Bonilla
Bono
Borski
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd
Brady
Brown (CA)
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Christensen
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Collins
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Costello
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Davis (FL)
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Frank (MA)
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Gutierrez
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Hall (OH)
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Hutchinson
Hyde
Inglis
Istook
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Jenkins
Johnson (CT)
Johnson (WI)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kasich
Kelly
Kennedy (MA)
Kennedy (RI)
Kennelly
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kim
Kind (WI)
King (NY)
Kingston
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Kucinich
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LaHood
Lampson
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Lewis (CA)
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Lipinski
Livingston
LoBiondo
Lofgren
Lowey
Lucas
Luther
Maloney (CT)
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McCarthy (MO)
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McCrery
McDade
McDermott
McGovern
McHale
McHugh
McInnis
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinney
McNulty
Meehan
Meek
Menendez
Metcalf
Mica
Millender-McDonald
Miller (CA)
Miller (FL)
Minge
Moakley
Molinari
Mollohan
Moran (KS)
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Murtha
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Olver
Ortiz
Owens
Oxley
Packard
Pallone
Pappas
Parker
Pascrell
Pastor
Paxon
Payne
Pease
Pelosi
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pickett
Pitts
Pombo
Pomeroy
Portman
Poshard
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Quinn
Radanovich
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Ros-Lehtinen
Rothman
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Roybal-Allard
Royce
Rush
Ryun
Sabo
Salmon
Sanchez
Sanders
Sandlin
Sanford
Sawyer
Saxton
Scarborough
Schaefer, Dan
Schaffer, Bob
Schumer
Scott
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Sisisky
Skaggs
Skeen
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (MI)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (OR)
Smith (TX)
Smith, Adam
Smith, Linda
Snowbarger
Snyder
Solomon
Souder
Spence
Spratt
Stabenow
Stark
Stearns
Stenholm
Stokes
Strickland
Stupak
Sununu
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Taylor (MS)
Taylor (NC)
Thomas
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Thornberry
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Tierney
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Towns
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Turner
Upton
Velazquez
Vento
Visclosky
Walsh
Wamp
Waters
Watkins
Watt (NC)
Watts (OK)
Waxman
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Weygand
White
Whitfield
Wicker
Wise
Wolf
Woolsey
Wynn
Yates
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—5

Campbell
Manzullo
McIntosh
Mink
Paul

NOT VOTING—12

Allen
Bonior
Engel
English
Green
Herger
John
Lewis (GA)
Porter
Schiff
Stump
Wexler

□ 1404

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois and Mr. EVANS changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained during the rollcall vote on H.R. 867, the Adoption Promotion Act of 1997. If I had been present, it was my intention to vote ''aye'' because I strongly support the legislation.

I ask that my statement appear in the RECORD after the vote.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. GREEN. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained in my district both yesterday and this morning. On rollcall votes 92, 93, 94, 95, and 96, if I had been present, I would have voted ''aye'' on 92, ''aye'' on 93, ''aye'' on 94, ''aye'' on 95, and ''aye'' on 96.

I ask that my statement appear in the RECORD immediately following the recorded votes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CAMP. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 867, the bill just passed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. MORELLA). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

AUTHORIZING THE CLERK TO MAKE CORRECTIONS IN THE ENGROSSMENT OF H.R. 867, ADOPTION PROMOTION ACT OF 1997

Mr. CAMP. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that in the engrossment of the bill, H.R. 867, the Clerk be authorized to correct section numbers, punctuation, and cross references and to make such other technical and conforming changes as may be necessary to reflect the actions of the House in amending the bill.

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

There was no objection.

