Lampson	Murtha	Serrano
Lantos	Nadler	Shays
Leach	Neal	Sherman
Lee	Oberstar	Sisisky
Levin	Obey	Skaggs
Lewis (GA)	Olver	Smith, Adam
Lofgren	Ortiz	Snyder
Lowey	Owens	Spratt
Luther	Pallone	Stabenow
Maloney (NY)	Pascrell	Stark
Manton	Pastor	Stokes
Markey	Payne	Strickland
Martinez	Pelosi	Tanner
Mascara	Pickett	Tauscher
Matsui	Pomeroy	Thompson
McCarthy (MO)	Porter	Thurman
McCarthy (NY)	Poshard	Tierney
McDermott	Price (NC)	Torres
McGovern	Ramstad	Towns
McHale	Rangel	Turner
McKinney	Reyes	Upton
Meehan	Rivers	Velazquez
Meek (FL)	Rodriguez	Vento
Meeks (NY)	Roemer	Visclosky
Menendez	Rothman	Waters
Millender-McDonald	Roukema	Watt (NC)
	Rush	Waxman
Miller (CA)	Sabo	Wexler
Minge	Sanchez	Weygand
Mink	Sanders	Wise
Moakley	Sandlin	Woolsey
Moran (VA)	Sawyer	Wynn
Morella	Scott	

ANSWERED ''PRESENT''—1

Kolbe

NOT VOTING—14

Clement	McDade	Slaughter
Dingell	McNulty	Smith (OR)
Gonzalez	Roybal-Allard	Whitfield
Hill	Schumer	Yates
Kennelly	Shuster	

□ 2123

Mrs. NORTHUP changed her vote from ''no'' to ''aye.''

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4194, DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1999

Mr. GOSS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privilege report (Rept. No. 105–628) on the resolution (H. Res. 501) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4194) making appropriations for the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry independent agencies, boards, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1999, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REQUEST TO WAIVE CERTAIN POINTS OF ORDER AGAINST PROVISIONS OF H.R. 4104, DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1999

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the House waive all points of order under clause 2 or 6 of rule XXI against the Y2K provisions of H.R. 4104, to wit: the provisions on page 37, line 12, through page 38, line 14.

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

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, and I would object, Mr. Speaker, I would have to object on the grounds that this unanimous consent agreement is contrary to the rule which was just adopted by the House of Representatives, and for that reason I do object.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Objection is heard.

CHEAP POLITICS AT THEIR VERY WORST

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

Mr. HEFNER. Mr. Speaker, I have been in politics for a long, long while and I have been in tough campaigns when the rhetoric was very, very high but there is something that came to my attention tonight that was issued by the Republican National Committee, and the last paragraph says if Democrats want to block this motion so they can get a raise, so be it, said the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LINDER), but by tomorrow I guarantee every newspaper in their district will know about it.

I would not even bring this up but a few months ago my sister-in-law died after a 3-year battle with cancer, and I had an excused absence from this House, and there was a vote that was taking place and a press release sent to my district accusing me of making a bad vote, it was bad for my constituents.

It only takes 10 seconds to check this computer to see if people are here. You have no guarantee that there will not be a press release in your newspaper whether you are even here or voting or not. This is cheap politics at its very, very worst, and I abhor it to the nth degree.

□ 1930

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 4104 and that I may include tabular and extraneous material.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arizona?

There was no objection.

TREASURY AND GENERAL GOVERNMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1999

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 498 and rule XXIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 4104.

□ 2131

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 4104) making appropriations for the Treasury Department, the United States Postal Service, the Executive Office of the President, and certain Independent Agencies, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1999, and for other purposes, with Mr. DREIER in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered as having been read the first time.

Under the rule, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) each will control 30 minutes.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. HOYER. Parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Chairman?

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Chairman, I do not know that anybody has made an announcement, but am I correct that the only thing we will be doing for the balance of the evening will be general debate? There will be no votes?

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield? I would be happy to respond to that.

Mr. HOYER. I yield to the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Chairman, yes, it is our intention to proceed through the hour of general debate, which will include a number of colloquies that we have, but not yet to open the bill at any point, not to begin the reading of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair will anxiously look forward to a motion to rise and will certainly recognize a Member who might choose to make that proposal.

Mr. HOYER. So, Mr. Chairman, the Members should know that they have no need to be here if they wanted to object or make any other suggestions in the body of the bill itself?

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Chairman, if the gentleman would continue to yield, any provisions dealing with the bill itself, amendments or motions to strike, would not be in order tonight because we will not begin the reading of the bill this evening.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Arizona for his clarification.

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE).

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, tonight I am pleased that we have gotten to the point where we are and that I can bring to the floor H.R. 4104 which is the fiscal year 1999 Treasury, Postal Service and General

Government appropriations bill. As reported, this bill provides $13.2 billion in discretionary budget authority for the agencies under the subcommittee's jurisdiction, and this level of funding is consistent with the subcommittee's section 302(b) allocation.

Mr. Chairman, I might note that the rule that we have just adopted, I realize, places in jeopardy large portions of this bill and many parts of the bill which include legislative provisions carefully crafted and agreed upon by the Members on both sides of the aisle. So I want to say that I believe the bill, as reported by the Committee on Appropriations, is an outstanding bill. It is one which every Member, I believe, on both sides of the aisle, can be very proud.

The bill that we have here today is one that is very strong for law enforcement. It is tough on drugs. It supports our efforts to restructure and reform the way the Internal Revenue Service does business. It is supportive of much-needed new court space for our judicial system.

First, in this area of law enforcement we continue our commitment to the drug and law enforcement efforts of the Department of Treasury as well as to the Office of National Drug Policy drug control policy headed by General McCaffrey. In total, we provide $3.6 billion for Treasury law enforcement efforts and $427 million for the activities and operations of the Office of National Drug Control Policy. As it specifically relates to drug efforts, the mark provides $1.8 billion. That is an increase of about 3 percent over the current fiscal year and approximately the same as the President has requested.

Second, we continue to target resources to restructuring the IRS management, computer modernization and customer service; and, third, we end the moratorium on the Federal construction of courthouses, providing much-needed space and security for the judiciary to meet the demands of its increasing workloads.

Mr. Chairman, as my colleagues are very aware, this bill carries an emergency appropriation of $2.25 billion for ensuring that all Federal information systems are Year 2000 compliant. I cannot stress enough to my colleagues the emergency nature of this issue. The implications of an information systems crash on January 1 in the Year 2000 would be simply mind-boggling.

