

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

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

□ 2030

FINANCIAL MARKETS TODAY

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I wish to associate myself with the remarks of the gentlelady from California, our dear colleague, Congresswoman BARBARA LEE, and thank her very much for her remarks on Congresswoman Stephanie Tubbs Jones. We share your feelings and your warmth and affection toward her, and I know that your remarks are of comfort to her son, to her sister, to her family, to all those who are associated with her and, of course, her staff, who must carry on. We thank you so much for that.

I rise this evening to do my part to offer the American people a point of view about the financial markets today and their unsteadiness. We know that the Dow Jones dropped over 500 points. We can all question how Wall Street and its actions have placed our country in this position with such high risk, high-leverage practices with no accountability.

I can remember back to 1999 when some of us fought very hard against the Securities Reform Act, so called, of that year, when, for the first time since 1935, this Congress passed the turning back of the Glass-Spiegel Act, threw it out the window, actually, where in our country we separated banking from commerce. We said, no, all those years, prior to 1999, we didn't want to be like the European banks, we thought it was very risky to allow Wall Street to undertake some of these practices that have now led to this great instability.

Many citizens are calling our office, and people bump into you and say, well, what are we supposed to do? We are concerned about the future? I guess one word would be, one phrase would be, don't panic.

Short-term advice to families would be to take a look at, if you have savings, where they are deposited, make sure they are in accounts that are federally insured by the Federal Deposit Corporation. This Congress will do whatever it must to make sure that those accounts are insured up to a level of \$100,000, which is the current law. People can look at their bank accounts, they can look at their credit-union accounts and make sure that they are within those boundaries.

People can take a look at safe investments like U.S. Treasury bills, and U.S. Savings Bonds. Yes, they don't pay as much. Sometimes their matu-

rity periods are much longer, but people have to be thinking about the long term, not just the short-term. Sometimes, I guess there is an old expression, sometimes when something looks so good, it's too good to be true, it probably isn't true. So one ought to be very prudent in these times.

Of course, having a hard asset like a home or a piece of land, or something that is very tangible and can hold value in the future, is something to think about in order to protect yourself for the future in view of some of what we are experiencing.

I would advise families to avoid payday loans to make sure they don't lock themselves into these never-ending loans with interest rates that push you into the poorhouse so fast you can hardly believe it.

I would encourage citizens to avoid high risk. Again, if it sounds to good to be true, it probably is. What has happened as a result of all this so-called banking deregulation, there are a lot of mailings that go out to people asking them to get hooked on credit, and they don't tell people how much that interest rate is going to be down the road.

There are many, many phone calls that come into families' homes now from places far away, where there is no accountability. You don't really know who the people are. You can't even see who is talking to you over the telephone.

I would urge families to be very, very cautious and to get good sound financial advice. Look locally to one of your certified, not-for-profit consumer counseling agencies. There is a network of those around the country. You can call your Member of Congress in your own region, and you can find out who the certified not-for-profit counselor is in your area.

Many times credit unions, even if you are not a member of the credit union, they do great. Consumer counseling, that's what they are established for under the laws of our country, and you can really try to protect yourself in the markets that we are facing today. It's a little bit dicey out there, so you have to be careful.

Congress, again, must meet its responsibilities to protect the deposits of the American people. We certainly will do whatever is necessary there. But people can do a lot for themselves as well.

I always tell people if you can't afford a fancy car, get one for transportation. Why do you have to prove to somebody that you can buy the most expensive car in the world? You don't really need that if you are lucky to have a job in the economy of today.

If you can't afford the gasoline, use the bus system. Use the bus maybe 2 days a week, drive 3 days a week. Find a way to use the dollars you have wisely. Think creatively.

Communities, and I know our mayors are struggling with this around the country, how do they really hedge against an uncertain future? My advice

is to make decisions and think about how do we use the dollars in this community wisely, to create wealth, and wealth is more than money, wealth, our assets that grow over time.

Money sometimes is fungible. It can disappear off a balance sheet. But, in fact, if you have a set of farmers around your community, who can help your region become more financially and food self-sufficient, communities ought to exercise that power.

We ought to help our citizens become energy self-sufficient in their own households. There are many things communities can do.

As I close this evening, I would urge communities across this country to think about creating wealth, not just pushing money around, and getting the best financial advice you possibly can in these difficult times.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Ms. CLARKE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

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

There was no objection.

HAITI

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. CLARKE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Ms. CLARKE. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the chairwoman of the Congressional Black Caucus and its members, we are presenting this evening during our message hour a call to action, that is Haiti, country in crisis.

