

health care insurance by the Office of Personnel Management, a cut to Social Security by \$4.2 billion, and sweetheart deals, basically legalized bribery, to buy off votes of the Senate by the Louisiana purchase, the Cornhusker kick-back and the Gator aid.

To those Blue Dog Democrats, 40 sitting in conservative districts, do the right thing. Don't walk the plank on this bill. This is still the United States of America, and we're going to take this country back.

□ 1545

UNACCEPTABLE GROWTH OF GOVERNMENT

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

Mr. KLINE of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, we have been talking all day about this bill that is that 2,700-page Senate bill, this bill that increases bureaucracies and bureaucrats and gives more government power and more government control. We know the American people don't like it, and we are speaking against it.

But that is not bad enough. At the same time, using this convoluted parliamentary procedure, our Democratic colleagues want to have the government take over the student lending business, build up bigger bureaucracy, wipe out 30,000 private sector jobs, make the Department of Education one of the largest banks in the country lending \$100 billion a year of money that we don't have, money that we have to borrow from China before we can lend it to students.

So whether it is health care or it is student lending, we are watching a massive growth of government power, size, and spending, and I deem that unacceptable.

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO OFFER RESOLUTION RAISING A QUESTION OF THE PRIVILEGES OF THE HOUSE

Mr. FLAKE. Madam Speaker, pursuant to clause 2 of rule IX, I hereby give notice of my intent to offer a resolution raising a question of the privileges of the House.

The form of the resolution is as follows:

Whereas, the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct initiated an investigation into allegations related to earmarks and campaign contributions in the Spring of 2009.

Whereas, on December 2, 2009, reports and findings in seven separate matters involving the alleged connection between earmarks and campaign contributions were forwarded by the Office of Congressional Ethics to the Standards Committee.

Whereas, on February 26, 2010, the Standards Committee made public its report on the matter wherein the Committee found, though a widespread perception exists among corporations and lobbyists that campaign contributions provide a greater chance of obtaining earmarks, there was no evidence

that Members or their staff considered contributions when requesting earmarks.

Whereas, the Committee indicated that, with respect to the matters forwarded by the Office of Congressional Ethics, neither the evidence cited in the OCE's findings nor the evidence in the record before the Standards Committee provided a substantial reason to believe that violations of applicable standards of conduct occurred.

Whereas, the Office of Congressional Ethics is prohibited from reviewing activities taking place prior to March of 2008 and lacks the authority to subpoena witnesses and documents.

Whereas, for example, the Office of Congressional Ethics noted that in some instances documents were redacted or specific information was not provided and that, in at least one instance, they had reason to believe a witness withheld information requested and did not identify what was being withheld.

Whereas, the Office of Congressional Ethics also noted that they were able to interview only six former employees of the PMA Group, with many former employees refusing to consent to interviews and the OCE unable to obtain evidence within PMA's possession.

Whereas, Roll Call noted that "the committee report was five pages long and included no documentation of any evidence collected or any interviews conducted by the committee, beyond a statement that the investigation 'included extensive document reviews and interviews with numerous witnesses.'" (Roll Call, March 8, 2010)

Whereas, it is unclear whether the Standards Committee included in their investigation any activities that occurred prior to 2008.

Whereas, it is unclear whether the Standards Committee interviewed any Members in the course of their investigation.

Whereas, it is unclear whether the Standards Committee, in the course of their investigation, initiated their own subpoenas or followed the Office of Congressional Ethics recommendations to issue subpoenas. Therefore, be it

Resolved, That not later than seven days after the adoption of this resolution, the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct shall report to the House of Representatives, with respect to the activities addressed in its report of February 26, 2010, (1) how many witnesses were interviewed, (2) how many, if any, subpoenas were issued in the course of their investigation, and (3) what documents were reviewed and their availability for public review.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under rule IX, a resolution offered from the floor by a Member other than the majority leader or the minority leader as a question of the privileges of the House has immediate precedence only at a time designated by the Chair within 2 legislative days after the resolution is properly noticed.

Pending that designation, the form of the resolution noticed by the gentleman from Arizona will appear in the RECORD at this point.

The Chair will not at this point determine whether the resolution constitutes a question of privilege. That determination will be made at the time designated for consideration of the resolution.

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.