Checks to senior citizens, to veterans, to financially-needy Americans will go unsent because the group responsible for getting these payments out, the Financial Management Service, may not be able to meet its deadline. The FMS, Financial Management Service, sends out 63 million Federal payments each month. They pay 85 percent of the government's bills. Rail systems could come to a standstill with trains sitting idle on tracks because switches are locked in place. Major power grids could be thrown into a massive blackout because nuclear power plants have gone off line, have shut down for safety reasons. FAA's contingency plan for the year 2000, that is, in the event their computers go belly-up and they do not have their mission-critical systems compliant, their contingency plan is simply to reduce the number of flights by 60 percent.

My colleagues, it is obvious that this kind of solution or this kind of problem is one we simply cannot afford.

In OMB's last report to the Committee on Agency Progress in Meeting the Year 2000 Deadline we were told that only 40 percent of all critical mission systems in the Federal Government are compliant. That means that 60 percent are not. We are being told that 15 of the 24 largest Federal agencies will fail to meet the January 1 deadline.

Mr. Chairman, January 1, 2000, is not a date that we can slip. We cannot in this body, in this Congress, pass legislation which will postpone the beginning of the millennium, which will stop the clock in its tracks, so it is critical that agencies get the resources they need and that it gets them in a timely fashion. We cannot and we should not afford to play politics on this issue. We need to do everything possible to ensure that the agencies have the money they need and they have it when they need it, and regardless of the outcome of what happens on this bill, we must make sure that we take the steps, whether it is in this bill or a separate supplemental appropriation bill, to get that money to these agencies that is absolutely necessary.

Mr. Chairman, I want to make a few general observations about several possible amendments to this bill. At this point, we have a list of some 25 different colloquies, amendments and points of order. I suspect with the adoption of the rule that we have just had there will be many other points of order that will be made. Of these only seven, seven have anything to do with an appropriations matter, with the dollars that are in this bill. The rest are all legislative in nature.

I appreciate and share the frustration that we all have when important legislative issues are not and cannot be addressed through the appropriate authorization process. But there is a reason that these provisions cannot and are not moved through the regular legislative process. They are controversial, and they are difficult issues. They require the thorough vetting of a committee hearing. They require the careful consideration of the authorizing committees which are established and constituted and staffed to consider that kind of legislation. Attaching these items to an appropriation bill does nothing to address the underlying controversy. In fact, it intensifies the debate and serves to threaten and derail the very important work of the Committee on Appropriations which is to make sure that our agencies have the funds they need to carry out the tasks that this Congress has given them through the authorizing legislation.

Mr. Chairman, the bill before us today supports those critical operations for the Customs Service, the Internal Revenue Service, the Secret Service, the General Services Administration. We simply cannot afford to shut those agencies down in order to advance controversial legislative items.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, let me take just a moment to take this opportunity in this moment to express my sincere appreciation for the very hard work and the dedication of the distinguished ranking member of this subcommittee, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), and for his staff, Cory Alexander, Kim Weaver, Pat Schlueter. They have been absolutely invaluable as we moved this bill through the subcommittee, the full committee, and now to the House floor.

And as I pay tribute to them, let me pay tribute to those staff members who are around me on this side of the aisle who have done such an outstanding and fantastic job: the clerk for our committee, Michelle Mrdeza; our other professional staff, Bob Schmidt, Jeff Ashford, Tammy Hughes; and our detailee from the Federal Government, from the Secret Service, Frank Larkin; and to my personal staff member, Jason Isaac; all of whom have toiled an incredible number of hours in order to get us where we are this evening.

Mr. Chairman, without the cooperative work on both sides of the aisle, I do not think that we would have the bill that we have here this evening.

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

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, the gentleman from Arizona is, in my opinion, one of the most decent, hard-working Members of the House, and he is continually. Because this is a difficult bill to handle, plays in very difficult situations, and I want to thank the gentleman from Arizona for his bipartisanship in handling this bill.

I also want to join him in congratulating the staff at the beginning of my remarks. He mentioned, and I will mention them again because that deserves such: the Chief Clerk of our committee, Michele Mrdeza, with whom I have had the opportunity to work for 7 years now, Bob Schmidt, Jeff Ashford, Tammy Hughes, Frank Larkin and Jason Isaac who is, although not on the committee staff like Cory Alexander of my personal staff, of my leadership staff, a critical component of the consideration of this bill, and Pat Schlueter and Kim Weaver, who work respectively for the committee and for the Committee on Appropriations' associate staff.

Mr. Chairman, I want to begin by saying that this bill in many respects is a very good bill given the fiscal constraints that confront the Committee on Appropriations. This subcommittee's commitment of over $4 billion to

the Treasury's very important law enforcement activity is present in this bill. Almost one-third of the $13.2 billion in discretionary budget authority in this bill is targeted at law enforcement.

I am pleased that the bill fully funds the President's request for the Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative. The $27 million program is an important part of the administration's overall strategy to curb youth violence. This administration has been successful in presenting to the American public in its first term a program to reduce crime in America. The good news is they have been successful.

□ 2145

This bill will continue that progress. This bill funds antidrug activities totaling over $1.8 billion. Over $400 million is provided to the drug czar for a variety of drug-fighting efforts, including $162 million for the very successful high-intensity drug trafficking areas.

I am pleased that we are able to maintain IRS funding at a level that will enable Commissioner Rossotti to continue progress with reform.

I want to speak briefly of the changes that had been effected in IRS. Secretary Rubin and Deputy Secretary Sommer should be given great credit for rescuing the failing tax system's modernization program. They provided the needed high-level oversight for IRS to make a sharp turn in this computer systems area. They appointed a new chief computer systems officer who, after months of intense work, released a blueprint for technology modernization. This multibillion dollar program is now on the right track and it has been put on the right track by a bipartisan effort of this Congress and by the leadership and through the leadership of Secretary Rubin and Secretary Sommer and members of the IRS staff.

The appointment of Commissioner Rossotti was another clear change, Mr. Chairman, for IRS. Commissioner Rossotti is a tough-minded business manager. During his brief tenure, together with Secretary Rubin, IRS has improved customer service in a number of ways. Telephone access has been increased from 69 percent to 90 percent. Problem-solving days were instituted in all 33 IRS districts, allowing taxpayers to cut through the red tape and resolve difficult problems. National and local taxpayer advocates were established.

In addition to Treasury, this bill, Mr. Chairman, funds many smaller agencies, including Archives, OPM, GSA, the Federal Elections Commission and the Executive Office of the President. We will be talking about those agencies as we proceed through the markup of this bill. They are critically important agencies of our government; and, for the most part, we have tried to fund them so that they can perform their responsibilities as appointed by this Congress through legislation and as is expected by the American public.