HOUSING OPPORTUNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY ACT OF 1997

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 133 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 133

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 1(b) of rule XXIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2) to repeal the United States Housing Act of 1937, deregulate the public housing program and the program for rental housing assistance for low-income families, and increase community control over such programs, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. Points of order against consideration of the bill for failure to comply with clause 2(l)(6) of rule XI of clause 7(b) or rule XIII are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Banking and Financial Services. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Banking and Financial Services now printed in the bill. The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered by title rather than by section. Each title shall be considered as read. Points of order against the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute for failure to comply with clause 5(a) of rule XXI are waived. Before consideration of any other amendment it shall be in order to consider the amendment printed in the Congressional Record of April 29, 1997, pursuant to clause 6 of rule XXIII, if offered by Representative Lazio of New York or his designee. That amendment shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for ten minutes equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against that amendment are waived. If that amendment is adopted, the bill, as amended, shall be considered as the original bill for the purpose of further amendment. During further consideration of

the bill for amendment, the Chairman of the Committee of the Whole may accord priority in recognition on the basis of whether the Member offering an amendment has caused it to be printed in the portion of the Congressional Record designated for that purpose in clause 6 of rule XXIII. Amendments so printed shall be considered as read. The chairman of the Committee of the Whole may: (1) postpone until a time during further consideration in the Committee of the Whole a request for a recorded vote on any amendment; and (2) reduce to five minutes the minimum time for electronic voting on any postponed question that follows another electronic vote without intervening business: *Provided*, That the minimum time for electronic voting on the first in any series of questions shall be fifteen minutes. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute made in order as original text. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. YOUNG of Florida). The gentleman from California [Mr. DREIER] is recognized for 1 hour.

(Mr. DREIER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material in the RECORD.)

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, for purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from South Boston, MA [Mr. MOAKLEY], my very good friend and the ranking minority member. Pending that, I yield myself such time as I may consume. Let me say that all time that I will be yielding will be for debate purposes only.

Mr. Speaker, in the tradition of past housing rules, this rule provides an open rule for the consideration of H.R. 2, the Housing Opportunity and Responsibility Act of 1997. However, the rule does waive points of order against consideration of the bill for failure to comply with House rules regarding the 3-day availability of committee reports or CBO cost estimates.

The main committee report has been available for 3 days, but because it did not include a CBO cost estimate, a supplemental report containing that estimate was filed yesterday, thus requiring these waivers.

The rule makes in order an amendment in the nature of a substitute as an original bill for the purpose of amendment, which shall be read by title. It contains a minor waiver of points of order for appropriating in a legislative bill, but I understand that the Committee on Appropriations is not opposed to the waiver, Mr. Speaker.

The rule further makes in order an amendment by the gentleman from New York [Mr. LAZIO] before other amendments are considered, which will be considered as read, shall be debatable for 10 minutes, equally divided between the proponent and an opponent, and shall not be subject to a demand for the division of the question. All points of order against the Lazio amendment are waived.

If adopted, the bill, as amended, shall be considered as an original bill for the purpose of further amendment, thus ensuring an open amendment process.

Finally, the rule strongly encourages preprinting of amendments in the RECORD, and allows the Chair to postpone votes and reduce votes to 5 minutes on a postponed question if the vote follows a 15-minute vote.

The rule also provides for one motion to recommit, with or without instructions.

Mr. Speaker, this is a bona fide open rule. Over the years I have had the great honor of referring to the former chairman of the Committee on Banking and Financial Services [Mr. GONZALEZ], who is sitting right here on the floor now, as Mr. Open Rule because of his strong commitment to major housing bills and bringing them under an open amendment process.

It is a distinction that, after 2 years of experience, I am now transferring from Chairman GONZALEZ to the current chairman of the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity, the gentleman from New York [Mr. LAZIO], and I know that the gentleman from Texas [Mr. GONZALEZ] would strongly support me in that action. While an open rule on a bill of this nature will be time-consuming and contentious, it is essential that we proceed in this nature.

Housing policy must be seen in the context of broader welfare policy. Members have strong feelings about the impact of Federal housing programs on low-income families and how these programs should be reformed. An open rule will allow all issues to be debated and will strengthen public confidence in whatever program changes we collectively decide to move ahead with in the House.

Quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, the changes called for in the bill are long overdue. Our public housing programs are a failure, and those failures have been known to us now for nearly two decades. Yet, until now, Congress has failed to offer effective solutions to addressing the housing and economic needs of poverty-level families.