SUPPORTING GOALS AND IDEALS OF RED CROSS MONTH

Ms. WATSON. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 311) expressing the support of the House of Representatives for the goals and ideals of Red Cross Month.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 311

Whereas the American National Red Cross, one of the most well-known humanitarian organizations in the world, was founded by Clara Barton in Washington, DC, on May 21, 1881;

Whereas the American National Red Cross received a congressional charter in 1905 setting forth the purposes of the organization, which include giving relief to and serving as a medium of communication between members of the Armed Forces of the United States and their families, and providing national and international disaster relief and mitigation;

Whereas the American National Red Cross depends on the support of the people of the United States to accomplish the mission of the organization;

Whereas the American National Red Cross has been at the forefront of helping individuals and families prevent, prepare for, and respond to disasters for more than 127 years, including more than 70,000 disasters annually, ranging from apartment and single-family home fires, the most common type of disaster, to hurricanes, floods, earthquakes, wildfires, tornadoes, hazardous materials spills, transportation accidents, explosions, and other natural and human-caused disasters;

Whereas, when a disaster strikes or is imminent, communities throughout the United States depend on the American National Red Cross to help meet the basic and urgent needs of affected individuals, including shelter, food, healthcare, and mental health services;

Whereas the "Be Red Cross Ready" safety program encourages the people of the United States to take the 3 actions that will help them "Be Red Cross Ready" for a disaster: "Get a Kit, Make a Plan, Be Informed";

Whereas the "Be Red Cross Ready" safety program represents a major effort by the American National Red Cross to encourage the people of the United States to be more prepared for a disaster or other emergency;

Whereas, since 1943, every President of the United States has proclaimed March to be "Red Cross Month"; and

Whereas the American National Red Cross uses Red Cross Month as an opportunity to promote the services and programs the organization provides to the people of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of Red Cross Month;

(2) recognizes the contributions of American National Red Cross volunteers in times

of natural and human-caused disasters, and in times of armed conflict; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to "Get a Kit, Make a Plan, and Be Informed".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. WATSON. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

Ms. WATSON. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I am grateful for the opportunity to speak today and to vote on H. Res. 311, a bill I introduced to honor one of the most well-known humanitarian organizations in the world, the American National Red Cross. This bill expresses the support of the House of Representatives for the work of this important institution by honoring March as Red Cross Month.

Since the American National Red Cross was founded by Clara Barton on May 21, 1881, the organization has been at the forefront of providing relief to individuals around the world during times of great crisis. The American National Red Cross provides relief for more than 70,000 disasters annually, ranging from small home fires to hurricanes, floods, tornados, conflicts, and earthquakes, such as those that recently struck in Haiti and Chile. And I understand there was a 4.4 earthquake today in the Los Angeles area.

The American National Red Cross has had a presence in Haiti since 2004, supporting local disaster preparedness, HIV education, malaria prevention, and measles immunization programs.

In the 2 months since the devastating earthquake struck on January 12, the American National Red Cross has allocated \$106.4 million for Haitian relief and development and efforts to provide both short-term and long-term assistance to the survivors. In just 2 months, the global Red Cross network has provided relief items for 400,000 people, including 99,000 tarps, tents, shelter tool kits, and meals for more than 1 million people, 40 million liters of clean drinking water, built more than 1,100 latrines, helped vaccinate more than 125 people, treated more than 55,000 people at Red Cross hospitals or mobile clinics, and assisted more than 25,000 people who arrived in the United States following the earthquake.

With an estimated 1.3 million Haitians left homeless by the earthquake, the difficult and noble work the Amer-

ican National Red Cross has undertaken in Haiti is an effort that each and every American can be proud of. However, the relief they bring to Haiti is only one example in over 129 years of exemplary humanitarian service.

This institution represents the best aspect of the American spirit to people all around the world. When a disaster strikes, the sign of the Red Cross is a source of comfort and hope, and a reminder of the generosity and the caring nature of the United States and its citizens.

Since 1943, every President of the United States has proclaimed March as Red Cross Month, and I urge my colleagues to continue this tradition and support H. Res. 311.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1600

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of House Resolution 311, introduced by my good friend from California, Ambassador Watson. For the past 129 years, the American Red Cross has been providing material and emotional support to victims of disasters and to our military families. Many of us know the story of the founding of the national organization by Clara Barton in the aftermath of her service during the Civil War. But, my colleagues may be less familiar with the fact that 93 years ago this week, Miami philanthropist Harriet Parsons James convened a group of local residents to begin the southeastern Florida chapter of the American Red Cross. A month later, Mrs. Florence Spottswood of Key West gathered a group of local leaders in the Keys to start what soon became the Key West chapter of the American Red Cross. Madam Speaker, the Spottswood family name is still associated with philanthropy and altruistic good works in the Florida Keys.

