

become a South Asia specialist, while simultaneously working as a children's librarian at the Berkeley Public Library in Berkeley, California. However, after finding her true passion with the public library, Ms. Parikh changed her educational focus to library science and has since been serving as a librarian and administrator in Pierce County.

Ms. Parikh has become a leader in providing early learning, training, and support for families, childcare providers, and library staff both locally and across the state. While Parikh believes that early learning is a critical service for all public libraries, she maintains that teen services are equally important. She supported Pierce County Library System in becoming one of the first Libraries of Promise, which seeks to encourage people to build the character and competence of children by providing them access to additional educational outlets.

Ms. Parikh's leadership as a strong community collaborator is a testament to her success for advancing early learning forward throughout Pierce County. She has collaborated with social service organizations, schools, and community leaders to build services for young learners.

Ms. Parikh is a founding member and chair of the Early Learning Public Library Partnership, a consortium created with the vision that public libraries are full, essential partners in the early learning movement in Washington State. The consortium puts public libraries at the table with other early learning organizations. Under her leadership, the partnership has grown to include 27 public libraries across the state.

In addition to her library responsibilities, Ms. Parikh has been active in the Association for Library Service to Children, served on the Public Library Association Board of Directors, and held a seat on the Executive Committee of the Washington Library Association.

Parikh is the seventh winner of this award, provided by former American Library Association President Peggy Sullivan.

Madam Speaker, I congratulate Neel Parikh on this impressive achievement, and celebrate her commitment to furthering children's education through positive library experiences.

DOD AND DEBT/DEFICIT

HON. MIKE QUIGLEY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 30, 2010

Mr. QUIGLEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today because we can no longer afford to ignore defense spending as our deficit rises.

The unprecedented federal stimulus package and two wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have put the FY 2009 federal deficit at 10 percent of GDP, its highest level since 1945.

As the federal deficit grows and we look for places to cut, we must be able to scrutinize every part of the federal budget—including defense spending.

Defense spending has more than doubled since September 11, 2001, and at \$719 billion, the current defense budget, is the highest it has been since World War II.

Our discretionary spending has also grown by \$583 billion since 2001, and defense spending accounts for 65 percent of that growth.

Accounting for close to 20 percent of the federal budget, defense spending simply cannot be ignored as we look for places to cut.

For too long we have followed policies that assume more spending automatically means more safety and more power.

But new critics of this unquestioned defense spending argue cuts to the defense budget can and should be made; and these cuts can be done without compromising our safety.

A new report by the Sustainable Defense Task Force, comprising security experts from across the country, finds that we could save up to \$960 billion over the next ten years, without jeopardizing our national security.

The report outlines a whole menu of reform options ranging from reducing our oversized nuclear stockpiles to cutting our bloated force structure in Europe and Asia—all of which are possible due to the U.S.'s current security posture: We no longer face the traditional opponents we once did.

We still operate as if we are at war with an opponent as powerful as the former Soviet Union; but today the U.S. does not face a threat that even remotely compares to the Soviet Union.

Not even China, which spends barely one-fifth as much on military as the U.S., can compete.

The U.S. spends more on research and development than Russia does on its whole military.

Today, the U.S. spends more than two and half times as much on its military as the group of potential opponents, including Russia and China.

In other words, the U.S. could cut its defense spending in half and we would still be spending more than our current and potential adversaries.

As the Task Force points out in its report, our military strength far out-weighs any threat from our adversaries, and can easily be reduced while still maintaining our military superiority.

However, while we are building up our capacity to fight traditional opponents, such as China, we are failing to build a defense force capable of combating nontraditional opponents such as Al Qaeda.

We have spent \$1 trillion and lost 5,500 American lives on large-scale military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan with little progress to show for it.

As Benjamin Friedman, of the Cato Institute, points out, our principal enemy Al Qaeda "has no army, no air force and no navy."

And the military assets most useful for counterterrorism are relatively inexpensive such as surveillance technologies, special operations forces and drones.

As the threats to America evolve, so too must our military structure.

But over the years, rather than realigning our military to meet current threats, we have simply added more requirements to our military, growing our defense budget by 9 percent on average every year.

There has never been a better time to reinvent our defense budget.

We are facing a growing deficit, forcing us to make cuts, and we have a defense budget ripe for reform.

Now all we need is the political will to make tough choices.

With limited resources we must choose, because the real ramification of overspending on

defense is not simply that we will have too many unnecessary ships, aircrafts or missiles—but that we won't have enough resources to support vital domestic investments such as health care, education, and infrastructure needed to remain a superpower.

Military power is not simply about spending more than our adversaries.