We have witnessed this year, so far in the hurricane season, tremendous distress, death and destruction. I want to start by expressing the sympathies of myself and the members of the Congressional Black Caucus, our condolences and support for the people of Texas and the Gulf Region, who have been toiling under storm after storm after storm and dealing with the destruction that comes from nature's wrath, as some would place it.

In this context, I wanted to speak a bit this evening with my colleagues and with the public about the need to actually look at what happens, not at the point at which the hurricane ends on our shores, but also its path and the

death and destruction that it leaves in the wake of its path.

I am speaking of the Caribbean region in our hemisphere, and the many nations in those waters that have been devastated by the series of hurricane activity this year, be it the island nation of Turks and Caicos or the island nation of Jamaica, the island nation of the Dominican Republic, the island nations in the Caribbean region have been rocked by this year's hurricane season thus far. I have had the opportunity to join with Congressman KENDRICK MEEK and Congresswoman DONNA EDWARDS from Maryland on an emergency codel to destination, Haiti.

The devastation that we witnessed firsthand on that nation is truly a call to action. As you can see here, this year we have had a number of storms from Category 1 to Category 5 in their strength. The nation of Haiti in just 3 weeks was struck by four storms, Tropical Storm Fay, which hit on August 16; Hurricane Gustav, which hit on August 26; Tropical Storm Hanna, which hit on September 1; and then Hurricane Ike, which hit on September 7.

It is estimated that over 850,000 people have been affected by this storm on the island nation of Haiti, and almost half of those affected were children. It is estimated that over 500 people have been killed and rescuers and aides are only beginning to reach some of the hardest-hit areas, as I speak to you right now. It is also estimated that over 150,000 people are internally displaced, and only about half of those people are in shelters.

You will notice that I have been saying, as has been estimated, and this is the case, because Haiti has lost its ability to communicate across its island. The destruction that has rocked that nation has eight of Haiti's 10 geographic departments, which have been flooded. All of the major roads and bridges granting access to many of the hardest-hit areas have been washed away.

Haiti's prime minister says that 1 million people or more may be homeless. The storms have crippled Haiti's already delicate infrastructure, and most of the City of Gonaives, which is the second-largest city on the island, is damaged so badly that it cannot be repaired. Local officials are considering moving the entire city to another part of the island that is on higher ground.

We had an opportunity to meet with President Rene Preval on our codel, and he said to us, this is the Katrina of an entire nation, but we are suffering without a fraction of the means that Louisiana had. A lot of infrastructure that was destroyed by Hurricane Jean in 2004 was recently rebuilt and recently destroyed by this latest series of storms.

This includes the hospital in Gonaives. Radio NPR reports that in the Grand Ravine neighborhood of Port-au-Prince, 700 people are living in a school where there is no running water, no electricity, no beds and often

no food. People have been packed in there for weeks, but all is not lost. I was proud to see that, very swiftly, the United States has moved into action to aid our neighbors and our friend known as the island nation of Haiti.

Upon arriving in Port-au-Prince, we saw a lot of helicopter activity and were informed that the USS *Kearsarge* is in port in Port-of-Spain providing needed humanitarian assistance and aid.

□ 2045

As I said earlier in my presentation, all of the major roads and bridges have collapsed. That has isolated many of the communities and the cities that have historically been connected in commerce and in bringing foods and goods and services across the island. So the only way that people can be fed, can be given water, can be administered medicine is through the air, and we are proud to know that our aircraft carrier is there, as we speak, administering that much needed aid and support.

I want to thank the young men and women I met there who sought not robbery but, rather, to change their mission, to move along with their admiral and captain and crew into the Caribbean Sea from Latin America and over to Haiti where they're working night and day to try to preserve as much life as possible. I can tell you that, from my observations, this is a mammoth task. The mammoth task exists because Haiti remains flooded out.

In Gonaive, we did a flyover, and we were able to see in the streets where people live. There was rushing water, like rivers, flowing past people's homes, flowing over all of their planting grounds, and making it so that people were actually risking their lives in simply trying to get from point A to point B. Many of the residents have taken to their rooftops to live. In other areas, we witnessed the levels of mud that have accumulated as the waters have receded. In some areas, there are as much as 2 to 4 feet of mud before people's homes, in the roadways, in the byways of the communities in which people live.

We had an opportunity to pass over Haiti's breadbasket, an area in Haiti where new harvesting was taking place—the planting of rice. That entire area is completely flooded out, having basically killed off this planting season for Haiti, and so we have a nation in crisis. The crisis is one of a magnitude that I, personally, have never witnessed before. The circumstances become more and more dire with each passing moment.

