

of them, have been passed out of this body, and certainly the predicament that we find ourselves in is because of the administration's refusal to prioritize on behalf of the needs of veterans; the needs of major research institutions; a failing job market that needs increased job training dollars; the young people of America who want a future and, therefore, college assistance; and then recognizing the importance and the crucialness of access to health care; a good energy policy; and certainly the needs of repairing the transportation system of America.

I'm grateful that we have reprogrammed dollars to include money for research, job training, college assistance, access to health care, and as well, that we're reminded that we must ensure the safety of this Nation, while fighting, of course, to preserve the transportation centers of excellence, the letter that I wrote to ensure that funding for that would be included.

And though we talk sometimes without understanding about the concept "earmark," it is for the community of Houston, Texas, and the 18th Congressional District more early childhood education, more homeland security dollars for a constable's office. It is more dollars for a mental health facility, and it is recognition of more technology for our local first responders.

So I rise today to express the dilemma, when we have three branches of government, to refute any accusations of the postures that Democrats are in. Democrats are fighters. It is because of a budget mark and a stance by this administration to demand \$120 billion for a war that is not working that puts us in a position not to be able to service the needs of the American people.

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So we will continue this fight and we will stand strong and tall for those who are in need.

And I look forward to the Military Success Act of 2007 that I have authored being debated on this floor to acknowledge that the military has finished their work, it's time to bring them home and to reward them in honor and medals for what they have done in Iraq and to ensure that the people of America receive a spending bill that serves the needs of the American people.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege to yield 6 minutes to the distinguished former member of the Rules Committee, my friend from Georgia, Dr. GINGREY.

Mr. GINGREY. I thank my colleague for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I want to remind the previous speaker that this body and the other body passed a spending bill for our veterans increasing by \$4 billion over 3 months ago, and the President made very clear, emphatically stating that he was ready to sign that bill to get this money to our veterans, and the Democratic leadership has

made a decision, for whatever reason, not to send that bill to the President. So I think it's important to point that out.

Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight in opposition to the rule and to the underlying bill in its present form. In regard to the rule, I can't expound and do any better than the comments that the senior Republican long-term member of the Rules Committee has just outlined, the gentleman from Florida. That stack of 11 bills in this omnibus sitting in front of the gentleman from Florida is almost as large as the Internal Revenue Code, which I understand is as thick as nine Bibles. Mr. Speaker, that's probably as thick as at least six Bibles, and every rule has been waived. And all this business about earmark reform, it makes a total mockery of that. So, Mr. Speaker, from the standpoint of the rule, absolutely I am opposed to it.

We need earmark reform. I have submitted legislation to cut earmarks by 50 percent immediately and then 1 percent of discretionary spending in the subsequent year and to say that no Member of this body, no matter how powerful, should have a larger bite at the apple in regard to Member-directed initiatives, or what the general public, who's so outraged at that process, knows as pork and/or earmarks.

In regard to the bill itself, my colleagues, I'm sure, hopefully on both sides of the aisle, will be opposed to this omnibus because there's not one penny, Mr. Speaker, not one penny of money for our troops in Iraq. That in itself is a reason why absolutely I would be opposed to this omnibus. But, Mr. Speaker, there's more. There is much more when we look into the weeds and finally see some of the things in these bills.

Last year this body voted to strike language from the energy and water bill that would not allow the Corps of Engineers to update manuals in regard to how they control water releases from certain dams in the Southeast where we are suffering from a severe drought, Mr. Speaker. And yet this same language now is stuck in on the Senate side, and it's in this omnibus bill that would prohibit the Corps of Engineers from updating these 25-year-old manuals, making the drought in the Southeast worse than it has ever been. And, Mr. Speaker, I want to point out the fact that in this body last year when we voted to remove that language from those bills, Speaker PELOSI voted to remove the language; Majority Leader HOYER voted to remove the language; Appropriations Chairman OBEY voted to remove the language; Minority Leader BOEHNER voted to remove the language; and every subcommittee chairman on the Appropriations Committee, the so-called cardinals on the Democratic side, voted to remove that language. Now it's in there sort of air-dropped on the Senate side.

There are other things in here, Mr. Speaker, that I am so much opposed to.

There's increased funding for title X, almost \$17 million for Planned Parenthood and abortion providers, but there's no increased funding for critical abstinence education, which goes a long way to ensure that abortion services wouldn't be needed, Mr. Speaker.

There is \$2.9 billion in here, Mr. Speaker, to provide for security on our southern border, to build that fence that this body has called for; yet there are all kinds of restrictions. In fact, the committee says 15 conditions have to be met before this money can be spent on 300 or 400 miles of fencing on our southern border that we so desperately need, and at the same time there's millions of dollars in this omnibus, Mr. Speaker, that provides legal defense funds to defend illegal immigrants who are in this country. I just don't quite understand the logic of that, Mr. Speaker.

I am sure my colleagues are as confused as I am over this gimmick of advanced appropriations. But how does this body say that we are going to spend \$2.4 billion additional money on Labor-HHS and say that we are not going to count it against this year's appropriation, that it's going to be counted in 2009, this so-called advanced appropriation? Is it an emergency, Mr. Speaker, to spend \$100 million to provide security at the upcoming Republican and Democratic National Conventions? Is that, my colleagues, what we would call money that needs to be spent in an emergency?

And last but not least, Mr. Speaker, I put language in an appropriation bill that would not allow funding for States that mandate that our little girls in the fourth and fifth grade, our 9-, 10-, 11-year-old children, could not attend public school unless they receive a shot against human papillomavirus, a sexually transmitted disease, not a communicable disease like measles, mumps, and whooping cough. Unfortunately, this funding is allowed in this omnibus, but my language is removed.

So for many, many reasons, my colleagues, vote "no" against the rule and vote "no" against this bill when it comes to us in its present form.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Wisconsin, chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, for a response.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, even though it's not Halloween, I'm concerned that some Members may be seeing ghosts. So I simply want to say that the gentleman from Florida raised concerns that because this is an amendment between the houses that we might not be fully disclosing earmarks.

Let me simply point out to the House that the gentleman's claims are misplaced. Early this afternoon I submitted for printing in the RECORD a lengthy and complete explanatory statement, the same statement that went on the Rules Committee Web site last night. That statement contains full and complete disclosure of all earmarks. We did that disclosure exactly