Instead, we have continued to spend hundreds of billions of dollars on costly and inefficient public housing programs that encourage waste, fraud and abuse, while destroying urban communities and relegating tenants to second class status in Third World living conditions.

□ 1415

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2 will improve housing conditions and economic opportunity for tenants by substantially deregulating public housing and giving authorities the flexibility they need to operate efficiently and effectively.

While H.R. 2 does not fundamentally alter the Federal Government's intrusion into the housing market, nor does it reduce the size of the HUD's bureaucracy, it will go a long way toward reforming our failed public housing programs. For that I applaud the chairman, the gentleman from New York [Mr. LAZIO], for his successful efforts in bringing this bill forward.

I look forward to working with him to bring about similar reforms to the remainder of HUD's bureaucracy so we can enhance local control, reduce administrative overhead and cost burdens, maximize the direct flow of housing assistance, and promote our ultimate objective, which is the achievement of economic self-sufficiency for our low-income families.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2 is a good bill that deserves our support. A similar bill passed the House 1 week short of a year ago. More important, this rule provides for an open amendment process, as I have said, that will allow all of the policy issues that we will be considering to come forward with a free debate.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support of the rule, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to see this open rule come to the floor. It is a welcome change, and I urge my colleagues to support the rule. This rule waives points of order against failure to allow Members 3 days to review the committee report. This is the fourth time, Mr. Speaker, in the last few weeks that the committee has waived this rule. I hope that this trend would stop very soon, because Members really need time to review the bills before they actually come to the floor.

This bill, Mr. Speaker, is another matter entirely. This bill takes public housing away from the poor and hands it over to the people who can afford better. It replaces our housing programs with block grants. It entices richer tenants into public housing and pushes poorer tenants into homelessness.

Mr. Speaker, that is not what public housing is all about. Public housing is about giving families a chance to live on their own, no matter how much money they make. It is about reducing the number of homeless children and helping low-income parents give their children the kinds of lives they deserve.

Mr. Speaker, a long time ago, when I was a young boy growing up in South Boston, I lived in the first public housing ever built in the country: the Old Harbor Village, which is today called the Mary Ellen McCormack. Back then my family's moving into the project was upward mobility for me. There was no stigma, there was no crime in public housing. The Old Harbor Village was part of the community in every sense of the word. In fact, up until then, it was probably the nicest place we ever lived.

Growing up in the projects, you had a strong sense of community, a strong sense of pride, and everybody looked after everybody else. You lived for the guy upstairs, downstairs, and over the back fence. We were all treated as citizens and not subjects, and when a person is respected, they respond accordingly.

Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt about it, public housing has slipped a long way since then. It has slipped a long way since I was a tenant. But that is no reason not to try to get it back where it was. That is no reason to change Federal housing from a program that is targeted to the poorest of the poor to a program for everyone else. That is what the bill will do, Mr. Speaker. This bill takes housing away from those in most need, and pushes them further towards the fringes of society. It will widen the already enormous gulf between the rich and poor in this country at a time when the American children need all the help we can give them, no matter how much money their parents make.

Mr. Speaker, there are some good ideas in this bill. There are some provisions for flexibility and for administrative reforms that we badly need, but the rest of the bill just goes too far. My Democratic colleagues will propose a bill to improve our housing program by implementing ideas that everybody agrees to. But the Democratic substitute eliminates that risky block grant program which takes funding away from housing and does absolutely nothing to ensure that the funding will be available to operate and maintain the current units. The Democratic bill keeps public housing on the side of poor people. The Democratic bill keeps public housing on the side of the children.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this open rule and oppose the bill. Public housing should be a leg up for those who need it, and not for everyone else.

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

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Columbus, OH [Ms. PRYCE], a valued member of the Committee on Rules.

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished vice chairman of the committee, the gentleman from California [Mr. DREIER] for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my support for both this open rule and the Housing Opportunity Responsibility Act. First, I want to commend the chairman, the gentleman from New York [Mr. LAZIO], and the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity of the Committee on Banking and Financial Services for crafting legislation that follows our basic principles of, No. 1, making the American dream of affordable housing more attainable; No. 2, empowering individuals to improve their lives; No. 3, returning more decisionmaking authority to States and localities where it belongs.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2 does all of these things, fundamentally changing the public housing in section 8 rental assistance programs and allowing the Federal Government to support local communities in their decisions.

