Mr. BRYANT of Texas. I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, let me just say respecting our binational agreements is pretty important. I have been told over and over again in hearings throughout the last decade that the agreement that President Ronald Reagan made with the President of Mexico was not a treaty, and that is absolutely right. Nonetheless, many of us respect agreements made by our Presidents. In fact, I think it is the responsibility of the U.S. Congress, not the State legislature, to see to it that we respect those agreements and live up to them.

The La Paz Agreement, under article 2, said very simply that the Governments of Mexico and the United States were directed to the fullest extent practicable to adopt appropriate measures to prevent, reduce, and eliminate sources of pollution in their respective territory which affect the border area of the other. Article 7 stated that the two governments shall assess as appropriate projects that may have significant impacts on the border area.

I have placed into the RECORD with my motion to revise and extend the objections of the Mexican Government and diplomatic note to the United States. That is not the responsibility of the State of Texas. We are a State that is in this Union. That is the responsibility of this Congress to see to it that we respond in an appropriate fashion.

I can just tell the Members that my colleague from Texas is absolutely right. The United States would not put up with it if it was within 100 kilometers, as the La Paz Agreement states we were to have the dumping of radioactive waste by the Government of Mexico.

Mr. BRYANT of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his additional comments. I would emphasize once again, we are not talking about a simple siting question that makes some people happy and some unhappy. We are talking about a siting question that subjects this country to enormous liabilities.

In 1931, 40 miles from this site, there was an earthquake that registered 6.4 on the Richter scale. Sixty-five years ago is just yesterday in geologic time. In April of this year, just 2 months before this thing was marked up in committee, there was an earthquake in the same region that measured 5.6 on the Richter scale. Can anybody argue that we ought to let States locate nuclear waste dumps in earthquake zones right next to an international boundary and on a river that serves millions of people, who if harmed will be in the courthouse asking the taxpayers of this country to pay for the harm that they suffered? I do not think we can make that argument.

Today the gentleman from Texas [Mr. COLEMAN] and I and the gentleman from Texas [Mr. DOGGETT] and the gentleman from Texas [Mr. BONILLA] stand on the floor of the House and ask this House of Representatives to make a decision that is in the interest of the American people, and say to the States of Texas, Maine, and Vermont, go back and do it again. We may approve the next one and we may not, but for goodness sakes do not send us one that is in an earthquake zone.

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

I would just say that our colleague, the gentleman from Texas [Mr. FIELDS], should be commended for this efforts to move this bill forward in a very fashionable, responsible, and timely manner.

I would like to thank the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE], the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Energy and Power, for his support in moving this very reasonable measure through the House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. FIELDS] to close debate.

Mr. FIELDS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I will be fairly brief.

The purpose of a law passed by Congress is to allow States to make decisions for themselves, to make decisions relative to siting. That decision has been made. It is a decision that has been reviewed by the Texas Low-Level Radioactive Waste Compact Commission. It has been reviewed by the Texas Water Commission. The Texas legislature has voted on this. I stand here with a letter from Governor George Bush. It is factual to say that former Governor Ann Richards supported this. I stand here with a letter from Lieutenant Governor Bob Bullock, I stand here with a letter from Mickey LeMater of the M.D. Anderson Cancer Institute talking about the need for Congress to move forward.

Is there a benefit to the State? The answer is absolutely. That if the State of Texas had not itself moved forward, then Texas would have been subject to becoming the dumping ground for the rest of the country. We would not have had the ability or have the ability to pass laws restricting the low-level nuclear waste coming in to our particular State. This is a decision that has been made by Texans for Texans in the best interest of our particular State. I urge all of my colleagues to support this piece of legislation.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FOLEY). The gentleman will state it.

Mr. COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, it has been some time since I have done a suspension on the floor and I am unsure how we can assure a record vote. At what time should that request be made?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. We will have that in just a moment.

The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Colorado [Mr. SCHAEFER] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 558.

The question was taken.

Mr. BONILLA. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5, rule I, and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SCHAEFER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 558, the bill just considered.

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

Mr. COLEMAN. Reserving the right to object, Mr. Speaker, not on that issue but only to make sure that we have in fact ensured that we will have a vote. I thought we needed to ask for the yeas and nays. If that was done in dissimilar fashion, that is fine, but I just was inquiring.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The yeas and nays have not been ordered on that motion. It would be put to a vote tomorrow afternoon at some point.

Mr. COLEMAN. I thank the Speaker, and I withdraw my reservation of objection.

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

There was no objection.

PERMISSION FOR SUNDRY COMMITTEES AND THEIR SUBCOMMITTEES TO SIT TOMORROW, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 1995, DURING THE 5-MINUTE RULE

Mr. BONILLA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the following committees and their subcommittees be permitted to sit tomorrow while the House is meeting in the Committee of the Whole House under the 5-minute rule.

The Committee on Banking and Financial Services; the Committee on Commerce; the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight; the Committee on International Relations; the Committee on the Judiciary; and the Committee on Resources.

It is my understanding that the minority has been consulted and that there is no objection to these requests.

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

□ 1815

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, the Democratic leadership has been consulted and we have no objection to these requests.

Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

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

There was no objection.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. BRYANT of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to make a point of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FOLEY). The gentleman from Texas will state his point of order.

Mr. BRYANT of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we made very clear our intention to ask for a record vote on that. At the time the gentleman from Texas [Mr. BONILLA] stood up on the compact commission matter, he raised a point of order that a quorum was not present and that did not lock in a record vote. The gentleman from Texas [Mr. COLEMAN] specifically asked what action he was supposed to take to lock in a record vote.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Chair to grant us our motion for the yeas and nays to be ordered on H.R. 558.

Mr. BONILLA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to revise my point that I made earlier and ask for the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the yeas and nays are ordered.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5 of rule 1, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1617, CONSOLIDATED AND REFORMED EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND REHABILITATION SYSTEMS ACT (CAREERS ACT)

Mr. SOLOMON, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 104–249) on the resolution (H. Res. 222) providing for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 1617) to consolidate and reform work force development and literacy programs, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered printed.

FISHERY CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT AMENDMENTS OF 1995

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FOLEY). Pursuant to the order of the House of today 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. 39.

□ 1816

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. 39) to amend the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act to improve fisheries management, with Mr. GOODLATTE in the chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the order of the House of today, the bill is considered as having been read the first time.

The gentleman from Alaska [Mr. YOUNG] will be recognized for 30 minutes and the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. STUDDS] will be recognized for 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alaska [Mr. YOUNG].

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, this is a unique period of time that we are faced with during this session. We have a bill that has been heard by the committee and we have worked on this bill for approximately 3½ years now. It is H.R. 39, the Fisheries Conservation and Management Amendments of 1995, which I sponsored, along with my good friend, the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. STUDDS].

Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of H.R. 39, the Fishery Conservation and Management Amendments of 1995, which I sponsored.

Mr. Chairman, this legislation, as you will see, enjoys broad, bipartisan support from members of the Resources Committee and those members from coastal districts with fishing interests. For this bill to have come this far shows the bipartisan effort involved in the development of the bill. I want to thank Subcommittee Chairman SAXTON, GERRY STUDDS, and GEORGE MILLER for their leadership in addressing the difficult issues in this important legislation.

This reauthorization of the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976 is crucial to continuing the sound management of this Nation's fishery resources. If Members take nothing else away from this debate, remember, this legislation is supported by Members on both sides of the aisle, by the fishing industry, and by the environmental community.

This has been no small feat, and while some may not be entirely happy with the legislation, reauthorization of this act is very important to us all.

Mr. Chairman, during the 103d and 104th Congresses, 10 hearings on reauthorization issues were held. This legislation represents an attempt to address the concerns raised at these hearings. This legislation may not be perfect; however, fisheries management is a complicated balancing act. We have attempted to address the concerns raised by commercial fishermen, recreational and charter boat fishermen, environmental organizations, fishing communities, fish processors, and other interested groups.

The Magnuson Act was enacted in 1976 in direct response to the depletion of U.S. fishery resources by foreign vessels. The Magnuson Act expanded U.S. jurisdiction over fishery resources to 200 miles. The Act also included provisions intended to encourage the development of a domestic fishing industry.

The act created eight Regional Fishery Management Councils to manage the fishery resources within their geographic area. The Councils were charged with determining the appropriate level of harvest to maximize the benefit to the Nation while still protecting the long-term sustainability of the stocks.

This means the Councils must balance the often competing interests of commercial and recreational fishermen, and the often competing gear groups within the commercial industry.

It is important to note that the committee continues to strongly support the current Regional Fishery Management Councils system. This legislation includes some reforms of the Council process and requires new disclosure rules to deal with the perception of conflict of interest on the Councils.

While this legislation deals with the fishing industry, it is environment friendly. In fact, you have probably received or will receive letters of support from many of the national environmental groups. We think that we have crafted a bill which will allow fishermen to make a living from the sea while also making them better stewards of the resources they rely on for their livelihood.

Three major areas needed to be addressed in this reauthorization to maintain healthy fisheries and healthy fishing communities. For the domestic fishery resource to remain healthy, fishery managers must take steps to reduce bycatch and the mortality of discards in the fisheries, to prevent the overfishing of stocks and rebuild those stocks which are already overfished, and, finally, to protect habitat essential for the continued renewal of the fisheries.

The reduction of bycatch in our fisheries is one of the most crucial challenges facing fisheries managers today. In the North Pacific groundfish fishery alone, more than 740 million pounds of fish were discarded, in 1993. That represents 16 percent of the total catch of the fishery. Much of that discard is of prohibited species. It is clear that this is unacceptable. We hope that the requirements of this bill will help Councils address the problem of bycatch, and we hope that fishermen will respond with innovative methods of reducing bycatch.

In particular, this legislation requires the Regional Fishery Management Councils to amend all existing Fishery Management Plans to reduce bycatch to the maximum extent practicable. It also provides the Councils with the ability to offer incentives to fishermen to reduce their bycatch.

A second area of concern is the protection of essential habitat. This has been a tough issue to wrestle with. We do not want to over-regulate the fishing industry; however, the Councils