Haiti is the poorest country in our hemisphere, and it is one of our closest neighbors, just a little over 700 miles away from Miami, Florida. Many in Haiti were looking forward to the harvest of rice crop. Unfortunately, much of it, if not all of it, has been destroyed by these storms just as the food crisis in that country was beginning to abate.

The USAID has moved in. They are providing as much as they possibly can in terms of response. They have allocated \$7.5 million in humanitarian assistance. The total value of U.S. Government humanitarian assistance is currently \$20 billion. According to the USAID, Haitian Government officials have stated that these recent storms have caused an estimated \$265 million in damage, particularly affecting their housing stock, agriculture, public infrastructure, and education.

In meeting with the newly installed Prime Minister for Haiti, Madam Michele Pierre-Louis, we were informed that the children's school has been postponed until the month of October, somewhere around October 3. My observations are that we will have to move with all deliberate speed to help and to assist in the recovery and in the rescue of those people in the various departments residing in the nation of Haiti in order for that part of their lives to be resumed.

We are not in this alone. I was very glad to see that the international community has responded as well. The U.N. troops and peacekeepers are on the ground, helping with the civil society, and the embassies of many of their partner nations—namely Canada, France and Brazil—are also collaborating with their local relief NGOs to bring as much to bear in this forward movement to get Haiti back on its feet, and it's going to take a coordinated effort to make sure that this is done in a timely and in a coordinated manner.

It is my hope that, through tonight's discussion, through tonight's presentations, we will see the need as a Nation to respond and to keep our response going and that when the TV cameras and the press crews have left Haiti that we will remember that this is a nation that is struggling to stand on its feet and that its civil society is extremely fragile. These storms have compounded what has been an ongoing challenge for Haiti to feed its own people.

So, this evening, I wanted to just share some of what I witnessed in the emergency codel commission by the Congressional Black Caucus, and I want to express gratitude to Speaker PELOSI and to Congressman KENDRICK MEEK for being so expedient in putting this codel together so that we could bring back the relevant facts to this body and to make sure that we're able to do all that we can do as we rebuild here in our own Nation and to make sure that, as to the hemisphere that we reside in, we are good neighbors and that, for our own sakes and for the sakes of the people who reside in Haiti, we do all that we can to make sure that they are on a safe road to recovery.

Having said that, I'm joined by a number of my colleagues this evening, all of whom have had longstanding ties to the nation of Haiti, all of whom have worked very hard in this body to make sure that we remain true to our

values as a Nation. They have been there throughout many crises in Haiti.

I'd like to acknowledge Congresswoman DONNA EDWARDS of Maryland, Congresswoman BARBARA LEE of California and Congresswoman MAXINE WATERS of California to make their statements.

Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share with this body and with the American people the images and accounts that I witnessed on a recent trip to the hurricane ravaged island of Haiti with my colleagues Mr. KENDRICK MEEK of Florida and Congresswoman YVETTE CLARKE of New York.

The damage is just devastating. From the rice fields that you can see here in these pictures that I took, they are covered with water and mud. It is unlikely that these fields will be ready for planting for a very, very long time. The topsoil has been washed away, replaced by mud and water. As we flew over, we could see the damage of the hurricanes, and we could see animal carcasses in the fields, with people walking through them and the standing water. Haiti is a place that is ripe right now for disease and for further destruction without intervention.

I do want to express and to join in the remarks of my colleague YVETTE CLARKE of New York and express the grave concern and our thoughts and prayers for the people of our own Gulf Coast, who at this moment are in a stage of recovery themselves from the hurricane damage of Hurricane Ike, which started in the Caribbean and made its way and strengthened to hit our own coast. This is the same storm.

For the people of Haiti, it was not just one storm; it was four—first Fay, then Gustav, then Hanna, and now Ike. An area might be able to absorb one storm and may be able to rebuild, but now more than 75 percent of the country has been under water, and the people in remote areas are unable to get from one location to the next location because of the damage to bridges and to roadways.

So we can't forget the pain of our southern neighbors in Haiti because these storms have made their way through the Caribbean, and we're only at the beginning of the hurricane season. I'm not sure how much more Haiti can take, but we know that it's time for us to intervene.

In addition to the rice fields, we saw firsthand the homes and the foundations washed away—even a place of worship filled with mud and standing water in places. In some areas, the hurricane damage was so devastating that it took away entire roadways and bridges. Eight bridges at least have been destroyed, leaving people stranded and isolated. President Preval very accurately, I think, described the blow to the country's infrastructure, likening it to a blow that would occur at a time of war, where the first thing that happens is that you take out all communications. That's what has happened in Haiti.

