

criminals by doubling the fines and jail time for those convicted of scamming the Medicare system. It creates a new offense for illegally distributing a Medicare or Medicaid beneficiary ID and establishes a penalty of 3 years in prison and a fine equivalent to the dollar amount stolen from Medicare. The Klein-Ros-Lehtinen bill doubles the criminal penalty for making false statements and for violating the anti-kickback statute from 5 to 10 years in prison and from \$25,000 to a \$50,000 fine. The Klein-Ros-Lehtinen bill will also create a pilot program that will implement biometric technology to ensure that Medicare beneficiaries are physically present to receive those services. This bill mandates strict background checks for Medicare suppliers that would be carried out before they start cashing those taxpayer checks.

Since its inception in the year 2007, Miami-Dade County's interagency Medicare Strike Force has helped stem the tide of Medicare fraud in our South Florida community. It has gotten more than \$220 million in court-ordered restitution to Medicare from defendants in 87 separate cases. The task force has saved Medicare approximately \$1.75 billion in phony claim submissions. But, Madam Speaker, lamentably there is so much more that needs to be done.

The bill that RON KLEIN and I have filed today will help give law enforcement the tools necessary to make even more arrests and to crack down on fraud in a more efficient and effective manner. It will direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to provide real-time access to data regarding fraud that will then be given to local law enforcement officials. The Klein-Ros-Lehtinen bill also directs the GAO, the Government Accountability Office, to follow up with Medicare contractors and report back to us in Congress with recommendations to make this system work even better for seniors all across the country.

STOP THE FREELANCE SPYING AT THE PENTAGON

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, a war that is illegitimate with no continued justification inevitably will be managed irresponsibly. But sometimes the excesses and the incompetence continue to shock me.

The Pentagon is now investigating a rogue spy operation that allegedly used private contractors to carry out attacks on militants and paid them inappropriately using a legitimate information-gathering program as a cover. It seems a Pentagon official named Michael Furlong was hiring private firms to gather intelligence about the whereabouts of top insurgents with the goal of hunting them down and killing them.

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And the whole time he was claiming simply to be involved in an above-board project to give us a better understanding of Afghan society and culture.

The CIA, the United States Government's legitimate intelligence-gathering agency, felt that its work was undermined by Mr. Furlong's freelance shenanigans. And it was the CIA's complaints that finally shut Mr. Furlong down and prompted the investigation. You know you've gone off the deep end when the CIA thinks your covert operation is beyond the pale.

No one can say for sure who was supervising or approving Mr. Furlong's operation, and apparently some of the money he was given control over has gone missing.

Mr. Furlong was something of a cowboy, actually. According to news accounts, he liked to brag about having a notorious Iran Contra figure on the payroll, and he likened his contractors to fictional movie assassins.

But this isn't a movie, Madam Speaker. It's not like we can all go home with a clear conscience after the lights come up and the credits roll. There are grave life-and-death consequences to the decisions made inside the Pentagon. And while a movie costs us maybe \$12, this war in Afghanistan is costing us millions every single day.

It's bad enough that this Congress is repeatedly asked to sign another check to pay for a war that is bankrupting our country and failing to advance our national security interests. But then we learn that the money being authorized, which I have consistently voted against, is being used on secret and illegal operations for which there is no transparency or accountability. And this is just the latest example of private contractors being used to carry out questionable wartime activities to get around the rules governing military operations.

It's an encouraging sign, however, that the Pentagon has begun to look into Furlong's operation, and this episode has prompted Secretary Gates to order a review of all the military's information operations programs to make sure everything is on the up-and-up. I'm expecting the oversight committee of this body to ask some tough questions. I can't imagine how we can debate another supplemental unless we've demanded and received answers about Mr. Furlong's spy ring and other possible wrongdoing.

It has to stop, Madam Speaker. It's time to rein in the contractors, and it's time to bring our valiant troops home.

We know there is a better way to fight terrorism and rebuild Afghanistan. It's time to turn our approach to national security upside down. We need a smarter strategy. We need to show American compassion, not American aggression.