Under this bill, the emphasis is placed on providing the most service for the least cost, and tailoring Federal assistance to fit local needs, so the limited Federal resources are invested in ways that are likely to achieve the greatest return.

Fundamental to the bill is the belief that those who receive Federal assistance share a responsibility and an obligation to pursue self-sufficiency. H.R. 2 would remove disincentives to work, while linking continued Federal assistance to a modest amount of community service each month.

While I support this legislation, I am concerned that H.R. 2 falls short of fully addressing the issue of national occupancy standards. This year I cosponsored legislation introduced by the gentleman from Florida [Mr. MCCOLLUM] to give States the authority to set their own occupancy standards. In the absence of State law, it would allow of a standard of two persons per bedroom plus infants. As I understand it, the so-called McCollum language was originally included, but was later scaled back significantly during the markup.

In my view, the housing bill offers us the perfect and appropriate opportunity to give States the flexibility and authority to set their own standards and to implement a reasonable standard in their place when States fail to take action.

A major housing reform bill like H.R. 2 should take advantage of the experience and expertise of those who deal with these issues on a daily basis. I hope this might be addressed at some point in the process.

Mr. Speaker, promoting safe, clean, and healthy housing is central to the American dream, especially for low-income persons. I believe this legislation is critical to reducing the concentration of power at the Federal level that has stifled innovation and kept local housing authorities out of the decisionmaking process. I urge support of the bill and the rule.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Surfside Beach, TX [Mr. PAUL].

(Mr. PAUL asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate very much the gentleman's yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to be able to support this rule coming to the floor, and pleased that it is an open rule. We will have a chance to debate housing. I think it is a very important debate. We have had this debate going on now for several weeks in the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity. Unfortunately, as far as I am concerned, the debate has not keyed in on the real important issue of whether or not public housing is a good idea.

This particular piece of legislation does very little more than juggle the bureaucrats in hopes that it will do some good. Public housing started in 1937 with the U.S. Housing Act, and we have been living with public housing ever since. In 1965 HUD was created, and since that time, we have spent literally hundreds of billions of dollars.

We have no evidence of any sort to show that public housing is a good idea. It causes a great deal of problems and actually takes housing away from many, many poor people. But it costs a lot of money and costs a lot of hardship to a lot of people. The principle of public housing is what needs to be debated. Hopefully, in the general debate and in the debate over the amendments, we will be able to direct a debate in that area.

One thing that I think our side, the side that I represent, that is the free market and the constitutional approach to housing, we have, I would grant you, done a very poor job in presenting the views on how poor people get houses in a free society. Since we have had 30 years of experience and there is proof now that it leads to corruption and drug-ridden public housing projects that do not last very long and it costs too much money, we ourselves who present the market view have not done a good job, emphasizing lower tax, less regulation and growth economy, sound monetary policy, low interest rates; this is what will eventually give housing to the poor people.

But I think it is very important that we not construe anybody who opposes this bill as being one that has endorsed the notion or rejects the idea.

Mr. Speaker, the one other point that I would like to make is one of the arguments in favor of this bill is that it is going to be saving some money in the bureaucratic process. But if this is the case, one must look very closely at the CBO figures, because last year the HUD budget took $25-plus billion. This year, with this wonderful new program, we will be asking, according to CBO, $30.4 billion, an increase of about $5 billion. And this is not the end, it is just the beginning. So this is an expansion of the spending on public housing.

By the year 2002, it goes up to $36 billion. So the best I can tell is we were working on the fringes, we are not dealing with the real issues, we are not dealing with the principle of whether or not public housing is a good program.