Communications and linkages from one area of the country to the next area of the country are entirely devastated. We saw people on the roadways, walking from one direction to the other direction, only to meet at a place where the road had been washed away so they couldn't even cross. We saw people bathing in water that contains rotten animal carcasses. We saw basic utilities—water, sewer and the power infrastructure—completely devastated, destroyed.

Now, there are early estimates—and we have to remember that they really are only early estimates—that there are, maybe, 600 people dead. Well, we know that those who are doing the estimates can't even reach the most remote areas of the country, and so we know that the devastation will climb over time, and that's why it's really important to intervene now.

The people of Haiti are in desperate need of food and shelter, of medical supplies and drinking water. You can see the pictures on the streets where the water is like a river rushing through the towns. There is moving water through the towns in Gonaive, and it's unclear when that water will recede and what will be left once the water has receded. We saw people camped out on the roofs of their homes, looking down at the destruction beneath and at the water in their homes.

Yet, in the face of all of this overwhelming devastation, what we also saw were the young men and women of the United States Armed Services. I want to offer a very special salute to the men and women of the USS *Kearsarge* and to Rear Admiral Joseph Kernan and to Captain Walter Towns, who are leading, really, the most heroic effort. It's so clear to us from all of our meetings and from what we witnessed that were it not for the efforts of the servicemembers on the USS *Kearsarge* in air-dropping medical supplies, food supplies and drinking water that those regions would not be touched at all. It is incredibly important that the USS *Kearsarge* remain in its mission off the coast of Port-au-Prince until that mission is done, until we can find replacement food supplies, until we can replace the bridges with temporary bridges so that the Government of Haiti can have access to the communities and so that the nongovernmental organizations can have access to communities. This is extremely important because, unless those temporary bridges are put in place, then almost the entire country will remain inaccessible for services and supplies to be delivered.

□ 2100

And we're in that very fragile window in Haiti in which we know that without intervention, disease will begin to set in. And so it's a very important time to begin to gain accessibility so that our medical teams on the USS *Kearsarge* and other medical teams

throughout the U.N. agencies and other missions can get to these remote areas and supply basic needs.

And let me say a bit about the efforts of our U.S. mission that right now is playing an amazing and important coordinating role in Haiti with other missions, with the nongovernmental organizations, with the U.N. relief organizations and mission on the ground trying to make certain that there's coordination among all of these folks of goodwill; that we're not duplicating efforts, and that our assessments about what needs to be done next make sense.

Now, I've joined in, along with many other Members, in support of an effort by Congresswoman MAXINE WATERS to try to spur up additional support and resources for the country of Haiti. I think that we're only at the beginning of knowing what the real need is, and so we need to look at this as a first step toward the recovery of Haiti, but not the only step that this country and the international community will need to make.

I really strongly applaud the efforts of Ambassador Janet Sanderson, who is doing an amazing job of working with the newly installed prime minister Michelle Pierre-Louis, who's only been on the job 9 days or so, barely has staff, but is on the ground now trying to respond to the needs of these most needy communities. And we need to do all that we can in this country and in the international community to make sure that the government of Haiti has the ability to make decisions for itself about its future and about the important needs for rebuilding infrastructure and support and services for the people of Haiti. And we can be in there providing the kind of guidance that we do on the ground and making sure that the resources are available so that communities don't remain further devastated.

Now, I'm concerned because it's very clear to me that if we don't act immediately to increase our assistance, the situation in Haiti will really only worsen and possibly threaten not just internal stability but external security as well. And so we have an opportunity for that not to happen, and that is by encouraging the international community and our own resources to step up efforts in Haiti.

But the danger of disease and the impending threats to food security are apparent, and we know that the food supply was already very fragile because of the food crisis earlier in the year, so we have another window, a window of maybe 2 weeks to a month to make sure that these resources come to Haiti in a meaningful way. And I know that in my congressional district in Maryland and throughout the country, people of this country are stepping forward too, offering donations to the American Red Cross and other international relief organizations, and so there needs to be a coordinated effort here in the United States to make sure that, as volunteers, we're providing the

kind of resources that Haiti can use and needs in order to rebuild.

Mr. Speaker, I join with my congressional colleagues in calling for those additional funds to help bring immediate relief to the people of Haiti, and for us to consider that this one storm impacted an entire region from the Caribbean all the way through the Gulf Coast. And we have to remember that, indeed, it was one storm that wreaked its havoc in this hemisphere, and treat it like that. And as we stand with the people of Texas and Louisiana and the gulf coast, we should stand with the people of Haiti.