For GSA, I am pleased that we are able to include money for absolutely essential courthouse construction projects. One of the reasons crime has gone down is because prosecutions are up, and we are processing criminals and letting them know that prosecution will be swift and sure. It is obvious that we need facilities to accomplish that objective.

I want to congratulate the gentleman from Arizona (Chairman KOLBE) because he disciplined our committee to taking the priorities of the Judicial Conference and the General Services Administration. These are not political choices. These are choices by the experts who know the needs and the abilities of the GSA to perform the responsibilities assigned to them by this Congress.

I remain concerned, however, about authorizing language for the FEC that would essentially establish term limits for the staff director and general counsel. I presume that will be struck, and I expect it to be struck.

Finally, I am pleased that this bill contains special emphasis in funding for solving the century date change problems with computers government-wide. We talked about that in the consideration of the rule. I hope that it stays in this bill. The chairman has pointed out it is a critical need, and our committee has responded to that need, not just on behalf of the agencies in our bill but the agencies throughout government.

As I pointed out in my opposition to the rule, which did not protect this, that was absolutely essential as we confront, as the chairman said, January 1 of the year 2000, because if we fail to solve this problem, not only will government shut down, not only will Medicare and Social Security be put at risk, not only will veterans benefits be put at risk, not only will the FAA, who controls our airplanes and our flight patterns and safety in the skies be at risk, but private commerce, which relies on the operations of government, will also be put at risk. I would hope, but do not expect, that we will protect that item.

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank again the chairman and the staff for their work on this bill. We will see how it proceeds, and we will see what is left of the bill after the Members in this House or this House works its will on it within the framework of this unfortunate rule.

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

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume for the purpose of a colloquy with the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. HAYWORTH).

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. KOLBE. I yield to the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Chairman, I thank the distinguished gentleman from Arizona for this time.

Mr. Chairman, I would say to the gentleman from Arizona (Chairman KOLBE), I would like to take a moment to thank you for your hard work on this Treasury, Postal Service, and General Government appropriations bill. In particular, I am very pleased the gentleman and his committee has seen fit to include report language that directs the White House Counsel's Office to clearly define the line between personal and official legal business in representation.

Mr. Chairman, I have been examining this issue for many months now and have come to the conclusion that the White House Counsel's Office continues to use taxpayer funds to pay legal staff to work on the President's personal legal issues. I think this is clearly a misuse of taxpayer funds. That is why I introduced a sense of the House resolution this March that, along with the cosponsorship of 30 of my colleagues, sends a clear signal to the White House that the public will not stand for footing personal legal bills of its elected officials.

Mr. Chairman, the White House Counsel's Office does not need 34 staff members, when previous Counsel's Office staff was limited to seven at most, and the American taxpayers should not be held accountable for $2.36 million in salaries for this legal work.

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Chairman, reclaiming my time, first of all, I would like to commend my colleague from Arizona for the hard work that he has done on the research on this issue. Our subcommittee has spent a good deal of time in the past several months reviewing the operations of the Office of General Counsel in the White House. What we have learned is that, of the 34 full-time employees in this office, there are seven attorneys that are assigned to ongoing Congressional, Independent Counsel and Justice Department investigations.

We all know that appropriations cannot be used to pay an employee's personal expenses. While we know that this is the case, the General Accounting Office has found that there may be some instances in which official and personal interests of a Federal employee may overlap. It appears this is precisely the case in the current investigations of the President.

I agree with my colleague that a proper distinction needs to be made between these two very separate sources of legal business, and I was pleased to include report language to this effect in the Treasury, Postal Service, and General Government appropriations bill.

Mr. Chairman, as the gentleman knows, the bill before us today calls for the counsel's office to write guidelines to ensure that ''no Federal funds are used for the private defense of the President.'' The gentleman and I agree on this issue, and I look forward to continuing to work with the gentleman on this and other issues to ensure that tax dollars are not used to pay the private legal expenses of the President.

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Chairman, if the gentleman will yield further, I

would like to thank my colleague from Arizona for his continued support of this very important issue.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. KOLBE. I yield to the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Chairman, I would ask the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE), am I correct that our committee has made no finding that such funds have been used?

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Chairman, our committee was not and we were not charged with making such a finding, that is correct.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY), the distinguished ranking member and former chairman of the Committee on Appropriations.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, first of all, I want to congratulate the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE) for his opening statement. I think it was a very thoughtful discussion of the procedural obligations of the House. I think the gentleman is a distinct credit to the House, and it is a privilege for me to serve with him. I think the gentleman tried to do the right thing on the subject that I am about to talk about.

Mr. Chairman, our job as Members of Congress is, first of all, to define differences and then to try to find resolution to those differentials. There are a number of items in the appropriation bills which are always subject to being stricken on a point of order, but they are usually included because they are necessary to build the kind of consensus that one has to have to pass bills like this.

The committee knew, for instance, that we had an emergency with government computers with the year 2000 problem that our computer manufacturers have tossed in our lap, and the committee tried to deal with that in a responsible way. But the rebels in the Republican caucus blew that agreement up, and so we had a rule which will allow that to be stricken.

On the issue of contraception involving Federal employee insurance, again we had a bipartisan committee consensus on that issue, but the rebels in the Republican caucus did not like that, so they have blown up that agreement.

I tried to make my earlier motion because I sought to prevent one Member from being able to strike the language in this bill that treats as an emergency the government-wide computer problems which we have. That motion was objected to.

If the majority is insisting on striking that emergency provision and if the majority is insisting on striking of the Lowey language, then it seems to me that, in the interests of equity, I have no choice but to strike most of the language of the bill which is vulnerable to points of order, and I intend to do so as we move through the committee process. I take this time simply to notify the House of that so that they will understand why I will be striking a good many provisions, including a number of those that I happen to personally agree with.

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, before I yield for a colloquy, let me just say in response to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) that I appreciate very much his kind words about our work on this bill, my work. Certainly he and his staff have been also very helpful in getting us where we are.

Obviously, the statements that I made about the Y2K, I believe very strongly that we need them. My objection earlier to the gentleman's unanimous consent request was not because I do not believe that we should have this, but because I think it is my responsibility as the chairman of this subcommittee and managing this bill to preserve the rights of the House in what the rule that they just passed says, which is not to protect that. So I am still very hopeful we are going to have this issue resolved in the not-too-distant future.

Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS) for a colloquy.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk, but rather than introducing it, I rise to engage the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE) in a colloquy. I would like to discuss with the gentleman from Arizona, the distinguished chairman of the Subcommittee on Treasury, Postal Service and General Government, provisions, issues, that are contained in his fiscal 1999 appropriations measure.

