

fake identification. Many of them have ties to Islamic terrorist groups.

This is al Shabaab's Somali terrorist organization, and it's aligned with al Qaeda. Their priority is to impose Sharia Islamic law, and they have stated their intent to harm America.

In addition to the Somalis and the terrorists from Somalia coming across the border, law enforcement officials in Texas said Mexican smugglers are coaching Middle Eastern illegals. They're teaching them how to dress and look Hispanic, and they are learning how to speak Spanish.

Mr. Speaker, what is it going to take for the administration to really secure the border? The warning signs could not be clearer. We need to send sufficient National Guard groups to the border now. Until the Federal Government understands border security is a national security issue, we are going to continue to have these threats.

And that's just the way it is.

GETTING OUR ECONOMY BACK ON TRACK AND CREATING NEW JOBS

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

Mr. CRITZ. Mr. Speaker, getting our economy back on track and creating new jobs is the priority of my constituents and a top priority of my own.

The Democratic Congress has already taken significant steps to create jobs and jump-start the economy, resulting in the lowest tax rates in over 50 years and the creation of over 500,000 new jobs so far this year. The American Jobs and Closing Tax Loopholes Act continues these efforts.

Current tax law allows companies here in the United States to be rewarded for shipping American jobs overseas. This is unconscionable, and American workers deserve better. This legislation includes provisions that close these tax loopholes and protects jobs here at home. This legislation will also continue to provide hard-working American families with the relief they deserve, relief on property taxes, sales taxes, and college tuition.

Mr. Speaker, the American Jobs and Closing Tax Loopholes Act is another important step to creating new jobs and jump-starting our economy.

□ 1015

ROHINGYA: BURMA'S FORGOTTEN MINORITY

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, the ongoing abuses and tragedies in Burma are almost unfathomable. The brutal and cruel military dictators systematically oppress and exploit the ethnic minorities in Burma, and they are denied the basic and fundamental rights that belong to every human being.

Among the minorities most deprived of such rights is the Rohingya, a Muslim minority in western Burma. The Rohingya people are denied citizenship, freedom of movement, college education, and even marriage. They need permission just to leave their villages and are prohibited from traveling beyond a particular region of the country. The tactics of rape, forced labor, torture, land seizures, arbitrary arrests, and extortion are also used to repress them. As a result, 1.5 million Rohingya have fled to surrounding countries.

I met with a representative of the Rohingya recently; and his request was, Please speak up for us, we are people too. For the Rohingya and for all the ethnic minorities and suffering people of Burma who are victims of this cruel dictatorship, we must speak out against their horrific abuses. Our government, the U.N., and ASEAN should speak up as well.

REMEMBERING OUR TROOPS ON MEMORIAL DAY

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

Mr. ALTMIRE. Mr. Speaker, as we prepare to commemorate Memorial Day, it's appropriate for us to look back at a few ways this Congress, in just the past year and a half, has worked to ensure that this Nation keeps its promise to our Nation's military veterans.

We expanded the new GI Bill college benefits to the children of all troops fallen since September 11, 2001. We passed landmark legislation for wounded veterans by providing help for family members and other caregivers and eliminating copayments for severely wounded veterans. Since 2007, we've increased funding for veterans health care by 60 percent, including the largest single-year increase in the 80-year history of the VA.

While we have accomplished a great deal to repay the men and women in uniform for their service, we still have more to do. Let us use the occasion of this Memorial Day weekend to remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice and recommit ourselves to continuing to fight for the troops that have fought for us.

POLITICAL GAMES HAVE NO BUSINESS IN MILITARY BILLS

(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. Mr. Speaker, benefits for our military men and women, as explained in the Army Times, should not be used as props in political games. The process of the final version of the "tax extenders" bill is Washington shenanigans at its worst. Combining tax increases and unrelated spending with legitimate needs

for our military men and women is insulting. I am confident the American people will see straight through these games.

I am a long-time supporter of concurrent receipt and finally ending the disability tax on retirees eligible for military and veterans benefits. There are over 153 lawmakers who are supportive of eliminating this inequity, and yet the political trap has been added with this tax increase, causing a "no" vote.

As the ranking member on the Military Personnel Subcommittee, I know that our military personnel deserve more from their lawmakers than these political games.

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

SUPPORT THE DURBIN AMENDMENT

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

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, 2 weeks ago, small businesses and consumers scored a major victory, finally, against abusive credit card practices by big banks and Visa MasterCard. By a strong bipartisan vote of 64-33, the Senate passed an amendment to the Wall Street reform legislation, cracking down on those out-of-control credit and debit card swipe fees.

Known as the Durbin amendment, this practical, commonsense language prevents card issuers from endlessly increasing costs borne by small businesses, costs that for many stores add up to more than the cost of health care. It also restricts some of the industry's most anticompetitive practices, finally allowing stores to give you a cash discount.

I urge my colleagues in the House to stand up for small businesses, provide them the protection they deserve, and support inclusion of the Durbin amendment in the final package of Wall Street reform.

OIL SPILL SITUATION STINKS

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

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, as we've had hearings regarding the oil spill out in the gulf, there have been some staggering things come forward, and the media is not grabbing it like they should and letting everyone know.

Who knew that the inspectors inspecting the offshore rigs were unionized? So they had union limits on how many hours and travel and this kind of thing. These guys are like the military. They're out there to protect the environment, and we're going to put limits on them? They've got to be out there protecting us.