Ms. CLARKE. I want to thank the gentlelady from Maryland, our newest member in the Congressional Black Caucus, Ms. DONNA EDWARDS, for her courage and her nimbleness. She rearranged her schedule very quickly to heed the call for her expertise and her ability. DONNA has come to us with a background and expertise in the philanthropic world, and she shared that with the prime minister, with the Ambassador to Haiti, and so I know that she will be called upon in the future as Haiti rebuilds to bring that expertise to bear.

I want to thank you for being my traveling partner, and I look forward to working further with you and the CBC and our colleagues to make things happen for the Nation of Haiti.

I'd like to acknowledge someone who really doesn't need an introduction, but has been one of the foremost experts on the island nation of Haiti, has been an outstanding, outspoken advocate for the people of that island nation, none other than the honorable MAXINE WATERS. She's being acknowledged for 5 minutes, or as much time as she may consume.

Ms. WATERS. I'd first like to thank my colleagues, YVETTE CLARK, DONNA EDWARDS and KENDRICK MEEK, for taking the time to go to Haiti to be able to document and identify devastation that has taken place, and to bring that information back to the House of Representatives, to the Congress of the United States of America, so that all of us public policymakers can understand in the most profound way what is needed, what has taken place there, and what we can do to be of immediate assistance.

I would also like to take a moment to say to FEMA and to the elected officials in the gulf coast, who too, have been involved in dealing with the ravages of the recent hurricanes and storms, that we appreciate that you have demonstrated that you have learned so much from Katrina, and that you have done a great job in giving assistance to the victims of the recent storms in the gulf coast. I say that with all sincerity, because it is important for us to know and understand that magnificent work was done in giving assistance to the victims of the gulf coast. And I've watched very carefully what has been taking place in not only Galveston and in parts of

Texas, but also as far as in Bay City of Mississippi.

So our hearts are with the people who have been the victims of the storms in that area, and we're very proud, and I'm very proud and pleased that the United States of America is able to do what it does and have learned so much from Katrina and are able to be of assistance in the way that they have been.

And having said that, we're generous people. We're people who not only have learned to deal with devastation in our own country, but we are a people who are forever ready to give a helping hand in other parts of the world. And certainly, what we have demonstrated in recent weeks right here in our own hemisphere in the Western Hemisphere for one of the poorest nations in the Western Hemisphere is to be commended. But we've got to do more.

As I understand it, and having listened to my colleagues and having followed as closely as I possibly can, what has been taking place, we have spent about \$20 million just from USAID alone. And then to listen to the stories about the armed services and the help that they're giving and the work that they're doing, I'm proud of my country. I'm proud of the assistance and the hand that we're extending to Haiti as we wrestle with the work that we must do in our own country and in the Gulf Coast.

Having said that, I have spent much of my time in the Congress of the United States paying attention to Haiti. I paid attention to Haiti because I know the history of Haiti, and I understand what the people of Haiti have been through historically. I have spent a lot of time in Haiti. I was there for the bicentennial and I flew up to Gonaives, where I watched a people who have been through so much celebrate its history and its independence, and I know the price that has been paid for that independence.

I also know that this is a people who have had to survive the dictatorships of Papa Doc and Baby Doc, and I know that this is a people who have seen a democratically elected president removed, and I know the history of our own country as we have restored the leadership to Haiti in recent history. And I also know the history of a coup d'etat, and a history of a people who have wrestled and fought and tried very hard to stabilize their country, despite all of the political unrest.

But, you know, we're at a time when it doesn't matter what position you took, whether some people thought that the democratically elected government of President Aristide should have remained or not. It's not about partisan politics at this time. This is about the people of Haiti.

It is not about even remembering what happened under Papa Doc and Baby Doc and La Tortue, none of that. This is about a people who have suffered far too much. My heart just goes out to the people of Haiti, people who

work very hard, who get up every day and just scuffle and work hard to survive, a people who are not very literate. Only 53 percent of the people in this country can read or write. But they work hard. And whenever they are confronted with one more disaster, with one more disruption, and you think they possibly just cannot make it, they just keep going and they keep going.

Over the past month Haiti has been devastated by four deadly storms in rapid succession, Tropical Storm Fay, Hurricane Gustav, Tropical Storm Hanna and Hurricane Ike. And over 15,000 houses have been damaged or destroyed. And as of a week ago, they already documented that over 154 people had been killed. And today, I hear my colleague say that number may be up to about 600. And as the flood waters begin to recede, additional bodies continue to be found and buried. And tragically, the real death toll just may never be known.