After several years of humanitarian service, those organizations merged in May of 1987, and today the South Florida Region American Red Cross continues to be an indispensable neighbor to the people of my congressional district. In the past year, it has responded to 556 local emergencies, delivered nearly 1,000 emergency messages to and from military families, and trained more than 19,000 people in lifesaving skills in our community. Whether it is in response to hurricanes, in response to house fires, the volunteers and supporters of the South Florida Region continue to provide critical aid, for which we are deeply grateful.

Mr. Speaker, in the aftermath of the earthquake in Haiti, the American Red Cross in Miami-Dade, Broward, Monroe, and Palm Beach counties assisted more than 13,000 U.S. citizens who were flown to south Florida by the U.S. Government. They served nearly 10,000 meals. They provided mental health support to nearly 2,000 people. Nationwide, the American Red Cross has

raised over \$350 million for earthquake relief and development efforts. It has already used more than \$100 million to provide food, water, relief supplies, shelter, and health services to the people of Haiti.

I am proud to join my colleagues in supporting the ideals of Red Cross Month. Whether it is providing disaster relief, safe blood, or communications between our military members and their families, the American Red Cross is one of the most enduring and successful examples of the volunteer spirit at the heart of our Nation.

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

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, if I could inform Ambassador Watson that I have some more remarks to make, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to take a moment to highlight an unfortunate absurdity that we are confronted with today, Mr. Speaker. I'm proud to support the resolution before us, but all of us recognize that dedicated people of the American Red Cross will continue to do their good work regardless of whether they are congratulated by this body. Yet the Democratic leadership has taken care to ensure that this symbolic resolution will receive a vote today—something that they may deny to the trillion-dollar Senate health care bill.

To recap, we're able to debate and vote on this nonbinding resolution. That is well and good. Yet we are denied the chance to vote on this huge, expensive Senate health care bill. The procedure being discussed in the press attempts to get around the basic requirements of the Constitution—that both Houses of Congress must pass the same bill text before it is presented to the President and signed into law.

As the director of the Constitutional Law Center at Stanford Law School, former Federal Circuit Court Judge Michael McConnell wrote in yesterday's Wall Street Journal: "Under Article I, section 7, passage of one bill cannot be deemed to be enactment of another." I'm sorry if the Democratic leadership feels that the burdens of representative government outlined by our Constitution are too great a burden for their agenda to bear. But that momentous bill deserves at least as much consideration as we are giving to the wide range of nonbinding resolutions that we are considering this week.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 311 to recognize the American National Red Cross and to express my support for the Goals and Ideals of Red Cross Month.

The Red Cross is one of the most effective and important disaster relief organizations in the world, and since its founding in 1881, the Red Cross has worked diligently to prevent and relieve suffering. As a non-practicing Registered Nurse, I am still moved by the lifesaving work that the Red Cross does in some

of the most difficult places on the planet, and I am proud to recognize this organization and all of their efforts. Additionally, every President of the United States since 1943 has proclaimed March to be Red Cross Month and because of this, I am happy to join people across the county in supporting this remarkable organization.

Mr. Speaker, the American National Red Cross is one of our country's greatest treasures, and the work that they do is unmatched across the globe. I encourage my fellow colleagues to join me today in supporting this resolution to recognize this organization and support the goals and ideals of Red Cross Month.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, so I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GUTIERREZ). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 311.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

RECOGNIZING PERSECUTION OF FALUN GONG

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 605) recognizing the continued persecution of Falun Gong practitioners in China on the 10th anniversary of the Chinese Communist Party campaign to suppress the Falun Gong spiritual movement and calling for an immediate end to the campaign to persecute, intimidate, imprison, and torture Falun Gong practitioners, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 605

Whereas Falun Gong is a traditional Chinese spiritual discipline founded by Li Hongzhi in 1992, which consists of spiritual, religious, and moral teachings for daily life, meditation, and exercise, based upon the principles of truthfulness, compassion, and tolerance;

Whereas according to the 2008 Annual Report of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China, "tens of millions of Chinese citizens practiced Falun Gong in the 1990s and adherents to the spiritual movement inside of China are estimated to still number in the hundreds of thousands despite the government's ongoing crackdown," and other estimates published in Western press place the number of Falun Gong adherents currently in China at the tens of millions;

Whereas in 1996, Falun Gong books were banned in China and state media began a campaign criticizing Falun Gong;

Whereas in 1999, Chinese police began disrupting Falun Gong morning exercises in public parks and began searching the homes of Falun Gong practitioners;