In title 3 of the bill, there is funding for high-intensity drug trafficking areas. As the gentleman knows, the illegal drug trade has been a problem in the Dallas-Fort Worth area for quite some time. However, in the last 13 months, it has gotten progressively worse.

Since 1997, 13 young people have died from heroin overdoses in Plano, which is an affluent subdivision of Dallas. From January to June 1997, Parkland Hospital in Dallas has had 311 cocaine overdoses, 44 heroin overdoses and 19 methamphetamine overdoses. I reiterate, this is just in one hospital in Dallas.

Recently, the U.S. Attorney's Office in Dallas and the Drug Enforcement Administration announced the seizure of $11.7 million in heroin at the Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport. It is clear that the DFW area has become a major trafficking point for international narcotics trafficking.

According to the Office of National Drug Control Policy, a region's designation as a HIDTA is the result of massive collection and analysis of various kinds of drug and law enforcement information. This information should demonstrate that increased resources can be brought to bear in a specific area and would result in progress being made in that area.

In our discussions with the Office of Drug Policy Director, Barry McCaffrey, General McCaffrey, has indicated that he believes that resources should be brought to bear in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. This $5 million that we believe is necessary is something that we would like to ask to be designated as a result of these discussions and would ask that General McCaffrey designate this area as a HIDTA.

□ 2200

My good friend and colleague, the gentleman from Texas, (Mr. SAM JOHNSON) and I wanted to engage in some discussions about this.

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to join in this colloquy with the distinguished chairman of the Subcommittee on Treasury, Postal Service, and General Government, as well as my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS). The 13 that died from heroin that the gentleman discussed came from Plano, which is the area that I represent, and the drug seizure at Dallas-Fort Worth Airport which was $11.7 million in heroin, amounts to only 2 percent of what goes through there in their estimation. They do not have the resources to address the problem, and that is why we are requesting the gentleman's help in securing the necessary funds to designate north Texas as a high-intensity drug area.

Providing funds will give local law enforcement the necessary resources to fight the war on drugs. The gentleman knows what our position in Texas is relevant to the country of Mexico, and therefore, I think that the gentleman understands that our Dallas-north Texas area has become a funnel for that process, and Barry McCaffrey, as he indicated, does agree and informs us that he supports our efforts.

The Senate has already earmarked $5 million for the creation of HIDTA in northeast Texas, and we hope that the gentleman will continue to work with us and support the Senate language in conference. I know that the chairman of the subcommittee, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE) and I have had a discussion previously, and the gentleman indicated that perhaps the dollars were not there, but in conference, perhaps the gentleman and the Senate can find them.

Parents and children of north Texas need this help, and we are really fighting a war there, and we need the essential weapon of the HIDTA in the Dallas area. I know for the people of our area that the gentleman will help us. We just cannot afford to lose one more child to the ravages of drugs.

I thank the gentleman for allowing us to discuss it with the gentleman this evening.

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SESSIONS. I yield to the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Chairman, I thank both of the gentlemen for the questions and the comments that they made. I am very aware of the work done by the

High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas, the HIDTAs, and the efforts that they make in order to cooperate with local law enforcement. I think they do make a difference, and I certainly understand from the eloquent statements tonight how critical the need is in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

It is my understanding that the director plans to designate the Dallas-Fort Worth area as a HIDTA, and this legislation, I can tell my colleagues that this legislation does provide adequate funding of the overall HIDTA account to fund the creation of another HIDTA in that area.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank the distinguished gentleman from Arizona, and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SAM JOHNSON) and I both have worked very carefully with the chairman of the subcommittee, not only to enunciate what the problem has been in Dallas and Fort Worth, but also to receive his advice along the way in how to get this done.

I have great respect and I want to thank the gentleman very much. I will tell the gentleman that the citizens of Dallas and Fort Worth, the police departments that will utilize this and the U.S. Attorney, we will spend the money very wisely. We have a great respect for the taxpayers who have provided this money, and we intend for our resources to be used very carefully. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as she may consume to a distinguished member of our committee, the gentlewoman from South Florida (Mrs. MEEK), the former State Senator and now a distinguished Member of our body.

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Chairman, to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE) my chairman of the subcommittee, and to my ranking member, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), it has been a pleasure to serve on this subcommittee.

First of all, the chairman has conducted the meetings with a professional acumen that is rarely seen in a body such as this. The ranking member has supported him and has helped us. We have worked as a group. It is not a partisan committee, it is a bipartisan committee where we work together on issues and we work toward the resolution of those issues.

This is a very good bill. I support it. I would like my colleagues to support it. It is extremely important that attention be paid to the reduction of violent crime, and this subcommittee has seen to that, not only in its proceedings, but in all of its action in that committee.

What effort is any better in a Congress than the reduction of crime and the saving of lives, and this committee has seen to that and has funded it.

I am particularly interested in the gang resistance reduction program in that gangs are on the rise in our country, and we need more and more attention paid to them, and this subcommittee has done that. We have given the kind of support to investigations so that when something is discovered, that there is support for the findings.

Most importantly, attention is being given to missing and exploited children. My colleagues may have heard of many instances in my Miami, Dade County, of children who have been missing and have yet to be found, and this committee is focusing on that, to strengthen the families and to try to give us some assurance that once there is a missing or a lost child, this committee has paid attention to that.

The Customs Service, that is the highlight of an area that I represent, Miami. We are surrounded by water, and if it were not for the attention of the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) and this subcommittee, we would have many, many problems in Miami. They have steadily increased the number of Customs Service operators we have in Miami, and in south Florida we are extremely grateful for that. I could go on and on, telling my colleagues about the many things that this committee has focused on, but most of all, it is important to be a working Member of this committee and not be left out of decisions. That has not happened on this subcommittee.

I want to congratulate the chairman and the ranking member for such professional acumen.

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the distinguished gentleman from Erie, Pennsylvania (Mr. ENGLISH) for the purposes of a colloquy.

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, it is indeed a privilege to engage the distinguished gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE), my friend, the subcommittee chairman, in a colloquy.

Mr. Chairman, it is my understanding that the subcommittee felt, understandably so, that they had to closely follow the recommendations of the Judicial Conference when deciding on courthouse priorities in this appropriation.

As the gentleman is well aware, because we have discussed it at length, the Federal courthouse complex in my hometown of Erie, Pennsylvania, is badly in need of renovation and expansion. Repair and renovation of this courthouse is a strong community priority that enjoys active support by the Federal judges who work there, the GSA, as well as most of our local elected officials.