According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, up to 800,000 people in Haiti are in dire need of humanitarian assistance. As of September 6, more than 100,000 people had taken refuge in temporary shelters, and this was before the onslaught of Hurricane Ike. Many roads and bridges were damaged or destroyed, and crops have been lost. There is now a desperate need for food and water and health services.

And I'm so sorry to hear about what has happened to the rice fields. Haiti, at one time, grew rice for its people. They exported rice that was grown in Haiti. They lost that over the years for a lot of reasons. Some of it was political. But to know that they had gotten back on the road to raising and growing rice again was extremely important. And to have these pictures that were shown to us today where now all of that has been destroyed is just almost too much to take, too much to endure.

I immediately asked my colleagues to join with me in requesting at least \$300 million in appropriations for disaster assistance for Haiti following these devastating hurricanes. I did not know what the assessment would be, and we still don't know how much will be needed. But I knew immediately that it was going to be massive and that we needed to move very quickly, and that we need to appropriate substantial sums for Haiti.

□ 2115

And we will probably have an assessment in the very near future, but we need to get started right away to not only support Haiti through USAID, as is being done, but we have to add to it. You heard about the devastation. You heard about the destruction. I am just hopeful and prayerful that Haiti can survive as an island nation. The destruction is mammoth. And I believe that everything that we do and everything that we can think of doing must be done.

I know that the people of Haiti will get up every day, people who are sleeping on those rooftops, and they will fight to survive, they will fight to stay alive, and they believe, no matter what happens between the United States and Haiti, that we're their friends and that we will do whatever we can do to be of assistance to them.

So I would just, again, thank my colleagues for taking time to go there and to do this documentation and this eyewitness of what has taken place.

I would like to thank our ambassador there. Sanderson is a wonderful representative who has worked very hard. I would like to thank President Preval because he has been handed a task just as President of putting that nation back together and to stabilizing that government and to reorganizing and building that infrastructure. It's an awesome task even without experiencing these hurricanes.

So my prayers and my heart go out to President Preval and the government, and I would hope that we move very quickly to appropriate additional dollars.

And I will yield back the balance of my time.

Thank you very much.

Ms. CLARKE. I thank the gentle lady from California for sharing with us her resolve to be a problem solver, to be a leader in this body in making sure that we can do all we can on behalf of the people of the island nation of Haiti.

I would like to acknowledge at this time another powerhouse coming out of California, a member of the Congressional Black Caucus, our vice chair, none other than the Honorable BARBARA LEE.

Ms. LEE. Thank you very much. And let me thank you, Congresswoman CLARKE, a daughter of the Caribbean, for your leadership and for having the vision and the tenacity to put everything aside and go to Haiti this past weekend. And I want to thank you for that presentation because hopefully the rest of the country is watching and will have some sense of the tragedy that is taking place in Haiti. And because of your leadership, Congressman KENDRICK MEEK, and Congresswoman DONNA EDWARDS, I think this Congress will have a better handle now on what we need to do and what has taken place, which is beyond our imagination. So thank you, again, for stepping up to the plate and for your leadership.

Yes, four tropical storms and hurricanes in 4 weeks, Fay, Hanna, Gustav, and Ike. These storms left Haiti devastated. Also other Caribbean islands have been devastated as well as, of course, the gulf coast in our own Nation. So tonight our thoughts and our prayers, first of all, go out to the families and the residents of all of these communities in all of these countries that have been devastated by these storms.

And I will also just say that we have to do something and we have to do it quickly. And I want to thank Congress-

woman MAXINE WATERS for right away asking that we sign on to making this request of \$300 million. And as a member of the Appropriations Committee, I know that all of us are going to work very hard to try to make sure that at least the \$300 million is there.

And also thank you, Congresswoman WATERS, for your leadership and for tonight, your presentation, putting all of this really in a historical context because we have to remember that Haiti is a vulnerable country and has been for many, many years. And we can't separate out our work now in terms of emergency assistance and relief from the work that we have to do long-term because of many of the issues that we have to address as it relates to infrastructure, job creation, health care, helping to develop water systems. All of those issues that you have been working on for so many years. So thank you very much for reminding us of the long-term work that still remains to be done.

This year, I believe it was in May, Congresswoman KILPATRICK and I led a congressional delegation to Haiti; and we were looking then at the conditions on the ground as it related to the soaring food prices. But our questions and what we wanted to know was what if our worst fears would come true, and that is what if another hurricane hits when the process of rebuilding and developing the agriculture sector and helping the emergency food assistance, while all of this is taking place, we said what if another hurricane hits this summer. And we didn't even want to ask that question because we were worried and we knew that we would have to face now, and the people of Haiti would have to face, the enormous, enormous tragedy now that they have to deal with.