We need a humanitarian surge, not a military surge. Instead of troops, we need to send aid workers and other civilian experts. That is the best coun-

terterrorism approach of all. That is what will give Afghan people hope for a better life. That is what will build a durable peace.

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

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

THE THIRD FRONT—PAGE II

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, I bring you news from the third front, and that's the war for this Nation's national security on our southern border with Mexico.

We are engaged in three conflicts, three wars: the one in Afghanistan, the one in Iraq, and the border war on our southern border.

The \$40 billion a year illicit drug trade in Mexico has resulted in a vicious wave of violence in northern Mexico. Over 18,000 Mexican nationals have been killed in recent years by the criminal drug cartels, most of those, innocent civilians; but also many of them are the competition among the drug cartels. And they're fighting for control of the routes that lead into the United States where those drug cartels can sell their wares.

Just a few days ago there was a bombing at the United States Embassy in Nuevo Laredo, just on the border. Recently, a pregnant U.S. Embassy employee and her husband were murdered in Juarez, Mexico, right in front of their young daughter and other witnesses.

And in 2008 there were 1,500 murders in Juarez, Mexico alone; and this year, over 500 people have been killed. To put it in perspective, in 2008 there were only 300 murders in all of Houston, a city that dwarfs the size of Juarez, Mexico. And the violence is escalating.

Good people are abandoning the border cities in Mexico and fleeing further into the interior, and some are fleeing to the United States to stay with relatives, all because of the violence on the U.S.-Mexico border.

And people in this country who say that the violence on the border won't come into the United States live in blissful ignorance of reality. It's already here.

In the El Paso sector of the Border Patrol in Texas, our agents are being targeted by the Azteca hitmen for the Juarez drug cartel. The Azteca gang is a group of individuals who work for the drug cartel, the Juarez drug cartel, and their primary mission is to enforce the ability to bring drugs into the United States. And now we understand our Border Patrol agents in the El Paso sector are being targeted to be shot

and kidnapped and murdered by these hitmen. They're after our Border Patrol agents.

And recently, as recently as today, we've learned that there is a \$250,000 bounty on our Border Patrol agents for their murder and for their kidnapping. The drug cartels are putting out these hits on our Border Patrol agents because they are enforcing the rule of law and keeping the drug cartels out of this country to the best of their ability.

This is serious. This is violence. And it's being perpetrated by the drug cartels against Americans, both in Mexico, Mexicans in Mexico, and Americans in the United States.

Unfortunately, too many people in Washington, D.C. are closing their eyes to reality. They don't see that the violence has already spread into the United States.

Madam Speaker, there are 14 counties in Texas that border Mexico. And recently I called each of those 14 sheriffs and asked them this question: How many people in your county jail are foreign nationals charged with crimes in the United States, other than immigration violations? How many are charged with felonies, misdemeanors, crimes of violence? And they told me that 37 percent of the people in the border county jails in Texas are foreign nationals charged with crimes, not immigration violations. So we see that the crime in Mexico on the border is coming into the United States and affecting our border counties.

And these counties are not rich, wealthy counties. They don't have the money to try, prosecute and house these individuals.

We shouldn't wait till something tragic happens before we do something about it. There are border incursions every day by these criminal drug cartels, and now there are reports that the drug cartels are cloning Border Patrol vehicles so that they can bring drugs into the United States. Recently, there were two incursions by Mexican military helicopters across the Texas-Mexico border into the United States, and their intentions are still unknown.

So it's important, Madam Speaker, that we do what is necessary to protect the dignity of our Nation. The first duty of government is the national security to protect the people.

The Texas Governor and other Governors asked for the National Guard to go to the border to help secure and protect the dignity of our Nation. I think we should send the National Guard to the border. We need to do what is necessary because it is the duty of government to protect the people. And that protection starts at the border. And it's time we wake up to the reality of the way the world is, that the drug cartels are serious about being violent and about being criminals.

And that's just the way it is.