And then yesterday, Director Birnbaum, when asked what kind of checks and balances did you have, she

said, We sent them out in pairs of two. And then I asked, Well, then was it a good idea that the last inspection team of two was a unionized father-and-son team that went out there to carefully watch each other to make sure each other did the right thing? This is outrageous.

And then we had the investigation going on as to what gifts may have been given to the people doing the inspections.

This thing stinks, and it needs to be cleaned up.

THE PENTAGON BUDGET

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Today, the House will finally turn from naming sports teams' accomplishments to the Pentagon budget, a budget that's top heavy with more generals and admirals than we had at the height of World War II, a broken procurement system that's gold-plating dysfunctional weapon systems while our troops lack basics.

But, today, Congress will finally answer a question that is a puzzle perhaps only inside the Washington, DC beltway: How many engines does a single-engine jet fighter need? Now, where I come from it's pretty simple, the answer is one; but you've got to tune in later today to find out the judgment of Congress because some think you need two engines for a single-engine jet fighter. Hey, it will only cost another \$15 billion or \$20 billion.

CONTINUE FIGHTING FOR OUR VETERANS

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

Mr. WILSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, each Memorial Day Americans pause to remember the tremendous commitment and sacrifice made by our men and women in our Armed Forces. I'm proud that this Congress continues to honor our military by making veterans a top priority.

In the last 2 years, we have invested in our veterans health care and worked hard to improve the benefits available once they return home. For instance, we passed a new GI Bill so our troops have access to a quality education. We also increased the gas mileage reimbursement rate, which is important for our veterans in rural areas like mine.

I recently introduced another piece of legislation to help rural veterans, the Appalachian Veterans Outreach Improvement Act. This bill will improve access to services and benefits for veterans in Appalachia. With Memorial Day right around the corner, I ask my colleagues to join me in continuing to fight for our veterans.

BAN BP

(Mr. GUTIERREZ asked and was given permission to address the House

for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, this is from BP's Web site. It says: "Our code of conduct is the cornerstone of our commitment to integrity." And just what is the code of conduct? The code of conduct is: "We aim for no accidents, no harm to people, and no damage to the environment." This is from their Web site. Well, BP is zero for three.

So I ask everyone, Where is the integrity if they don't even meet their own guidelines? This has been the worst ecological disaster, and we know that they don't have solutions ready when a disaster occurs.

Now, under our purchasing agreements, we have to have a satisfactory record of integrity and business ethics when we grant someone a contract. So today I have an amendment to end the \$2 billion that we purchase each and every year with taxpayer dollars from BP for our department. Let's disbar them because they should be banned permanently.

EXTENDING UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BENEFITS: THE COST OF INACTION FOR DISABLED WORKERS

(Mrs. MALONEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, the Joint Economic Committee released a report this week which shows the staggering cost to the government of failing to extend unemployment benefits. The report focuses on unemployed disabled workers.

By the end of 2010, the JEC estimates that 290,000 unemployed disabled workers will exhaust their unemployment benefits. Without extension of unemployment benefits, the JEC estimates that two-thirds of these workers will leave the labor force and move on to Social Security disability insurance. Shifting these workers from the labor market and onto the SSDI rolls—the cost of inaction—is a \$24.2 billion lifetime cost.

By contrast, extending unemployment insurance benefits and COBRA premium benefits is \$721 million in 2010. Not only is an extension of unemployment benefits the morally right thing to do; it is fiscally responsible, saving the government over \$23 billion.

WE MUST DO MORE FOR OUR VETERANS

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

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, in my 16 months in Congress, the most challenging thing I have had to do has not had to do with energy or health care or our economy. The hardest thing I have had to do has been to stand in front of 700 Connecticut National Guard troops

who are deploying to Afghanistan, 18, 19, 20, 21 years old, young people who had raised their hand and said, I will serve my country. I will die for you and for your freedoms. And I thought, how can we thank a young person who will say that and who will do that? The answer is we can't, we can't possibly. But we can thank them through our actions. We can do what we did in passing the GI Bill to provide college education to our troops, to give businesses a \$2,400 tax credit for hiring unemployment veterans, providing nearly 2 million disabled veterans with a \$250 economic recovery payment.

I am proud of what this House has done for our veterans in the last 16 months and, as we approach Memorial Day, remind my colleagues of the need to do more for those who say that they will sacrifice for us.

MEDICARE REIMBURSEMENT

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

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, the time has come for this Congress to come to grips with the serious crisis in our health care system, the reimbursement of our doctors for treating our Medicare patients. Unless we act, there will be a 21 percent cut in Medicare reimbursement to those doctors that treat our senior citizens.

We are in danger of creating a situation that may very well cause the collapse of our Medicare system. I favor a permanent fix; that's what we promised the doctors. We are now considering a 19-month fix. I'm not happy with it; I'm going to support it. Let everybody in this House vote for that Medicare reimbursement fix for the doctors so they can continue to treat senior citizens until we figure out a way of permanently fixing this discrepancy.

Unless we're prepared to go to medical school and go back home to our districts to treat our senior citizens, we better make sure that our doctors get adequately reimbursed so this system will continue.

□ 1030

A TRIBUTE TO RAYMOND H. RATHMELL

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, this spring, in a small town in my district called Renovo, the Bucktail Area Junior/Senior High School dedicated its campus to another educational institution: Raymond H. Rathmell.

Mr. Rathmell was involved with the school for 42 years, first as a teacher, as assistant principal and then as principal. There are countless students and