So tonight I think it's important for us to recognize the fact that we have to do more.

Our own country I want to commend for doing everything we can do that we have done. It is remarkable to hear what you all have said you saw down there taking place and what our ambassador has done and what our armed services' young men and women are doing. I know our Peace Corps is engaged. I have a cousin in Haiti, and they're working very hard with the NGO community to develop a response.

But also we have to remember now what you pointed out in terms of the transportation system. We have to be creative in how we help deliver this emergency assistance and this humanitarian assistance because this is a devastating hurricane that is of enormous proportions that will require new ways of doing things, new ways of delivering assistance, new ways of helping to save lives.

Five hundred people. Let's hope it stays at 500 people who have died. Of course our prayers go out to the families of the 500 people. It's hard to imagine what else the—what other deaths have occurred as a result of this, but

let's pray it stays at 500, unfortunately. There are 70,000 people in shelter now, 250,000 and more in need of assistance. Many of the cities under water. It's hard for us to imagine.

But thank you for those charts and those photographs tonight because I think now we're coming to grips with the reality of what has happened and what has set in and how we have to redouble our efforts with a sense of urgency.

And we have to work on all fronts. I know Congressman ENGEL and myself, we're working on a briefing with the ambassadors with the region. Hopefully, the entire congressional body, both Members' staff, both sides of the aisle, will come out for those meetings later on this week.

We've got to provide more than the \$20 million. Twenty million, yes. That's a decent amount for relief efforts, but much more will be needed. We've got to have much more than \$20 million; \$300 million in assistance, which Congresswoman WATERS has asked for, may or may not be enough, but thank you again for asking for \$300 million. We've got to start somewhere.

And so, again, as the world leader, the United States I think is stepping up to the plate and has to show the rest of the world that we can lead, we can help our neighbors, and we can help not only in the most immediate and necessary emergency assistance that's required, but also with the long-term sustainable development assistance that we must begin to look at and provide for Haiti. So tonight we're sounding the alarm.

Congressman MEEK, Congresswomen CLARKE and EDWARDS went to Haiti. They came back. And they didn't have to do this. They could have been in their districts. They could have been doing other things this weekend, but they stopped and took their time so that they could come back and make sure that all of us were on the same page and that all of us heard that alarm. And we may see it on the TV, we may hear it from our friends in the community, but until it's real and it's made real and we have these meetings and discussions and forums here in Washington where the funding, hopefully, will come from, that's where I think this debate needs to be right now in terms of what we can do as Members of Congress.

So I have to thank you again for your leadership and giving us the opportunity to pull together and do something. Because I think to do nothing would really put us on the side of history that we would be ashamed of in the future. I think we all want to be on the right side of history at this moment in terms of how we respond to a country that is vulnerable, that has been under attack, that has been poor forever, that regardless of how poor, has resilient people who continue to be proud, who continue to get up, who continue to want to work, who continue to want a better day. We have to

be on the side of those people of Haiti now and show them that we are their friends and their allies and will continue to work to support their efforts.

There's a slogan that we use, I know, in my district in our community when we talk about Haiti. We say, "Let Haiti live." Let Haiti live. Now we're talking about let Haiti survive. I think Congresswoman WATERS and EDWARDS and CLARKE talked about how vulnerable and fragile Haiti is right now. So before Haiti can live, it's got to survive.

So tonight we're saying let Haiti survive; let's find the will and the way and the means to do everything we can do to make sure that the people of Haiti receive the type of humanitarian and emergency assistance, but also the type of long-term assistance that they deserve and that we definitely intend to provide.

Thank you again.

Ms. CLARKE. Thank you very much, Congresswoman BARBARA LEE, for your leadership, your commitment as a member of the CBC, and a Member of the House of Representatives. You have been very outspoken and a real leader in addressing these challenges that are before our international community, our friends, and our allies.

So this evening, if I didn't see it for myself, I would not believe it. Haiti is in crisis. As we stand here today, lives are tenuous. And what Haiti needs immediately we've been able to identify. Haiti needs as much support as we can give from this body, as much as we can orchestrate through our Department of Defense.

There is a need for watercraft that can travel across the waters to get to very remote areas that have been cut off by land; there's a need for assessment to take place as quickly as possible about the structural soundness of the infrastructure that currently exists, any modern technology that can be utilized to pump waters back into the seas to help dry out those areas.

Certainly food products are very important. We see a hunger crisis coming down the pike of a magnitude that I don't think we every witnessed in this hemisphere. We need clean water. The waterways of Haiti have been contaminated by the death and destruction around them, the death of humankind, the death of livestock. They need clean drinking water, they need medication and medical support because we are anticipating and trying to get ahead of any outbreaks of airborne diseases, of mosquito-borne diseases.