Recognizing that the committee had severely limited funds to work with this year on new courthouse construction projects, does the chairman agree to consider this project for funding for the fiscal year 2000 legislation?

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania. I yield to the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the gentleman's question and yielding to me to respond to him.

Let me just say, first of all, that the gentleman from Pennsylvania has been extraordinarily eloquent and persistent on this issue, and he has made a case, I think a very strong case, not just to me, but I believe to the GSA, about the need for this in the gentleman's community, and his community is very fortunate to have the gentleman advocating on their behalf for this, I know, very important project for the gentleman's community. Let me just say the gentleman made me aware, and if I was not before, I am very aware now, for the need for renovation and expansion of the Erie Federal Courthouse that the gentleman brought to my attention both last year and again this year.

As the gentleman points out, we did follow the priorities established by the Judicial Conference of the United States in this year's bill. Last year we did not have any courthouse construction, this year we do have some, and we have gone right down the list, funding as many as we can going straight down that list.

It is my understanding that the Erie project is currently in the Judicial Conference's fiscal year 2001, not fiscal year 2000, construction program, but I will certainly continue to work with the gentleman on the gentleman's project as we attempt to continue funding priorities for new courthouse projects, and I hope that we can get additional funding next year to move as many projects forward as possible.

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman, and I thank him for all of his efforts on our behalf, for his willingness to consider this project, and I look forward to supporting this appropriation and working with him in the future to make sure that the Erie project goes forward.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3½ minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY), who has been such a hard worker on the Federal Election Commission and such an assistance to our committee in working on this issue.

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

Mr. Chairman, tomorrow I will raise a point of order against section 511 of this bill. I had planned to offer an amendment to strike this language. However, the provision is not protected, and I will instead raise a point of order.

The current version of this bill contains an unprecedented provision which makes Members of Congress micromanagers. It would essentially fire the general counsel and staff director of the Federal Elections Commission.

Since when, Mr. Chairman, have Members of Congress gotten into the business of hiring and firing staff at the Federal Elections Commission? The Federal Elections Commission is a congressional campaign watchdog. How can Congress be put in charge of hiring and firing people who are supposed to be policing them? It is sort of like letting the inmates run the penitentiary.

This is how it is being engineered: The FEC is a bipartisan commission made up of three Republicans and three Democrats. The Commissioners make all the final decisions: Salaries, decisions regarding who or what is investigated. It is all made on a bipartisan basis because four members must agree.

The bill that is in front of us tonight and tomorrow would change all that. It would allow the general counsel and the staff director to be fired by just three Commissioners or by just one party.

It was not long ago that the new majority tied the hands of the FEC financially by fencing their money, saying it could only be used for computers and not for investigations, which is what they needed. Now the new majority is attempting to tie the hands of the FEC politically. In other words, if one's party or big donor becomes a target of the FEC, the FEC and its staff will become the target.

Unfortunately, I believe the pattern has already been set. The current FEC general counsel, Mr. Lawrence Noble, has served the agency with distinction for 11 years. During that time he has recommended investigations of anyone he believes may have violated election laws, Republicans, Democrats, Independents alike.

However, because he is making sensible recommendations regarding an FEC ban on soft money and tightening the definition of ''independent expenditure,'' he has become the target of the GOP. Also, his investigations of GOPAC have been questioned.

I must note quickly that these two recommendations are currently contained in the Shays-Meehan campaign finance reform bill. That, too, is a proposal that the leadership on the other side of the aisle has taken great creative pains to kill.

Mr. Chairman, I have before me a recent editorial from the New York Times called ''Punishing Competence at the FEC.'' The text reads, ''This change is nothing more than an attempt to install a do-nothing staff. Reform-minded members from both parties have a duty to oppose this vendetta.'' Vendetta.

Mr. Chairman, we have enough on our plate to do; we should not be getting into the area of making personnel decisions at the Federal Election Commission, and I am relieved that this provision will be stricken tomorrow, and I hope that this is the last time that we will ever hear of such an ill-conceived, partisan, misguided idea as was put forward by the majority party.

□ 2215

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Chairman, I am happy to yield 2½ minutes to the very distinguished gentlewoman from Connecticut (Mrs. JOHNSON), who has worked very hard on the reform of the Internal Revenue Service.

Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

Mr. Chairman, no one opposed the rule under which we are working more strongly than did I. No one regrets more keenly that that rule passed. However, it gives us extraordinary latitude, extraordinary freedom, and with that freedom comes a good deal of responsibility. I would call on my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to exercise the power that this rule gives us individually in the interests of the people of this country.

I lost that rule fight. Those who opposed it lost that rule fight in the good old-fashioned way democracy works. I would hope that no one in this House would raise a point of order against the funding for the IRS, whose very structure and organization we have worked hard to reform.

I would hope we would not raise a point of order against the Customs; against the Financial Management Services, that pays all the bills in this country; the GSA, responsible for building courthouses, some of them so desperately needed to administer justice in this country.

I know the passions that underlie some of the controversial sections of the bill, like that referred to by my colleague, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) in the section regarding the FEC. There certainly will be some sections struck as this bill goes forward. But I would hope that none of us would use the latitude granted under this rule in a punitive, vindictive, or destructive manner.

It is extremely important that this House be able to exercise freedom responsibly. We tell our constituents to do it, and we have to do it. So I would hope that we would be able, at the end of the day, to come out with a bill that does appropriately fund the many, many functions of government that are encompassed in this appropriations bill.

Mr. Chairman, as one who opposed the rule strongly, I ask my colleagues to not exercise the authority it grants except in a very, very narrow manner.

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentlewoman for her very eloquent comments and remarks. I think they are remarks that I hope will be heeded by Members on both sides of the aisle.

As the ranking member from the other side said a few moments ago, this has been a bill that has been carefully crafted, and I think has had the work in a bipartisan way of people on both sides of the aisle, so I would hope that we would not strike out, and it does not mean that we have agreed on everything, but I would hope that we do not get into a spirit of tit for tat, and we do not strike all the provisions of this bill.

Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. KOLBE. I yield to the gentlewoman from Connecticut.

Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut. Mr. Chairman, as chairman of the Subcommittee on Oversight of the Committee on Ways and Means that has direct responsibility for the IRS, I have held the hearings on compliance on the year 2000 matters for all of those agencies under our jurisdiction, which is more than half the Federal Government.

I believe that many, many, many people in our government are working extremely hard to assure that on January 1, 2000, we will be able to pay the bills, that there will be no interruption in government services, that Medicare will go well, Social Security will go well, contractors will get paid, defense will move forward.

