

Stated for:

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Speaker, on Monday, May 4, 2009, I was absent during rollcall vote No. 230. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Con. Res. 111—Recognizing Israel's independence as a significant event in providing refuge and a national homeland for the Jewish people and congratulates Israel's people as they celebrate the 61st anniversary of Israel's independence.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, due to events in my congressional district, I was unable to vote today. If I were present, I would have voted "yea" to H. Res. 230, recognizing the historical significance of the Mexican holiday of Cinco de Mayo and "yea" to H. Con. Res. 111.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Madam Speaker, I was not present for votes on Monday, May 4, 2009, due to health reasons. If I was present I would have voted: "yea" on rollcall 229, H. Res. 230—Recognizing the historical significance of the Mexican holiday of Cinco de Mayo and "yea" on rollcall 230, H. Con. Res. 111—Recognizing the 61st anniversary of the independence of the State of Israel.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 1214

Mr. ELLISON. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to be removed as a cosponsor from H.R. 1214.

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

There was no objection.

NUCLEAR POWER VITAL TO ENERGY FUTURE

(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. Madam Speaker, the recently passed budget and the upcoming climate change legislation take a direct shot at the strained budgets of South Carolina families. Under an ill-advised cap-and-tax proposal, families will see their electricity bills, gas bills and grocery bills go up.

Meanwhile, South Carolina is the leader in the production of clean, viable and safe alternative nuclear energy. For over 30 years, South Carolina has benefited with over 50 percent of electrical generation by nuclear energy.

President Obama's own Secretary of Energy, Dr. Steven Chu, agrees that nuclear energy "is going to be an important part of our energy mix." Unfortunately, some in Washington still continue to ignore this proven technology.

I hope my colleagues in Congress will listen to Secretary Chu. In the meantime, South Carolina families and citi-

zens throughout our Nation cannot afford a spike in their utility bills, their gas bills or their food budgets.

I am grateful that Santee Cooper and SCE&G are proceeding with two new reactors at Jenkinsville, South Carolina, which will produce clean energy.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

HEALTH CARE FOR ALL

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, 50 million Americans have no health insurance. Another 50 million are underinsured.

And instead of creating a program that would provide insurance for all Americans, the great debate in Washington is how we can continue to keep the insurance companies in business. Think about it.

America spends \$2.4 trillion a year on health care, but 1 out of every \$3, \$800 billion a year, goes for the activities of the for-profit health insurance companies, corporate profits, stock options, executive salaries, advertising, marketing costs and paperwork.

Now, isn't it time that we took away the profit-making incentive in health care and created a system where there is health care for all, where everything is covered? We have the money to do it.

The question is whether we are going to have health care for the people or whether we are going to have insurance care using our money and our tax dollars to keep the insurance companies in their profits.

NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH

(Mrs. BACHMANN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BACHMANN. Madam Speaker, today I rise in support of H. Res. 391, which recognizes May as National Foster Care Month.

Today there are over 500,000 children in foster care across the United States, and my husband and I were privileged to have raised 23 foster children in our home.

Madam Speaker, as a foster mother, I know too well the challenges. And I am dedicated to changing public policy and to raising awareness related to the very special and individual needs of foster children, so that families who support these children receive the resources they need to help these really great kids receive adequate support to help them to reach adulthood in a positive way.

SAFE ENERGY

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, since the Nation has no official energy policy, we continue to discuss what shall we do about energy for the future.

The cynics and the critics don't want us to use fossil fuels such as clean coal or oil. They don't want us drilling for even natural gas.

We can never build enough of those gangly windmill eyesores to make much of a difference. Solar energy technology is still lagging behind in development, and we are learning that the corn-based ethanol that was to save us all is too much of a pollutant and a poor use of our own land.

So what are we to do? Are we going to freeze in the dark or bake in the global heat, depending on whether one believes global warming is fact or fiction?

Today I visited the North Anna nuclear power plant in Virginia. I was impressed with their pride for safety, security and competence. This plant, along with 63 others, safely produces 20 percent of our Nation's electricity. But France gets 80 percent of its electricity from nuclear power.

So we should defy the cynics and the critics and produce energy from all safe sources, including actively pursuing more clean nuclear power, or we will eventually be left behind in the darkness of the winter night.

And that's just the way it is.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

WILDERNESS BATTLE—MAY 5-7, 1864

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, May 5, tomorrow, 145 years ago this day, May 5, 1864, 90 miles from where we are today and tonight, Madam Speaker, there were 160,000 troops assembled on one battlefield. Over 100,000 from the North and about 25,000 from the South, and they participated in the 3-day battle called the Battle of the Wilderness.

Madam Speaker, this battle was so intense that the wilderness itself, the woods, caught on fire during the battle and many from both sides burned to death. Casualties were about 30,000.

And if you take the number of men and women we have in Afghanistan and Iraq tonight, 160,000 is approximately the number that we have in those two theatres of war. They were assembled on one battlefield in the great Civil War.

Madam Speaker, during the Civil War there were over 600,000 killed. If we took that and brought it into today's numbers, that would be about 5 million killed.

Today I had the honor to be with my good friend, PETER WELCH of Vermont, and actor Robert Duvall, on this sacred hallowed ground. We were there for several reasons, but the primary reason was to preserve this battlefield.

During the Battle of the Wilderness, Vermonters had especially high casualties. Of the 3,500 that went into battle, 1,234 were killed.

PETER WELCH of Vermont and myself had the privilege to go and see that location, that small area where they were protecting the crossroads. This was the highest percentage of casualties in Vermont history. Most of those that were killed were from the small community of Woodstock.

