovation and entrepreneurship have always been the backbone of the American spirit. As I travel to the eastern plains of Colorado, the landowners often tell me they are ready to install wind turbines on their property as an economic development tool. However, we must update our fragmented transmission system to transmit these vast resources.

By becoming a leader in renewable energy and energy-efficiency technologies, we can invest in our future and put Americans back to work.

MYTH: AMERICANS DON'T WANT BROAD HEALTH REFORM

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

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, another health care myth. It

is amazing that opponents of comprehensive health care reform still make the argument that Americans don't want it, but they do, and it is time to debunk it. According to an April 2009 Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll, just from this month, 59 percent of Americans say that it is more important now than ever to pass health care reform, 59 percent. And it is easy to understand why. Because of costs, 42 percent of Americans reported that they didn't see a doctor in the past year; 36 percent skipped dental care; 27 percent skipped a recommended medical test or treatment; and 18 percent of Americans reported that they cut their pills in half because they couldn't afford it.

This isn't time for small ideas. This isn't time to just protect the status quo. Americans demand comprehensive health care reform, and it is time that this Congress gives it to them this year.

BORDER VIOLENCE

(Mrs. KIRKPATRICK of Arizona asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, just across the border, heavily armed militias fueled by drug trafficking cartels are at war with the Mexican Government. Although the worst of the violence has been contained south of the border, its impact is being felt throughout the region.

These trafficking organizations are powerful, but we are fighting back. Recently, the Flagstaff Police Department busted a major drug ring that supplied a quarter of the methamphetamine in the area. I congratulate the Flagstaff Police Department on their successful bust, which helps keep drugs out of our community and is a blow against drug trafficking organizations on both sides of the border.

CREDIT CARDHOLDERS' BILL OF RIGHTS

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

Mr. KAGEN. Mr. Speaker, in these difficult economic times, we, as leaders, must ask ourselves the question, whose side are we on? Are we on the side of people—the consumers, the taxpayers, and hardworking families across the Nation? Well, I certainly am.

Today, I rise in favor of the Credit Cardholders' Bill of Rights. For too long, hardworking Americans have been victimized by high fees, high interest rates, and confusing credit card agreements that these companies can change at will.

The Credit Cardholders' Bill of Rights protects everyone from the unfair and often abusive practices that credit card companies put on everybody. It prevents credit card companies from unfairly increasing interest rates on existing balances.

The Credit Cardholders' Bill of Rights will protect everyone. It ends unfair penalties for cardholders who pay on time, and it protects vulnerable consumers from high fees due to subprime credit cards. In short, it prevents these companies from constantly moving the goalposts and taking advantage of ordinary people who have done nothing wrong.

Let's pass the Credit Cardholders' Bill of Rights and build a better Nation for everyone.

ENERGY

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

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of a progressive vision for America's energy future and the opportunity to create millions of American jobs for our working families.

President Obama and this Congress are taking on our Nation's energy crisis with a plan to create green jobs and build a clean energy economy; a plan that creates 300,000 new jobs by implementing a Renewable Electricity Standard, and another 222,000 new jobs with its high efficiency savings provisions.

Mr. Speaker, we have a choice to make in this Congress; we can choose to create millions of new American jobs that cannot be shipped overseas, reduce our dependence on oil from overseas, increase production of cleaner renewable energy sources, crack down on polluters who damage our air and our water quality, and give American entrepreneurs and innovators the tools they need to stay combative in the global economy, or we can do something else.

America can become a world leader in the new clean energy economy, or we can continue the failed policies of the last 8 years.

MAKING IN ORDER CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 627, CREDIT CARDHOLDERS' BILL OF RIGHTS ACT OF 2009

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that it be in order on Wednesday, April 29, at any time for the Speaker, as though pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, to declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for consideration of H.R. 627, and that consideration of the bill proceed according to the following order: The first reading of the bill is 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 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the Chair and ranking member of the Committee on Financial Services; after general debate, the Committee of the Whole shall rise without motion; and, no further consideration of H.R. 627

shall be in order except pursuant to a subsequent order of the House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

EXPRESSING SYMPATHY FOR SHOOTING VICTIMS IN BINGHAMTON, NEW YORK

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 340), expressing sympathy to the victims, families, and friends of the tragic act of violence at the American Civic Association in Binghamton, New York.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 340

Whereas on Friday April 3, 2009, the Nation experienced an appalling misfortune when a gunman entered the American Civic Association in Binghamton, New York, and murdered 13 and wounded 4 innocent people;