I think it is our obligation, while we may not all agree on how to fund this at this particular moment, to let this bill move forward. So my plea is not just to those who might want to eliminate any agency that is vulnerable to elimination under this rule, like those that I mentioned. It is also, for a second thought, by some on my side who are not satisfied with how we are funding the Y2K challenge.

There are many rounds yet in the public discussion within this body and in the Senate as to how we satisfy that, so I think restraint on both sides of the aisle to move forward on this very important bill is a responsibility we share.

Mr. KOLBE. I thank the gentlewoman for her comments. I certainly concur with them.

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

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 30 seconds.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to simply comment and thank the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Mrs. JOHNSON) for her comments. Unfortunately, as she knows and we all know, the problem with the rule is that any one of 435 people can, under the rule, object and strike any matter in the bill that is not authorized, or is so-called legislation on an appropriation bill, which in many instances is absolutely essential to carry out objectives that are generally agreed upon.

The problem with doing that, of course, is that acting reasonably is sometimes in the eye of the actor, and one of our 435 colleagues may well think they are acting very reasonably and responsibly by striking a matter that 434 of us do not. But under this rule, any one of us that sees something as a reasonable action to strike probably a majority of this bill can do so. That was and is the problem with this rule.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 4½ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT).

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Chairman, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT).

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Chairman, I rise to engage the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE) in a colloquy. Before I do, I just want to associate myself with the remarks of the ranking member regarding the hard work and the

dedication by both staff on the minority and the majority side, as well as the kudos and praise that he proffered to the chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I ask to engage the gentleman from Arizona in a colloquy.

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. DELAHUNT. I yield to the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to engage the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT) in a colloquy.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Chairman, I say to the Chairman, the gentleman from Arizona, as a former prosecutor, I have seen firsthand the devastating toll of illegal drugs on countless individuals, families and communities. As we strive to continue to reduce the demand for illegal narcotics, we must also do all we can to supply the men and women who patrol our borders with the tools they need to prevent drugs from reaching our shores.

Today I rise in support of a new interdiction technology that could help law enforcement do its job. The innovative, sea-going Night Cat catamaran has outstanding fuel efficiency, remarkable speed, and superior handling and maneuvering capability, as well as a unique wave-piercing engineering which addresses the problems of physical stress and injuries to crew members caused by vertical acceleration in choppy seas.

These advances would provide a dramatic increase in our ability to outmaneuver smugglers and maintain control in high-speed pursuits. There is a long list of recent rave reviews from Federal, State, and local anti-smuggling officials.

In extensive tests last September that were funded by the Office of National Drug Control Policy's Counterdrug Technology Assessment Center, and carried out by the Naval Surface Warfare Center and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the Night Cat outperformed other craft up to 150 percent larger. Its design has been formally endorsed by U.S. Customs, U.S. Border Patrol, the DEA, U.S. Coast Guard, Navy Seals, and the Naval Surface Warfare Center.

Now it is time to help realize the potential of the prototype Night Cat catamaran. Congressional support, by providing an additional $2.5 million, would allow research and development of a 40-foot vessel with night vision and stealth capability, and the manufacturing of two additional 27-foot vessels desperately needed in high-intensity drug traffic areas.

Such vessels could be put to use to test this concept in an operational context before any additional funding might be sought. Too often the smugglers have the tactical edge. We owe our agents the most sophisticated and effective technology available for their safety and the success of their mission on our behalf.

I recognize that the subcommittee has produced a bill within very tight budget constraints, and that this request comes very late in the appropriations process. I cannot at this time propose an amendment to transfer this funding from other activities included in this bill. Instead, I would hope to work with the committee to explore ways to work with this program as the bill proceeds to conference.

Will the chairman agree to work in conference with the other body to find funding for the Night Cat pilot program?

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the gentleman from Massachusetts for his efforts in this innovative and promising law enforcement technology program.

The committee is highly concerned about the state of U.S. marine law enforcement, and the poor condition of the vessels and operational capabilities of the Custom Service's marine interdiction program. Our bill adds $1 million for the Customs marine interdiction program. That is a 20 percent increase over last year's level.

While the Night Cat would be a major asset for the interdiction mission, many other issues, apart from procurement, have to be addressed in order to upgrade the condition of Customs marine enforcement.

Scores of vessels are deteriorating or are in poor condition, sitting in drydock or otherwise languishing for lack of resources to operate or maintain them. Inadequate staffing and operational support is a continuing problem, as is the need for management to integrate operational intelligence, investigative efforts, and air assets far better than is currently the case.

I would also expect to see efforts to secure funding through DOD channels. Nonetheless, test results do show the Night Cat could make a strong contribution to the interdiction effort along our vulnerable coastal areas. As the gentleman has indicated, it could be a useful military asset.

With the understanding that we have to address a broad range of issues in supporting marine interdiction, I want to assure the gentleman from Massachusetts that we will work with him to explore ways in which we can support this program, this very useful program as we go to the conference.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BLAGOJEVICH) for the purposes of entering into a colloquy.

Mr. BLAGOJEVICH. Mr. Chairman, I rise to engage in a colloquy with the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BLAGOJEVICH. I yield to the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to enter into a colloquy with the gentleman from Illinois.

Mr. BLAGOJEVICH. Mr. Chairman, as the gentleman from Arizona knows, the Violent Crime Coordinators Program was organized under Public Law 103–322. This law provides that in the investigative component of the Department of Justice's Trigger Lock program, the violent crime coordinators work with local prosecutors, police departments, and the United States Attorney's Office to investigate armed career criminal cases and ensure that they are prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

VCC's represent an important link in our law enforcement system, and have been successful in keeping our Nation's most violent repeat offenders off our streets by making sure that Federal mandatory extended sentences are implemented.

VCC programs have been supported by groups on all sides of the gun debate as a way to increase the prosecution of violent crime. I know that the subcommittee has worked hard to craft a bill within a very limited budget. Unfortunately, no money was appropriated for this very important program in the House bill. I have been working with the subcommittee to find a way to provide $2 million for the program to bring it to cities like Chicago, as well as others.

While I had initially intended to offer an amendment to transfer $2 million from the General Services Administration's building operations account to fund this program, I am instead hoping to work with the subcommittee as the bill proceeds to conference to find a way to achieve this goal.

Will the chairman agree to work in conference with the other body to find funding for the violent crime coordinator program?

□ 2230

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Chairman, if the gentleman will continue to yield, I thank the gentleman for his interest and for the strong support that he has given to this law enforcement issue.

The committee has tried very hard to fund law enforcement priority programs that have been requested by the administration, and I would like to point out that we increased funding for the ATF by $16 million to a total of $28 million for the youth crime gun interdiction initiative that was requested by the President.