HONORING THE LEADERS OF POLAND KILLED IN THE PLANE CRASH OF APRIL 10, 2010

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, this past Saturday, one of America's longest and strongest allies, the Republic of Poland, suffered a horrendous loss. A plane carrying 97 passengers crashed in Russia, including Polish President Lech Kaczynski; First Lady Maria Kaczynski; Ryszard Kaczorowski, who led a government in exile during the Communist era; Jerzy Szmajdzinski, the Deputy Speaker of Poland's Parliament; Aleksander Szczygło, the head of the National Security Bureau; Andrzej Kremer, the Deputy Minister of foreign affairs; Franciszek Gągor, the Army Chief of Staff; along with the president of Poland's National Bank, and a host of other public servants, including Anna Walentynowicz, the brave worker and opposition activist whose dismissal at the Gdansk shipyard in 1980 started the strike that led to the formation of solidarity.

All modern leaders of the Polish nation, they were mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters, sons and daughters, proud Poles all, now lost to this life but not to history.

But yet again, the Katyn forest embraces the collective tragedy of Poland's precious leaders. In the most morbid of ironies, the doomed plane was flying to Russia to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Katyn massacre, when more than 22,000 Polish officers and leaders were murdered at the hands of Joseph Stalin and the Soviet Army in and around that forest during World War II. Their bodies were buried and the truth hidden for seven decades. That is the truth of their slaughter. That history still must be made whole.

As the former President of Poland, Lech Walesa, stated, the crash marked "the second disaster after Katyn. They wanted to cut off our head there, and here the flower of our nation has already perished," he said.

"Buttons," a poem by Polish poet Zbigniew Herbert, written in memoriam of the Katyn massacre, contains one stanza which captures this modern-day tragedy as it does this Polish tragedy of 70 years ago for which it was originally penned.

"When only the metal buttons of the soldiers remain as they work their way to the Earth's surface from below, after decades where history has been masked. Now again a bird flew over, a cloud is passing, a leaf is dropping, a mallow grows, heavens above are filled with silence; the Katyn forest smokes with fog."

However, as the smoke and fog clears the Katyn forest this time, Poland will stand and prevail as a stable democracy. After this tragedy, Poland again will be led by valiant Poles and will not be occupied by foreign nations.

After an unimaginable loss of leadership such as this, a lesser country

would crumble, but not Poland. As the Polish expression reminds us, "So long as we are alive, there will be a Poland."

The nation of Poland is free and strong today. Against a backdrop of oppression, partition and heartbreak, it has emerged as one of the most freedom-loving, vibrant countries in Europe.

The United States stands in solidarity and support of her ally during this time of sorrow and mourning. The House of Representatives will honor the souls who were lost last week and remember those who were killed 70 years ago with a Special Order tomorrow.

We extend our condolences to the friends and families of those who perished, to the people of Poland, to the nation of Poland, and to the people of Polish heritage throughout the world.

This is a terrible catastrophe that brings to mind the many tragedies that have befallen Poland in the past. Yet, as we mourn, we must remember and honor what the Polish people have endured and overcome. They will do so again. We hold them in highest respect. And even through our tears, we can see clearly that Poland's best days are still ahead.

HONORING TARA SCHIPHOF, JUNIOR MISS NORTH CAROLINA

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

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the hard work and dedication of a young woman I recently met back home in North Carolina. Tara Schiphof was crowned the 2009/2010 Junior Miss North Carolina last summer at the age of 11.

When I met Tara over the Easter break, I was impressed by her poise, intelligence, and talent. Tara's a sixth-grader at Chestnut Grove Middle School in Stokes County and a student at the University of the North Carolina School of the Arts in the preparatory dance program.

What impressed me most about Tara was that in the midst of her busy life of dancing festivals, volunteering and giving back to her community, she remains dedicated to her studies and being a strong positive role model to her classmates.

So not only is Tara an award-winning competitive dancer; this sixth-grade girl is a real North Carolina role model.

□ 2015

She's very committed to her studies and is an honor student at Chestnut Grove. She's also raised money and volunteered for many organizations, including the Masonic Home for Children in Oxford, North Carolina, the Stokes County Arts Council, and the American Heart Association.

I'm proud to represent a fine citizen like Tara. Tara's family and friends