I, for one, think we can do a lot more for the poor people. There are more homeless now, after spending nearly $600 billion over these last 20 years, than we had before. So I am on record for saying we must do more but we can do more by looking more carefully at the market.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, we have a couple Members who are very enthusiastic in expressing their desire to speak, but I am having a challenging time to educate them right now; and I do not know if my friend, the gentleman from South Boston, MA [Mr. MOAKLEY] has anyone.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, if it makes the gentleman from California [Mr. DREIER] feel any better, after we pass the rule, I would be glad to listen to their conversation seated here in the Chamber.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I urge an ''aye'' vote on the rule.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I urge strong support of this rule, which will allow for a free and fair debate under an open amendment process.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 133 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. 2.

The Chair designates the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. GOODLATTE] as Chairman of the Committee of the Whole, and requests the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. LAHOOD] to assume the chair temporarily.

□ 1430

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. 2) to repeal the United States Housing Act of 1937, deregulate the public housing program, and the program for rental housing assistance for low-income families, and increase community control over such programs, and for other purposes, with Mr. LAHOOD (Chairman pro tempore) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

Under the rule, the gentleman from Iowa [Mr. LEACH] and the gentleman from Texas [Mr. GONZALEZ] each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Iowa [Mr. LEACH].

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

I rise today in support of H.R. 2, the Housing Opportunity and Responsibility Act of 1997. I want to thank the gentleman from New York [Mr. LAZIO] for his extraordinary leadership on this bill as well as the constructive commentary of the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. KENNEDY], who is the ranking member on the subcommittee, as well as the distinguished ranking member of the full committee, the gentleman from Texas [Mr. GONZALEZ].

H.R. 2 is the product of numerous hearings that were held by the Committee on Banking and Financial Services as well as 4 days of markup which included more than 70 amendments, with some 20 amendments from the minority side adopted.

H.R. 2 was reported by the committee by a vote of 28 to 19. In the last Congress, a similar bill, H.R. 2406, was reported out of the committee and passed the full House by a bipartisan vote of 315 to 107.

Reforming our Nation's public housing programs, regardless of one's philosophical beliefs, is a priority both for the Congress and the administration. The committee was encouraged when Secretary Cuomo appeared before the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity on March 6 and stated that he will work night and day to enact historic public housing reform legislation. Likewise, the committee has been committed to working with Secretary Cuomo to reform rather than eviscerate HUD and the programs under its jurisdiction. Members may recall that 2½ years ago many in the administration and some in this body favored elimination of HUD. The Committee on Banking and Financial Services prefers to maintain a credible public housing commitment, recognizing that moneys are short and that disappointments in some areas may be significant.

Nevertheless, we believe that reform and rehabilitation are preferable to stultification and decay.

Virtually all interested parties agree that the current public housing system does not serve the tenants of public housing well, nor does it efficiently or effectively utilize taxpayer dollars that are appropriated for public housing programs.

Quite simply, H.R. 2 is as much about improving the lives of low-income families and individuals as it is about fiscal responsibility and Government accountability.

H.R. 2 replaces outdated laws and programs with a new empowering approach for communities designed to be relevant to the 21st century. Along with welfare reform efforts, this bill is a critical step on the path to revitalizing empowerment programs that were crafted decades ago in a different social, legal, and economic environment.

Without question, there are a number of important issues where the majority and minority part ways on philosophical grounds. These issues were debated and considered in an open forum at the Committee on Banking and Financial Services, and I am pleased that the rule for this bill provides for the same opportunity in the full House.

While I do not wish to review all the issues where there are disagreements at this time, I would like to briefly touch upon one issue where there appears to be an inconsistency within the ranks on the congressional minority and the Democratic administration. H.R. 2 provides that each adult member of a family residing in a public or assisted housing project contribute not less than 8 hours per month in community service activities. Individuals who would be exempt from this requirement include the disabled, the elderly, persons who are employed and others who are otherwise physically impaired from performing such services.

Also, the provision is structured so as not to duplicate community work requirements under local welfare reform efforts.

This provision is generally based upon the long held American precept that those who receive assistance from a community should give back to that community in some way. Some of our Democratic colleagues argue that this provision is punitive and demeaning. Yet it is worth noting that the administration's public housing bill that was provided by Secretary Cuomo and introduced by the gentleman from New York [Mr. LAZIO] and the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. KENNEDY] by request included the same provision to require 8 hours of community service. Also, the public housing bill that passed the House in the last Congress by a resounding 315 to 107 vote, which was submitted by former HUD Secretary Henry Cisneros, included the same community service requirements to which our colleagues on the other side are now raising objections.