In trying to accommodate all the requirements the committee needed to fund, it was not possible to increase the funding for support of the trigger lock investigative efforts. However, we believe that locking up violent career criminals is an important objective, and ATF can contribute significantly to that effort. I, therefore, want to assure the gentleman that we will work with him on ways to fund this requirement when we do get to a conference on this bill.

Mr. BLAGOJEVICH. Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank the chairman. He is a great chairman. The ranking member is a great ranking member. Jeff Ashford from the gentleman's staff, Pat Schlueter from the ranking member's staff and Deanne Benos from my staff.

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I rise to say that in ending this general debate, we ought to, again, lament the fact that a large part of the work of this committee is, in my opinion, supported by the majority on both sides. It is unfortunate that we have gotten ourselves involved in a lot of political gamesmanship and that this rule will plunge us into seeing much of this bill stricken because, as I said, one person can do that.

Furthermore, we will not really focus, I predict, during the course of the consideration of this bill, on the substance of this bill, which is funding critical law enforcement, critical tax collection and tax reform issues, critical building of facilities to confront the crime problem in America, critical programs to make sure that our elections are fair, that people who are running for election follow the rules and that we adequately fund those who we are assigned the purpose of overseeing those elections.

It is unfortunate that as we consider this bill we will focus on the elimination of programs because they have not been authorized, through no fault of the Committee on Appropriations and perhaps even through no fault of the authorization committees, but the fact is they have not been authorized. So many of the programs that the gentlewoman from Connecticut referenced, which all of us know ultimately will be adopted, will be stricken from this bill. That is unfortunate, but the rule allows that.

In closing, I want to again congratulate the chairman and thank the chairman, thank the staff on both sides of the aisle, thank the members, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. MEEK) on my side, and the members on the other side for working together to try to adequately and appropriately fund agencies that are critical to the continued success of this country.

We are fortunately experiencing one of the longest, most successful economic periods in the history of America. We clearly have not been the sole persons who have brought that about. In fact, what government has done has been only a portion and not the majority portion of that success.

It has been the private sector, their innovation, their enterprise, their investment that have brought about this growth. But clearly, as I said in relationship to the Y2K problem, the agencies in this bill are critical partners in that success.

This bill has a long way to go before it becomes law. We will work together with the chairman and with the Members of this committee in a bipartisan way to try to bring it to fruition successfully.

I want to regret that and hope that the provision that the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. LOWEY) included in this bill and the Committee on Appropriations adopted providing for women in the Federal service to have access to contraceptive services to preclude unwanted pregnancies and, therefore, abortions, which everybody wants to do, will not be struck on a point of order and that at the very least we can consider that by majority vote in this House, which is not precluded by the rule, probably will not happen but is not precluded by the rule.

I thank, again, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE) for his leadership, his openness, and his positive attitude and actions as we consider this bill.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank the gentleman from Maryland for his kind words and would echo them back to him and tell him that I appreciate very much his cooperation and the efforts that he has made this year and in the past year that I have been chairman of this subcommittee to help me craft a bill that I think has been a good bill and one that can be supported by a majority on both sides of the aisle.

I come to this subcommittee with a lot less knowledge than the ranking member has of these agencies that are under the jurisdiction of this committee and he has been extraordinarily helpful. Again, I want to thank his staff and the staff that is with me on this side of the aisle for the work that they have done.

Mr. Chairman, as the ranking member said, tonight is the calm before the storm. Tomorrow is not likely, when we take this bill up again, to be quite so easy in terms of the kinds of things that will happen to this bill tomorrow.

As the gentlewoman from Connecticut said, I hope that Members will exercise as much restraint as possible, but as the gentleman from Maryland has pointed out, it takes only one Member out of 435 to strike most of the provisions of this bill, 80 percent of which, sadly, have not been authorized by the appropriate authorizing committees.

So I would only say that if this is going to happen tomorrow, I will, although we will have to concede the point of order, I will vigorously object or urge Members not to make that point of order. I would do so now in a general fashion and will tomorrow at the time that they make these points of order.

Nonetheless, I would note for my colleagues on both sides of the aisle that there will be another day for this bill. We will have an opportunity in the conference committee with the Senate to craft, I think, again, a bill, using the work that we have already done in the subcommittee and the full committee, using that work to make sure that our priorities that have been expressed by this House through the committee process, as it should be done, that those priorities are included in the final bill which gets brought to the floor this fall in a conference report.

I am confident that we will have a bill. I am confident we will have a bill that can be generally supported by Members on both sides of the aisle. I am confident we will have a bill that will deal with the priorities that we have established for law enforcement, for restructuring the Internal Revenue Service. I believe that those priorities will be dealt with.

Mr. Chairman, I will say that while I believe that tomorrow may be a stormy day, the sun will come out on the other side of that day. And we will have legislation, we will have an appropriation that all of us can look with some pride on.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, this rule strikes the emergency funding appropriation related to the Year 2000 conversion of Federal information technology systems. I must protest this provision in the rule because of the severity and potential impact of the Year 2000 problem.

I'd like to commend the work of Representative STEVE HORN who is the Chairman of the Government, Management, Information and Technology Subcommittee where I serve as ranking member. Mr. Horn has been a leader on the Y2k issue long before anyone else. I am pleased to be serving with him on the subcommittee on this issue.

I'd also like to commend the Majority for paying special attention to the Y2k problem. However, I'm concerned that if we delay the emergency appropriations for Y2k that we will not be giving the agencies the support they need to solve this problem.

Last month, the U.S. Postal Service released their first progress report on fixing the Y2k problem. The report was worrisome. Out of 335 mission-critical systems, 210 need to be repaired, 59 need to be replaced, and only 54 were Year 2000 compliant. The Postal Service needs their emergency appropriations as soon as possible. Imagine the disservice we are doing to the American people and economy by not doing our best to make sure their mail is delivered in a timely manner once January 1, 2000 is here.

At the Treasury, the Financial Management Service issues all the Social Security and other checks for the Government. Currently, they have 5 systems that have not been completely assessed to see if they are Year 2000-compliant. Renovation of these systems is critical if U.S. citizens are to receive their Social Security checks in the Year 2000.

The IRS is funded with this appropriations bill and currently has 93 out of 243 information technology systems fixed. That leaves 150 systems to be fixed before the year 2000. If the U.S. Government is unable to collect taxes on January 1, 2000, this could have serious consequences to the continued operation of the Government.