Real military power, argues Kori Schake, a top foreign policy advisor for John McCain, is "fundamentally premised on the solvency of the American government and the vibrancy of the U.S. economy."

But in order to maintain that vibrancy we must get our fiscal house in order, and in doing so reexamine our defense spending and make cuts and reforms where necessary.

Secretary Gates said it best while paraphrasing President Eisenhower, "The United States should spend as much as necessary on national defense, but not one penny more."

Let's hold him to his word. Let's reinvent the defense budget.

CELEBRATING NATIONAL DANCE DAY ON JULY 31

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 30, 2010

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to join me in celebrating National Dance Day on July 31.

National Dance Day, in the Nation's Capital and throughout the United States, will celebrate dance as an artistic form and will promote the health benefits of dance. Here in the Nation's Capital, I will be joined by "So You Think You Can Dance" co-creator, executive producer, and judge Nigel Lythgoe, by Dominique Dawes, the well-known U.S. Olympic gymnast and a member of the President's Council on Fitness, Sports & Nutrition, and by the Dizzy Feet Foundation to promote dance as an avenue for physical fitness. Our partners, in addition to the President's Council, and Dizzy Feet, include the Kennedy Center, the Smithsonian Institution, the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Dance Association, and the National Council of Negro Women.

In addition to being an art form, dance can be an aerobic activity that helps to improve heart health, strengthen muscles, increase flexibility, and burn calories. Our country has a national adult and childhood overweight and obesity epidemic. Keeping with the spirit of the First Lady's "Let's Move!" initiative to combat childhood obesity and the work of the President's Council on Fitness, Sports & Nutrition, we will promote physical activity among children and adults, and have fun dancing, the exercise that many of us most enjoy!

On July 31, we will gather on the National Mall from 3 to 7 p.m. to watch, learn and dance, and to recognize dance expression, with "Flash Dance" instructors, Fluria Flammenco, Step Afrika, Beat Ya Feet Kings, Capitol Movement Project, DCypher, Bancker Ball Room Dancing Club, and many more. We will encourage physically active lifestyles by promoting all forms of dance for physical fitness.

Madam Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in celebrating National Dance Day on July 31.

INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 5987, THE
SENIORS PROTECTION ACT OF 2010

HON. EARL POMEROY

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 30, 2010

Mr. POMEROY. Madam Speaker, I rise to introduce the Seniors Protection Act of 2010, H.R. 5987. I am honored to be joined by many of my colleagues who have heard from senior citizens back home about the pressing need for Congress to provide this relief in light of the widely held expectation that there will be no increase in Social Security benefits for a second year in a row. The legislation would ensure that seniors, veterans and people with disabilities who receive Social Security and similar federal benefits receive a one-time \$250 payment in the event that no cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA) is announced this fall.

Seniors did not cause the near meltdown of the economy that occurred in the last days of the prior Administration, yet too many are still feeling the brunt of its fallout. This bill would help seniors across the country who face the likely possibility that on October 15th, the Social Security Administration will announce for the first time ever—as a result of a long-standing statutory formula—that there will not be a COLA in Social Security benefits in back-to-back years.

The failed economic policies of the prior Administration left the nation in such a deep recession that, for the first time since automatic COLAs began in 1975, recipients of Social Security, Supplemental Security Income, Veterans Administration Pension and Disability Compensation, and Railroad Retirement benefits did not receive a COLA in January of this year.

Social Security benefit levels are quite modest—only \$14,000 a year for the average retiree. Yet, the median income for senior households is a mere \$24,000, reflecting just how much Social Security means to most elderly Americans. Six in ten seniors rely on Social Security for more than half of their income. About a third of retirees have little other than Social Security to live on.

Although economy-wide measures of inflation have shown no net increase since the last COLA, which reflected price levels in the third quarter of 2008, Medicare premiums and health care costs have continued to rise. Moreover, seniors' other sources of income have weakened as a result of the economic downturn: the financial collapse reduced the value of their IRAs; interest rates are low, reducing income from seniors' savings; and the housing crash reduced seniors' home equity. The one-time \$250 payment for retirees and other beneficiaries would represent less than two percent of the average annual Social Security benefit.

Seniors who depend on their very modest Social Security benefits worry about meeting their basic day-to-day expenses. I have heard these concerns from seniors in my district and from Members of Congress who are hearing these same worries from their seniors. I am pleased those Members are joining me in introducing the Seniors Protection Act of 2010. Democrats are honoring America's commitment to protect the purchasing power of seniors' Social Security benefits.