□ 2130

They need support for those who are struggling with their own health conditions currently.

We've asked the President of the United States to move forward with temporary protected status for Haitians, to halt the deportation of Haitians from the U.S. To send individuals into that environment right now is cruel and unusual punishment. We hope that the administration will heed this call at this time.

There are immigration issues, but there's an unprecedented international relief effort going on right now in Haiti, and the last thing that the Nation can do right now is provide for those who are returning deportees.

Despite the frequent report of drowning caused by unsafe refugee boats collapsing, the current conditions and crisis in Haiti may trigger an exodus of Haitian immigrants to the United States. Desperate times call for desperate measures. You have desperation climbing each and every day.

Since fiscal year 1998, the Coast Guard has interdicted well over 1,000 Haitians each year. Over 1,000 Haitians have already been interdicted in 2008.

Temporary protected status is the most inexpensive, immediate form of aid the President can single-handedly provide, and we ask that he make this possible as soon as possible.

There are currently six countries that are protected under TPS provisions: Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, Burundi, Somalia and Sudan. And while other countries under similar circumstances have been afforded relief through TPS, Haiti has been overlooked time and time again.

Remittances are currently one-third of Haiti's gross national product. If we indeed want to underpin and undergird this country in its recovery, it is critical that we look at every vehicle and instrument we have at our disposal to help the people of the island nation of Haiti.

So we've put some recommendations forward. We look forward to further debate and conversation here in the House of Representatives. Haiti is a country in crisis. I've seen it. I know it. It is our time now to act upon it.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for giving us this time as the Congressional Black Caucus. I want to thank our chairwoman, CAROLYN KILPATRICK, for her vision and leadership and her insistence upon us traveling on this emergency code.

I'd like to thank again my colleagues Congressman KENDRICK MEEK for his leadership in this code and his ability to get things moving and done through his affiliation and work as a member of the Armed Services Committee.

And I'd like to thank our newest Member, DONNA EDWARDS, for her leadership. She is a rising star. She is a part of making things happen here on the Hill, and it's just a source of pride and inspiration to work with her on this very important endeavor.

THE DEMOCRAT ENERGY BILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ALTMIRE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I will be joined this evening on the floor by a number of distinguished colleagues, and we're going to take the oppor-

tunity on what we believe, Mr. Speaker, is the eve of a historic debate on energy legislation in the House of Representatives, to talk about the issue that is most bearing upon the American family. It is most bearing upon American business. It is most bearing upon our schools and our seniors and our standard of living, and that is, the high cost of fuel and gasoline.

The American people are hurting, and Republicans here on the House floor are delighted that this Congress is back in session, that the lights are back on and the cameras are back on because, all through the month of August, while the House Democrats took a 5-week paid vacation, Republicans stayed here because we simply believe that there's no issue of greater import to working Americans, small business owners or family farmers than the cost of gasoline and the high price of oil.

I will say to you that the disappointing economic news in August, Mr. Speaker, can be explained with one phrase: The high cost of energy is costing American jobs, and the American people know this.

As I traveled the four corners of my eastern Indiana district this past weekend, I did not hear about the bowling scores of Presidential candidates. I didn't even hear about lipstick very much. But I heard one Hoosier after another saying to me, please, get Congress to do something real about lessening our dependence on foreign oil and lowering the price of gasoline at the pump. And that's why we're here tonight, to talk about this issue.

It's an issue on the front page of my hometown newspaper, the largest newspaper in my district, I should say, the Muncie Star Press. After Ike hit shore, gasoline prices went to \$4.29 a gallon. In parts of my district, they were reported to be well over \$5 a gallon in the Midwest.

The headline tells the tale: Hoosiers are helpless. Millions of American people are helpless, Mr. Speaker, as they see a Congress that has over the last two years of this Democrat majority twiddled its thumbs while gasoline prices rose and rose and rose, and then they took their 5-week paid vacation.

But as I said, Republicans never left. As newspapers reported and radio reported all throughout the course of this summer, we stayed on this floor even though the lights were dimmed and the microphones were off, and we kept demanding that Speaker NANCY PELOSI would bring this Congress back into session and would bring a bill to the floor of this House that would give the American people more access to our own domestic reserves through drilling and include all of the other strategies long-term energy independence, more conservation, more fuel efficiency, solar, wind, nuclear.

A lot of people are looking at Congress this week with the word that we're going to be debating an energy bill that newspapers are reporting includes drilling and they're saying,