

wage, giving the Federal Government the ability to negotiate cheaper prescription drug prices, making college more affordable by cutting interest rates in half on student loans, and fully implementing the 9/11 Commission's recommendations.

We have provided valuable oversight of the Bush administration's failings at both the Justice Department and at Walter Reed Hospital. Had we not conducted oversight hearings of the horrendous conditions at Walter Reed, several incompetent administration officials would still be on the job.

Then, last week, we approved an emergency supplemental spending bill that provides critical funding for our soldiers and our veterans while holding the Iraqi Government accountable for taking control of Iraq.

And this week, we will pass a budget which is balanced within the next 5 years.

Mr. Speaker, the American people asked for a change and a new direction, and this Congress is delivering.

STRYKER BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM

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

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to salute the Pennsylvania National Guard, in particular the Stryker Brigade Combat Team. Fielding the Stryker Brigade has been the largest program undertaken by the Pennsylvania National Guard in modern history.

The Stryker Brigade Combat Team is a combat force that provides division, corps, or joint task force commanders a unique capability across the full range of operations.

On this upcoming district work period, I will be visiting Fort Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania, to have an opportunity to tour their Stryker program. The Stryker is a survivable and sustainable method of troop transportation. It can take soldiers safely into a range of environments, from war to humanitarian assistance. We must do everything we can to defend our troops from harm, and the Stryker provides that protection.

Pennsylvania has the largest Army National Guard in the United States, with the 28th Infantry Division being the premier division with a large number of soldiers in a high state of readiness.

I commend the Stryker Brigade Combat Team and the entire Pennsylvania National Guard for their fine service to our country and representing Pennsylvania with honor.

IRAQ BENCHMARKS

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

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, when hundreds of billions of dollars of

U.S. taxpayer money is being spent on a war overseas, it is important there be benchmarks and consequences if they are not met.

Last week the House approved an emergency war supplemental that will finally hold the Iraqi Government accountable by measuring its performance on standards that President Bush himself outlined earlier this year.

Under the plan passed here last week, the President must report to Congress this summer on the progress the Iraqi Government has made on these key benchmarks. If the Iraqi Government lives up to its promises, our troops will remain there until next year. If, however, they do not meet the President's own benchmarks by this summer, we will begin to redeploy our troops out of Iraq immediately. This accountability is particularly critical after the release of a Defense Department report showing that the Iraqi Government is not close to meeting any of these benchmarks.

Mr. Speaker, it is time that the Iraqi Government realizes that the American troops are not going to be in Iraq indefinitely, and that they have to begin seriously taking responsibility for their own nation.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 835, HAWAIIAN HOMEOWNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 2007

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 269 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 269

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 835) to reauthorize the programs of the Department of Housing and Urban Development for housing assistance for Native Hawaiians. All points of order against the bill and its consideration are waived except those arising under clause 9 or 10 of rule XXI. The bill shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Financial Services; and (2) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. During consideration of H.R. 835 pursuant to this resolution, notwithstanding the operation of the previous question, the Chair may postpone further consideration of the bill to such time as may be designated by the Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BUTTERFIELD). The gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. For purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS). All time yielded during consideration of the rule is for debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have up to 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks on House Resolution 269.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 269 provides for consideration of H.R. 835, the Hawaiian Homeownership Opportunity Act of 2007, a closed rule providing 1 hour of general debate in the House, equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Financial Services.

The rule waives all points of order against the bill and against its consideration except for clauses 9 and 10 of rule XXI. The rule provides that the bill shall be considered as read. Finally, the rule provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to speak very long about this legislation other than to express my sincere hope that this body will move forward expeditiously with its passage.

As my colleagues know, the Hawaiian Homeownership Opportunity Act was placed on the Suspension Calendar last week after being unanimously voted out of the Committee on Financial Services by a voice vote. It was our hope, and the hope of so many Native Hawaiians, that the House would support it with as much enthusiasm as did the committee of jurisdiction.

Unfortunately, as we all now know, there are some in this body who believe that it is in their best interest to create a partisan divide where no such division should exist. They have in my opinion falsely accused my friends and representatives from Hawaii of ulterior motives, and in doing so, have delayed justice and fairness to some of our most loyal citizens.

Contrary to the false accusation made by its opponents, this bill is not a bill aimed at achieving Native American status for Native Hawaiians, no matter how important that issue may be.

This bill provides low-income Native Hawaiians access to the American Dream. They, just like all of us in this body, have had at one point in our lives a dream to own a home. This bill brings them one step closer to realizing that dream.

Shame on those who continue to paint this bill as anything other than what it is.

I urge my colleagues to support this rule and the underlying legislation which is so critically needed.

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

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

I rise today in opposition to this closed rule and the potentially unconstitutional measure that the Democrat