On the first day of battle, the Union troops were able to push the Southern troops away. On the second day of battle, a Texas brigade, led by General Longstreet, had arrived at the battle after marching all night, 26 miles, at about 6:30 in the morning.

General Robert E. Lee was excited to see the Texas brigade, and he said the Texans always moved them and, yes, they did, they moved the Union forces back a great distance. The general for the Texas Army said that "the eyes of General Lee are upon you," and Lee rode with Texas. About 60 percent of those Texans who went into battle that day were killed.

Madam Speaker, all of the southern States participated in this battle. Eighteen of the northern States participated in this battle, and there are stories like that from all States, this sacred ground, where the Battlefield of the Wilderness, took place.

But today we are faced with another battle, Madam Speaker, because the giant corporation Wal-Mart wants to build a Wal-Mart on that sacred ground. You see, during the battle, blood was spilled so much that one soldier said you can't tell whose blood it was, and that's exactly right, Madam Speaker. Every one of those troops that were killed that day, that fought that day and bled that day, whether North or South, were all Americans.

And that's why PETER WELCH and myself and Robert Duvall were there today to get the attention of Wal-Mart to not build on this sacred ground. Yes, they have the legal right to do so, but they should move down the street, down the road a bit and build the Wal-Mart that they want to build.

Because, you see, this ground is consecrated by the blood of Americans, and we don't want Wal-Mart to pour asphalt over the graves that are known only to God himself. So they should be a good corporate neighbor and build down the street.

You know, they need to put respect for history over love for money. They need to put dignity for the dead over lust for profit, because those that try to destroy history will be tried and convicted by history.

Wal-Mart has got more money than anybody. They can put their store anywhere they wish. So we are asking them

to be good patriots rather than those who seek the profit motive and go somewhere else.

PETER WELCH and I are good friends. We probably disagree on everything except this one thing, that this land is consecrated by the lives of Americans who stood for some principle and died for that principle.

He said it best today when numerous people were there. He said the land, the Battlefield of the Wilderness, is the cathedral of sacrifice.

I agree with my good friend from Vermont. It is the cathedral of sacrifice, and we want to remember and preserve our history. We owe the dead that right, and Wal-Mart needs to move away.

And that's just the way it is.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

RISING FORECLOSURES

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, as unemployment in community after community rises to double digits, and foreclosures similarly rise, Wall Street is at it again, milking both ends of the foreclosure debacle.

As many of the banks who volunteered to do foreclosure moratoriums, along with Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae, have ended those moratoriums, foreclosures are rising again and expected to continue to rise even with administration programs up and running. Between the first of this year and April 22, in my home county of Lucas, the major county I represent, 442 foreclosed properties have been sold.

Now, would you think that's good? Who do you think is buying those homes? The very same institutions that made the liars' loans and subprime loans in the first place, Deutsche Bank, followed by Citigroup, by Wells Fargo, by U.S. Bank, Fifth Third and JPMorgan Chase, HSBC, you know the names, or their subsidiaries.

So, they foreclose, they buy, then they sell, pulling profit each step of the way, while destroying neighborhood after neighborhood, community after community in their wake.

When are we going to stop letting Wall Street make money coming and going while people lose their homes and our communities are destroyed?

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Now, who do they sell to? That's interesting. All to absentee investors who don't care or don't even know where we reside. Absentee investors across our country and, in many cases, across the world.

Of the 442 properties sold—get ready for this—93 percent—93 percent—were sold to banks or to absentee investors. I don't call that community reinvestment. I call that community disemboweling, community disinvestment.

These buyers have no connection to Ohio or our community. They have no tie to our people. They merely seek to make more profit off the anguish of places such as where we reside, through the foreclosure process, as unemployment skyrockets. Communities do not have the tools to defend themselves from this predatory pillage.

Realtors from our district are telling us that the same banks purposely are slowing down short sales of properties, pushing off sellers, and leaving properties vacant. Why? To make more money again.

Federal policy should support Main Street families regaining equity and hope. Wall Street is rigging every transaction to laden their pockets—at the expense of the very taxpayers that supported them when they were crashing, and continue to support them as they stabilize. Business as usual for Wall Street—never doing for others, but profiting at everyone else's expense.

Foreclosures weaken communities. Absentee investors do the same. We see home prices fall, which leads to more foreclosures as communities weaken and mortgages go underwater. People in communities are drowning across this country. To jump in and save them will require creative, big picture-thinking that goes beyond the gains of these big banks or the silos of governmental programs and goes beyond the benefit of one institution over another.

We must let the FDIC and SEC deal with troubled banks and their ledgers and our financial system as they are designed to operate. Any Federal agency that deals with housing and foreclosures and jobs must join forces in designing funding mechanisms to radically transform the most hard-hit communities across our country. I would start with those that are now at double-digit in unemployment and foreclosures. Saving them will save more than just those communities. It will begin to breathe life back into our Nation's economy.

It's time Main Street was put ahead of Wall Street. And it's time that this Congress paid attention to what is happening coast-to-coast.

I will place in the RECORD material from the New York Times of this week.

[From the New York Times, May 4, 2009]

AS FORECLOSURES SURGE . . .

The Obama administration sat by last week as 12 Senate Democrats joined 39 Senate Republicans to block a vote on an amendment that would have allowed bankruptcy judges to modify troubled mortgages.

Senator Obama campaigned on the provision. And President Obama made its passage part of his anteforeclosure plan. It would have been a very useful prod to get lenders to rework bad loans rather than leaving the modification to a judge.