It is true there could be a slight administrative cost increase in this work component, but it would be our hope that this cost could in part be borne by those asked to fulfill a work commitment. In the larger picture, the bill is deregulation oriented with the CBO estimating administrative savings of $100 million over 5 years.

As for funding, this bill matches the administration request for fiscal year 1998 and is consistent with the fiscal year 1997 enacted levels. In other words, our approach represents a freeze on spending with greater administrative discretion allowed at the housing authority level.

Given efforts to balance the budget, this bill represents an administration congressional consensus. The minority is correct that the bill moves to more mixed income housing with housing authorities, at their strong request, allowed to provide housing to the near poor as well as the poor. While all poor currently in housing are legislatively protected, it must be understood that there are many aspects of current public housing programs which have been judged by experts as well as the public as a failure. To concentrate the very poor alone in public housing, particularly high-rise housing, is to condemn them in many instances to poverty segregation.

Single dimension, lowest income housing simply has not worked. For the sake of decent standards of housing for the poor, more local discretion is needed.

Mr. Chairman, I urge consideration of this reform approach as common sense.

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

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

Mr. Chairman, I first want to begin my remarks by complimenting the gentleman from Massachusetts for his superb leadership that he has demonstrated in housing issues. He knows the subject matter, which is complex, very well. Equally important, though, he does deeply and sincerely care about the people who depend on public housing. He seeks to create a positive reform and works tirelessly on behalf of people who have few advocates and really no political resources.

He is a model of decency and compassion. I salute his courage, his energy, his imaginative efforts, all of which reflects great credit to him, the people that he represents and serves, and this House.

The bill before us, H.R. 2, can best be described as a series of good slogans but unworkable or undesirable policies. The bill before us is no more likely to be enacted than last year's failed effort, which it very closely resembles, incidentally. We will offer a substitute that makes, I believe, far more sense and which deserves the support of our Members.

I will predict that in the final analysis, any bill that is enacted will look very much like the substitute that we will offer.

H.R. 2 creates strong incentives for local housing authorities to stop renting available units to those who are in the greatest need of them. Under the bill, housing authorities will henceforth rent units only to people who can afford to pay more. The reason for this is simple: The Congress has cut operating subsidies far below what the housing authorities need, so the only way to keep public housing units from falling into ruin is to rent fewer units to the poorest class of applicants.

To be perfectly frank, this bill abandons those who are in the greatest need and for whom this whole thing was intended in the beginning.

I sincerely believe, as I have all along, that it is possible to maintain sound housing authorities without taking the radical and callous steps provided in H.R. 2. The substitute that we will offer will target housing assistance in what I believe is a sensible and humane way.

H.R. 2 imposes huge new bureaucratic burdens on local housing agencies but provides no money for these schemes. The authors of H.R. 2 apparently believe that residents of public housing are defective or derelict and in need of social engineering. Therefore, they require that tenants sign and adhere to a personal improvement contract. If these agreements are to have any meaning or effect, they will need to be individually and expertly designed. The tenants would have to be carefully monitored, and there would have to be resources available to carry out the various components of the self-improvement plan.

But there is no money provided in this bill for any of this, nor is it clear how the housing authorities are supposed to do a better job for free than schools and social welfare agencies can do with actual money.

Likewise, the bill requires public housing residents to do at least 2 hours a week of community service. No doubt this is a well-intended thing, but, again, the bill provides no money to carry out this mandatory public service. Somebody will have to provide and create and keep the records to be sure that the residents do the required work. Somebody will have to check to be sure the work is being done, and somebody will have to be sure that the work is actually beneficial to the community.

Without some kind of administrative support, this mandatory work scheme will collapse in a welter of confusion and fakery.