Whereas the shooting resulted in the tragic loss of Lan Ho, Parveen Nin Ali, Li Guo, Dolores Yigal, Hong Xiu Mao, Marc Henry Bernard, Maria Sonia Bernard, Maria Zobniw, Jiang Ling, Hai Hong Zhong, Roberta King, Layla Khalil, and Almir O. Alves;

Whereas the attacker wounded Long Huyng, Shirley DeLucia, Sumi Lee, and Liqiao Chen;

Whereas this act of violence created numerous secondary victims, including over 40 people who were in the building at the time, as well as friends and family of the deceased who are struggling to cope with the impact of this tragic act;

Whereas many of the victims of this assault were residents of Binghamton, New York, in Broome County, New York, a close-knit, diverse community with a long history of welcoming people from all backgrounds, nationalities, and religions, as well as immigrants and visitors from abroad;

Whereas the American Civic Association in Binghamton, New York, has proudly served the community since 1935, assisting immigrants and refugees with counseling, resettlement, citizenship, family reunification, language skills, and other critical services that have played a vital role in the effort to secure the dreams of immigrants seeking legal citizenship;

Whereas the law enforcement agencies led by the City of Binghamton Police Department, with support from the Broome County Sheriff's Department, the New York State Police, and neighboring municipalities responded quickly, professionally, and heroically to the crime scene;

Whereas swift action by emergency medical responders addressed the needs of the

wounded and quickly transported them to hospitals;

Whereas the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and others provided swift and invaluable cooperation and resources to assist local efforts and provide additional services to help the community cope with this tragedy;

Whereas the United States State Department quickly offered, and is now providing, assistance with processing visas to expedite the travel of victims' family; and

Whereas, although the effects of this shooting will be felt for years to come, the Binghamton community will overcome this tragedy and re-emerge stronger than before and with renewed sense of unity, cooperation, and understanding: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) expresses its heartfelt condolences to the families and friends of the victims of the April 3, 2009, shooting in Binghamton, New York;

(2) conveys its gratitude to the city, county, State, and Federal officials and agencies whose quick and comprehensive response helped save lives and start the long healing process; and

(3) honors the American Civic Association for the services it provides to assist people from across the world who seek the American dream.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I now yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, with House Resolution 340, this Chamber expresses its profound sympathy to the victims of the tragic attack at the American Civic Association in Binghamton, New York, on April 3. Our thoughts continue to be with the families, friends, and the people of Binghamton, and they remain in our prayers. Thirteen men and women were murdered in this attack and four were wounded, shaking the community and the entire Nation.

House Resolution 340 was introduced by our friend and colleague, Representative HINCHEY of New York, and is co-sponsored by over 50 Members of Congress.

Given the tragic events on which House Resolution 340 is based, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform moved quickly to consider a report on the bill, which brings us to today's consideration of the resolution.

Mr. Speaker, we thank the American Civic Association for its continued service over the years as it has helped

immigrants and refugees with counseling, resettlement, citizenship, family reunification, language skills, and other critical services, playing a vital role in the effort to secure the dreams of immigrants seeking U.S. citizenship. We want them to know that they have our prayers and our heartfelt sympathies during this difficult time.

I would also like to commend the City of Binghamton Police Department, the Broome County Sheriff's Department and the New York State Police for their swift response to this attack. In addition, we thank the FBI, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Office, and other Federal agencies for their assistance.

We were all deeply saddened to hear of this attack, and it is difficult for us to comprehend such an act of violence. We will feel its effect for years, but we can be sure that in time Binghamton will heal, emerging from this tragedy stronger and more united than ever before.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge the passage of this resolution expressing sympathy to the victims, families, and friends of the tragic act of violence at the American Civic Association in Binghamton, New York.

For immigrants in the Binghamton area, the American Civic Association, located on Front Street, is a representation of their ongoing pursuit of the American dream as newcomers from around the world learn English and the skills necessary to obtain United States citizenship. But on April 3, the American Civic Association—a welcoming place serving 60 to 100 people per day—became a killing zone. On that dreadful day, a deranged man, whose own dream of immigrating from Vietnam to America had now come to nothing but despair and senseless turmoil, ended the dreams of one aspiring citizen after another by opening fire on unsuspecting employees, volunteers, and hopeful immigrants, resulting in the loss of 14 lives, including the shooter, and four wounded people.

As we remember the victims, we also commend the efforts of the first responders—local police, fire, emergency medical crews, city and county officials, and the community as a whole—for their rapid and cohesive response to this unfortunate tragedy. In addition, we commend the United States Department of State for quickly offering assistance with processing visas to expedite the travel of the victims' families so they could arrange for the burial of their loved ones.

The memory of this senseless event will not soon be forgotten. However, the strength and determination of the Binghamton community as well as the citizens of New York will help the healing process.