

head coach Stan Sims and the whole team on their accomplishments.

The Lady Owls were the only team to have all competitors finish in the top 20. In fact, Patrina Haines finished second in the field, and her teammate Erin Sutton, whose grandfather, Jack Sutton, works in my district office, was named Atlantic Sun Conference's Freshman of the Year and earned a spot on the all-conference team.

Winning a conference championship is quite an achievement, but this victory is even more inspiring when you consider it was the Lady Owls' first year participating in Division I sports. If this season is any indication, we can expect many more winning seasons for the Kennesaw State University team.

Mr. Speaker, these athletes have brought much pride to Kennesaw State University and the entire Kennesaw community. I ask that you join me in celebrating their accomplishment.

CUTS AT NATIONAL RENEWABLE ENERGY LABORATORY WRONG POLICY

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

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, here is another chapter in the competitiveness saga. A couple weeks ago in the President Bush's State of the Union address he stated, "So tonight, I announce the Advanced Energy Initiative, a 22 percent increase in clean-energy research at the Department of Energy to push for breakthroughs."

This was followed a week later by an announcement from the National Renewable Energy Laboratory in Colorado of cuts in outside contracts, cuts in operating expenses, and the laying off of 35 staff, including eight researchers, one in photovoltaics and seven in biomass and hydrogen.

The words and the actions simply do not match. The researchers will leave the lab, affecting our economy and distancing us further from solutions in energy technologies. We will lose their knowledge and their creativity.

There is a lot of talk about lost competitiveness, outsourcing of jobs, and lost opportunities in the alternative energy market. We could lead the world in energy technologies if we invest in alternative energies.

Mr. Speaker, which is it: Are we pushing for breakthroughs or are we cutting research?

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SBA KATRINA LOAN FUNDING

(Ms. BEAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. BEAN. Mr. Speaker, more than 5 months after Hurricane Katrina ravaged New Orleans and the gulf coast, many small business owners are still struggling with no relief in sight. Busi-

nesses are strained from a lack of customers, employees, infrastructure, electricity, and most particularly the access to capital that they need to get back to business. With no other funds available, many small business owners turn to the SBA for assistance. The Small Business Administration is prepared to help entrepreneurs through its disaster loan programs.

Yet today, real criticisms continue to surround the SBA over the agency's failure to provide adequate assistance to the gulf coast's businesses. Since the devastation from Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma, the SBA has declined approximately 80 percent of all disaster loans, with a backlog of over 200,000 pending applications. On January 30, the SBA released a statement that approximately 51,000 applicants have been approved for financial assistance from the agency; but with over 312,000 total applicants, this is a dismal ratio between those businesses and individuals who are getting loans and those who are left waiting.

As a member of the House Committee on Small Business and because of my own experience as a small business owner, I am well aware of the stimulative effect that small to medium-size firms can have on our regional economies. In the gulf region it couldn't be more critical to ensure small business owners reopen their doors to provide essential services and jobs that allow families to get back on their feet.

We can do better. I ask my colleagues to help me in this effort.

AMERICAN HEART MONTH/WOMEN & HEART ACT

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

Mrs. CAPPs. Mr. Speaker, I remind my colleagues that February is American Heart Month. Throughout this month, we recognize the millions of Americans struggling with heart disease and recommit ourselves to helping them. And we acknowledge the efforts of organizations like the American Heart Association, which help all of us prevent and treat heart disease.

What is not well enough known is that heart disease, stroke, and other cardiovascular diseases are the number one killer of women in the United States. Each year, 480,000 women die from heart disease. That is one every minute.

In addition to experiencing classic chest pain, women often have a greater tendency to exhibit atypical symptoms of heart attack, such as difficulty breathing, nausea and unexplained fatigue. So they are often misdiagnosed.

Yesterday, Representative CUBIN and I introduced the Women & HEART Disease Act. This legislation will increase awareness, education, data collection, and the detection of heart disease in women so that we can improve the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of women with cardiovascular disease.

I urge each of my colleagues to support this bill and other efforts to address the costly scourge of this disease.

ON THE DRUG PLAN DEBACLE AND THE COST OF CORRUPTION

(Ms. SOLIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, leave it to Washington Republicans to create a chaotic and confusing system that has left a large majority of seniors just saying no. The Republican prescription drug plan shows the everyday cost congressional corruption has on the American people.

Republicans promised American seniors they would have access to prescription drugs through private plans beginning January 1, but to date it has been an utter failure. In many instances, beneficiaries who tried to have their prescriptions filled under the new system were either told that their enrollment could not be verified or that their drugs were not covered. As a result, many beneficiaries, particularly those that are called dually eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid, were at risk for receiving no coverage at all.

Rather than choosing to work to alleviate drug costs for seniors, Republicans were more interested in coming up with a bill that benefited their friends in the pharmaceutical and insurance industries, friends who have been very loyal to them over the years.

America must do better, we can do better and put special interests aside so that we can help those people who truly need our assistance. Let's start thinking about our senior citizens.

VIOLENCE AMONG GIRLS

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, a Chicago Sun Times article today reveals that fighting among girls in schools is up. As a matter of fact, fights involving girls are up 31 percent, assaults are up 18 percent, and battery is up 15 percent. So far this school year, 529 girls in the Chicago schools have been written up for fighting in incident reports to the district's bureau of safety and security. While girls have been steadily catching up to boys in violence rates in the past 25 years, there are few programs to address this great need.

As we go into budget talks and budget negotiations, let us be mindful of this need and allocate resources to stem this tide of growing violence among girls.

BUSH'S BUDGET AND ITS FAILURES TO MAKE AMERICANS SAFE

(Ms. WATSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)