These prescriptions on H.R. 2 make fine slogans but they are unworkable. There is no money for them. They are not in any way integrated with any other program or policy. They ignore the complex reality of life at the bottom of the heap. The sad reality is that H.R. 2 represents a further and a much faster retreat from efforts to provide decent and affordable housing to the millions who desperately need help. Those most in need of help will be turned away. And those who get help will pay more for it.

I have highlighted only a few of this bill's defects. There are, of course, many more. I urge my colleagues to study the Democratic substitute. They will find that it is sensible and workable. The Democratic substitute is a realistic, good-faith effort to reproduce a bill that both parties can and should be able to agree on. I urge support of the substitute.

Mr. Chairman, I yield the balance of my time to the distinguished gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. KENNEDY], ranking member of the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Development, and I ask unanimous consent that he be allowed to control the time.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Chairman, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from New York [Mr. LAZIO], and I ask unanimous consent that he be allowed to control the time.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Iowa?

There was no objection.

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, over the next several days we will be discussing two different visions for the American community. One vision will be a portrait of the failed past. Imagine in this portrait mile after mile of 20-story projects stained by age, crumbling from neglect, isolated from jobs and business. The entry doors to the buildings are wide open, security locks punched out. Inside only the red light of an exit sign illuminates the hallway revealing an accumulation of debris. Outside after dark, the court yard is silent, and moms and dads trapped in their apartments instruct their children to stay away from windows for fear of stray bullets. Such a portrait is an all too familiar picture of life in public housing. It exists even here in our Nation's Capital.

There is another vision of the American community. This vision is one filled with neighbors working together to create an environment where children can grow up safely, surrounded by working role models and with the hope that one day, one day they can climb their own economic ladder to success.

□ 1445

Mr. Chairman, during the next several days, some here will talk of efforts to deprive our most vulnerable populations of affordable housing opportunities. Some will express outrage at involvement in community while ignoring the reciprocal relationships that exist throughout the rest of society. Mr. Chairman, it is fair to ask where these defenders were when communities and neighborhoods were falling into disrepair and neglect in their very own backyards.

With this bill, Mr. Chairman, we end the practice of looking the other way in the name of compassion when we see failure. To condemn another generation to a life without hope, a life without any sense of community, a life without the rewards of individual achievement or success, to defend this status quo mocks compassion and it is unacceptable.

Mr. Chairman, we are at a critical point in the debate over how we define the relationship of the Federal Government with local communities and neighborhoods. We begin today to end the cruel process of rewarding failure and punishing success. We cannot and we will not force children to grow up in an environment of violent crime where they are isolated from the economic and social opportunities of mainstream America.

And let me be clear. This legislation, this debate, is not about money. Our efforts over the next several days, no matter what we do, cannot alter the fiscal realities of the world. Money has not solved the problems of Chicago, of New Orleans, of San Francisco. It is the system itself that is broken.

Let us commit today on the floor to refuse to accept as legitimate the thinking that money is the answer to everything. But within those parameters let me strongly suggest that with the implementation of these reforms,

we will begin to be able to serve an even greater number of low-income Americans than we do today.

And so we begin. H.R. 2, the Housing Opportunity and Responsibility Act is, I believe, the embodiment of three central themes.

First, it removes Federal rules that punish working families in public housing. It removes rent requirements that discourage work and encourage the breakup of families. Families with the opportunity to earn more income are able to enjoy the full rewards of their efforts, and vulnerable residents are protected from harmful increases in rent.

This bill permanently eliminates regulations that have concentrated the poorest families in the very worst housing, and this is the second theme. Decades of warehousing poor families in high-rise projects have destroyed neighborhoods and condemned generations to live in a world much different than that which many Americans enjoy.

Our legislation allows for the creation of mixed-income environments where working people who serve as role models live alongside unemployed families. Instead of stark isolation from the economics of society, families become engaged in the activities of their neighborhoods, afforded a sense of accountability and responsibility for their own lives. And we are able to accomplish this without, and I repeat, without shutting out the poorest of American families from affordable housing opportunities.

Third, this legislation is about demanding accountability and performance from the thousands of housing authorities across the country. For those housing authorities that have chronically failed in their mission to provide affordable housing to low-income families, we contract out the management of the agency, take over the authority, or petition for a court-appointed receiver.