The Customs Service Year 2000 effort is also funded under this bill. All three of Customs mission-critical systems need to be repaired and tested. One of them is the NCIC component of the Treasury Enforcement Communications System which is also used by the FBI. NCIC is the Federal criminal database. Not fixing these systems in a timely manner could affect the apprehension of smugglers come January 1, 2000.

Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms is funded under this bill and needs to replace several of their programs. The funds need to be there for them to assure that the ATF can enforce the law come January 1, 2000.

Removing the emergency appropriations for Y2k from the Appropriations bill and setting up a separate emergency spending measure delays agency efforts at fixing the Y2k problem. Also, a separate emergency appropriations bill could contain unrelated objectionable amendments just as last year's flood relief bill did. Politicizing Y2k emergency funds this way trivializes the problem and threatens our readiness for the new millennium.

Mr. STARK. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of the Sanders amendment to H.R. 4104 which prohibits financial loans, guarantees, or other obligations from the Exchange Stabilization Fund (ESF) in the U.S. Treasury unless authorized by the U.S. Congress. Congress must have a say in how billions of taxpayer dollars are distributed worldwide. Under the current system, the administration is given a blank check—in the form of the ESF—to bailout failed economies in developing countries. This blank check, however, has been used to support irresponsible, and undemocratic international economic policy. Congress needs to gain leverage so that it can force the administration to abandon short-sighted goals and unequitable practices.

The ESF has evolved from a fund with a specific mission to an unaccountable giant nourished by tax dollars. Created by President Roosevelt under the Gold Reserve Act, the ESF was intended to be used to stabilize the exchange value of the dollar. The billions of dollars recently taken from the fund to bailout Asian countries and the $12 billion loan to Mexico in 1995 fall way outside of the realm of the ESF's original mission. A fund that no longer fulfills its original Congressional directive must be made accountable once again.

In addition to serving a financial purpose, ESF loans symbolically demonstrate American support for regimes, such as the Mexican regime that was bailed out in 1995. Loans with such international political and economic significance should require more than just the Administration's backing. The ESF currently has no direct accountability to the American people.

It is unwise for these funds to be distributed without Congressional approval. Each year on this floor we debate appropriations worth millions of dollars. We are shirking our responsibility to the American people by accepting unilateral executive appropriation of billions of dollars every year from the ESF to developing countries. Congress needs to be able to voice the American people's concerns over the use of the ESF.

And Mr. Chairman, I have many concerns over the projects that the ESF is currently supporting. These concerns have a direct bearing on the lives of the hard-working people back in my district.

ESF loans are part of an international tax and transfer cycle that rescues irresponsible risk-taking international banks at the expense of American and foreign middle and lower-income taxpayers. The short-term economic recovery promoted by ESF bailouts, not to mention U.S.-subsidized IMF structural adjustment, ignores long-term economic and political instability. Instead of learning to make more sound investments, banks continue to take risks knowing that they have a safety net. As a result there is a cycle of debt and rescue, subsidized by U.S. taxpayers. It is outrageous for wealthy international financiers and industrial moguls in developing countries to be saved time and time again by the hard-working people of America.

Congress needs to have the power to control the ESF so that lasting democratic regimes can be established and strengthened in countries benefiting from ESF funds. Under the present system, the ESF guarantees the solvency of insolvent institutions and unjust governments by continually bailing them out of crisis. The use of the ESF to support dictators in countries like Indonesia makes it obvious that Congress is needed to guarantee that the U.S. helps spread democracy and not corruption around the world.

Mexico in 1995 is a case in point in the use of the ESF to support corruption. The Mexican government purchased more than $45 billion of bad debts from Mexican banks in 1995 with the aid of $12 billion in ESF loans. Despite promising to eventually hold borrowers liable for the debts, the government has permanently absorbed the debt burden, agreeing to rescue the very financial elites that control the government. The likely result is that the $45 billion will be directly transferred from Mexican and American taxpayers to the politically and economically elite in Mexico, accentuating the class divisions that plague that society. Congress must have the power to insure that ESF loans are not given to countries that perpetuate corrupt political and economic regimes, such as Mexico.

ESF loans are part of a larger pattern of irresponsibly short-sighted international financial bailouts subsidized by U.S. taxpayers. Currently members can voice their feelings about funding for the IMF and other multilateral development banks. We deserve to also have our voice heard on the appropriation of billions of tax dollars to foreign countries through the ESF. I strongly urge my colleagues to support the amendment.

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. GILCHREST) having assumed the chair, Mr. DREIER, Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4104) making appropriations for the Treasury Department, the United States Postal Service, the Executive Office of the President, and certain Independent Agencies, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1999, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

STEVE SCHIFF AUDITORIUM

Mr. REDMOND. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on National Security be discharged from further consideration of the bill (H.R. 3731) to designate the auditorium located within the Sandia Technology Transfer Center in Albuquerque, New Mexico, as the ''Steve Schiff Auditorium'', and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. REDMOND. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 3731.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GILCHREST). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Mexico?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the initial request of the gentleman from New Mexico?

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the bill, as follows:

H.R. 3731

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. FINDINGS.

The Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Congressman Steve Schiff represented the First Congressional District of New Mexico in Congress from 1988 to 1998 with honor and distinction.

(2) Mr. Schiff chaired the Subcommittee on Basic Research of the Committee on Science emphasizing protection and improvement of America's economic and military strength into the 21st century through the support of a robust national science and technology infrastructure.

(3) Mr. Schiff was a tireless advocate of facilitating the transfer of technologies developed at federally supported institutions into the commercial sector.

(4) Mr. Schiff supported technology transfer efforts at Sandia National Laboratory, located in the First Congressional District of New Mexico, including its cooperative research and development programs, which have benefited the people of New Mexico and the Nation as a whole.

(5) Mr. Schiff's contributions should be acknowledged with a fitting tribute within the district he so selflessly served.

SEC. 2. DESIGNATION.

The auditorium located within the Sandia Technology Transfer Center in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and known as Building 825, shall be known and designated as the ''Steve Schiff Auditorium''.

SEC. 3. REFERENCES.

Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the auditorium referred to in section 2 shall be deemed to be a reference to the ''Steve Schiff Auditorium''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. REDMOND) is recognized for 1 hour.

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

I rise today in support of H.R. 3731, a bill to designate the auditorium located within the Sandia Technology Transfer Center in Albuquerque, New Mexico as the ''Steve Schiff Auditorium.''

It is a privilege to bring this bill to the floor today. This bill is a fitting tribute to the late Steve Schiff, who represented New Mexico's first congressional district, which includes Sandia National Laboratory, for nearly 10 years.

As chairman of the Subcommittee on Basic Research, Steve Schiff set a standard of commitment, furthering