Whereas on April 25, 1999, over 10,000 Falun Gong practitioners gathered outside the State Council Office of Petitions in Beijing, next to the Communist Party leadership compound, to request that arrested Falun Gong practitioners be released, the ban on publication of Falun Gong books be lifted, and that Falun Gong practitioners be allowed to resume their activities without government interference;

Whereas on the same day, immediately after then-Premier Zhu Rongji met with Falun Gong representatives in his office and agreed to the release of arrested practitioners, Communist Party Chairman Jiang Zemin criticized Zhu's actions and ordered a crackdown on Falun Gong;

Whereas in June 1999, Jiang Zemin ordered the creation of the 6-10 office, an extrajudicial security apparatus, given the mandate to "eradicate" Falun Gong;

Whereas in July 1999, Chinese police began arresting leading Falun Gong practitioners;

Whereas on July 22, 1999, Chinese state media began a major propaganda campaign to ban Falun Gong for "disturbing social order" and warning Chinese citizens that the practice of Falun Gong was forbidden;

Whereas in October 1999, Party Chairman Jiang Zemin, according to western press articles, "ordered that Falun Gong be branded as a 'cult', and then demanded that a law be passed banning cults";

Whereas Chinese authorities have devoted extensive time and resources over the past decade worldwide to distributing false propaganda claiming that Falun Gong is a suicidal and militant "evil cult" rather than a spiritual movement which draws upon traditional Chinese concepts of meditation and exercise;

Whereas on October 10, 2004, the House of Representatives adopted by voice vote House Concurrent Resolution 304, which had 75 bipartisan co-sponsors, titled "Expressing the sense of Congress regarding oppression by the Government of the People's Republic of China of Falun Gong in the United States and in China," and that the text of this resolution noted that "the Chinese Government has also attempted to silence the Falun Gong movement and Chinese prodemocracy groups inside the United States";

Whereas, on October 18, 2005, highly respected human rights attorney Gao Zhisheng wrote a letter to Chinese Communist Party Chairman Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao calling for an end to the persecution of Falun Gong and Chinese authorities, in response, closed his law office and took away his law license, with Chinese security forces suspected of being directly involved in Mr. Gao's disappearance on February 4, 2009;

Whereas Gao Zhisheng's family has subsequently been granted political asylum in the United States;

Whereas the United Nations Committee Against Torture in its fourth periodic report of China, issued on December 12, 2008, stated that "The State party should immediately conduct or commission an independent investigation of the claims that some Falun Gong practitioners have been subjected to torture and used for organ transplants and take measures, as appropriate, to ensure that those responsible for such abuses are prosecuted and punished";

Whereas the Amnesty International 2008 annual report states that "Falun Gong practitioners were at particularly high risk of torture and other ill-treatment in detention . . . during the year 2007 over 100 Falun Gong practitioners were reported to have died in detention or shortly after release as a result

of torture, denial of food or medical treatment, and other forms of ill-treatment";

Whereas according to the 2008 Department of State's Human Rights Report on China, "Some foreign observers estimated that Falun Gong adherents constituted at least half of the 250,000 officially recorded inmates in re-education through labor (RTL) camps, while Falun Gong sources overseas placed the number even higher";

Whereas according to the 2008 Annual Report of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China, "The (Chinese) central government intensified its nine-year campaign of persecution against Falun Gong practitioners in the months leading up to the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympic Games";

Whereas Falun Gong-related websites remain among the most systematically and hermetically blocked by China's Internet firewall; and

Whereas, according to an April 2009 New York Times report, "In the past year, as many as 8,000 (Falun Gong) practitioners have been detained, according to experts on human rights, and at least 100 have died in custody": Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) expresses sympathy to Falun Gong practitioners and their family members who have suffered persecution, intimidation, imprisonment, torture, and even death for the past decade solely because of adherence to their personal beliefs;

(2) calls upon the Government of the People's Republic of China to immediately cease and desist from its campaign to persecute, intimidate, imprison, and torture Falun Gong practitioners, to immediately abolish the 6-10 office, an extrajudicial security apparatus given the mandate to "eradicate" Falun Gong, and to immediately release Falun Gong practitioners, detained solely for their beliefs, from prisons and re-education through labor (RTL) camps, including those practitioners who are the relatives of United States citizens and permanent residents; and

(3) calls upon the President and Members of Congress to mark the 11th anniversary of Chinese official repression of the Falun Gong spiritual movement appropriately and effectively by publicly expressing solidarity with those practitioners in China persecuted solely because of their personal beliefs, and by meeting with Falun Gong practitioners whenever and wherever possible to indicate that support for freedom of conscience remains a fundamental principle of the United States Government.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution, and yield myself such time as I may consume.