For 75 years, and through 13 recessions, Social Security has been a steady and reliable

source of income—never a day late nor a dollar short. And since 1975, when Congress implemented automatic COLAs, recipients of Social Security have been able to maintain purchasing power over time. Social Security is often the only source of retirement income that is fully protected against the corrosive effects of inflation.

This bill is responsive to seniors and responsible to taxpayers. My colleagues and I are committed to fiscal responsibility and will ensure that the Seniors Protection Act of 2010 shall not cause an increase in the federal deficit. When the bill comes to the House floor it will include the necessary offsets to comply with the PAYGO law.

The legislation is supported by seniors. With regard to this legislation, our former colleague Barbara Kennelly, President of the National Committee to Protect Social Security and Medicare said:

For the millions of seniors who rely upon Social Security as their only source of income, and millions more who rely upon it for at least half of their income, a one-time payment to make up for the lack of a COLA is not a luxury, it's a necessity. I applaud the Members of the Congress who understand that helping seniors maintain their purchasing power for necessities like health care, fuel and food, not only improves their quality of life but also helps the local economy.

AARP Senior Vice President Drew Nannis offered the following statement:

For over three decades, millions of Americans have counted on annual increases in their Social Security checks to help make ends meet. This year, 41 million older Americans did not receive a Social Security COLA, the first time since automatic Social Security adjustments went into effect in 1975.

This relief will put money in the pockets of millions of older Americans struggling to make ends meet—money likely to be injected directly into our fragile economy.

Edward F. Coyle, Executive Director of the Alliance for Retired Americans said:

Seniors are struggling to get by. \$250 may not seem like much on Wall Street, but to retirees on Main Street it could be what allows them to pay their electric bill or buy groceries. We must make sure Social Security meets today's basic needs.

I urge my colleagues to stand up for seniors and support the Senior Protection Act of 2010.

MS. BARBARA YARBOUGH'S 50TH
YEAR OF SERVICE AT MIDLAND
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

HON. K. MICHAEL CONAWAY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 30, 2010

Mr. CONAWAY. Madam Speaker, I always enjoy being able to share stories about the great people of District 11 with my colleagues. Today, I would like to share the story of Barbara Yarbough, a treasured citizen of Midland, Texas, who I am privileged to represent in this House.

Barbara grew up in what many of us would consider difficult circumstances. Orphaned at the age of eight, she and her younger brother spent four years homeless until an Aunt took them in. Her Aunt encouraged her to go to college, telling her that if she graduated, she could do anything.

I do not know if Barbara's Aunt knew then how right she would be, but I am proud to say that Barbara has accomplished everything one individual could hope to in a life devoted to serving the communities she has called home.

In Midland, Barbara is a living legend. For almost forty years, she taught two generations of Midlanders, serving as an advisor, a confidant, a cheerleader, a mentor, and a friend to every student who sat in her classroom. After retiring from teaching, Barbara tackled new challenges, and now works as a parent liaison in the Midland school district. Through this office, she works with parents and families, offering counseling, advice, parenting classes, health information, and support for parents when they have needed it the most.

I expect that most every community has someone like Barbara; someone who works nearly as hard or touches almost as many lives. I imagine that every member of Congress I serve with can think of someone that might compare. But, I know that I represent the one and only Barbara Yarbough. She is a singular individual, a truly unique soul, who my community is blessed to be able to call our own. She is also a near and dear friend to me, who I am honored to be able to brag on here today.

This August, Barbara celebrates 50 years of serving the students, parents, and employees of the Midland Independent School District. I would like to offer my humblest gratitude to her for her five decades of service and her genuine, unwavering, and unflinching concern for the people of Midland. She has been and will continue to be a friend to many and a servant to all.

May God bless her as she has blessed us.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULE-
MAKING REGARDING "GAINFUL
EMPLOYMENT"

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 30, 2010

Mr. HASTINGS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express serious concerns regarding the Department of Education's recent Notice of Proposed Rulemaking regarding "gainful employment."

As it is currently proposed, the Department's approach will lead to serious educational capacity cutbacks in critically important fields such as nursing and education and will disproportionately affect low-income and minority students.

Today, 2.8 million students attend career colleges. Seventy-six percent of these students live independently, without parental support. Sixty-three percent are 24 years old or older. Fifty-four percent delayed postsecondary education after high school. Forty-seven percent have dependent children, and almost one-third of these students are single parents.

The Department's suggested approach will disproportionately harm these nontraditional and lower-income students who have no choice but to rely on student loans to pursue a postsecondary education and need the flexibility career colleges provide.

On May 18, I along with thirteen of my colleagues were assured during a meeting with