For too many years we have preserved and defended environments where drugs, rape, and murder proliferate throughout our neighborhoods. Today we say no more. We ask this: Should we allow this way of life to continue for our Nation's poor, or should low-income families expect no less than any one of us here expects in terms of the basic values of life: an opportunity to improve our own lives, a home where our children are safe and grow up learning the rewards of success.

Last year, Mr. Chairman, this House moved dramatically into the future by adopting, by an overwhelming majority, a housing overhaul that captured many of the reforms that are in the bill before us today. Last year's bill was supported by almost 100 Democratic Members and virtually all Republicans who saw the desperate need to break with the status quo and embrace positive reform.

Mr. Chairman, this legislation is less about shelter than it is about the creation of an environment where we can begin to successfully address poverty. Instead of a world of broken doors, broken windows, broken promises and broken dreams, we say to families in public housing, ''We respect you, and we will provide you with the opportunities and incentives to succeed.'' And in return, we expect responsibility and a contribution to the binding fabric of society. This is a fair deal.

Our goal is plain. We work to build a Nation of communities where every neighbor and every neighborhood can rise above the expectations of mediocrity and isolation to success. We promote civic responsibility that emphasizes we rather than me, an affirmation of rights, and the assumption of responsibility. Our efforts in this Chamber will seek inspiration for honesty and hard work and reflect the timeless values of discipline and respect.

I would like to thank the chairman of the Committee on Banking and Financial Services, the distinguished gentleman from Iowa [Mr. LEACH], for his guidance, for his help and for his support, as well as thank all the members of the committee who have participated in the consideration of this bill.

I would also like to thank the majority leader who scheduled this time and allowed this bill to come to the floor in an expeditious manner, and I wanted to thank my good friend whom I greatly appreciate, the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. KENNEDY], the ranking Democratic member of the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity, for his constructive additions to this bill.

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

Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

First of all, let me return the compliment to my good friend from New York, Mr. LAZIO, who has worked very hard on trying to fashion the bill. I believe very strongly that it is time for the Congress of the United States to get a bill passed. The question is which bill we get passed.

We heard a lot of talk and rhetoric about the fact that one view on how we ought to deal with public housing is to continue the policies of the past, and another view, which is a new vision of the future. I do not believe that that is, in fact, an accurate representation of the Democratic view as a continuation of the policies of the past.

Everyone is very clear that we need real reforms of public housing, of assisted housing in this country, and that we need to give HUD and local housing authorities a great deal of additional flexibility. Those are contained in the Democratic view on how we should handle housing issues.

Before we get into the guts of the bill, I would like to personally acknowledge and thank the former chairman of this committee, who was chairman of the Housing Committee in the Congress of the United States for perhaps longer than any other Member in the history of this country, someone who has dedicated his life to assisting the poorest people in our country and helping them attain decent and affordable shelter, who knows perhaps more than any other Member ever has about the issues pertaining to housing policy in this country. I would like to acknowledge the contributions of our great former chairman, the gentleman from Texas, HENRY B. GONZALEZ.

I also want to thank the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. LEACH], for the leadership that he has shown in trying to make certain that this bill has had the open and honest debate that I think did occur, although perhaps the votes ultimately fell short by one or two on a number of very important issues at the full committee level.

Let me take a brief moment to also thank the wonderful contributions of the staff of this committee in Nancy Libson, Armando Falcon, Angie Garcia, Rick Maurano, Eric Olsen, and, of course, Kelsay Meek, who has guided us through so many of these fights in the past. I want to thank them very much for the efforts they have made, as well.

Mr. Chairman, when we look at the housing policies of this country, there is no question that we need change. We have not had a new housing bill in this Congress in over 6 years. It is time we get a housing bill and it is time we get a fair housing bill. It is time we get a housing bill that recognizes that we need to do an awful lot to change the way housing works in this country.

There are 3,400 public housing authorities in the United States of America. Over 100 of those 3,400 are in trouble, and we ought to take action and give the Secretary the authority to move in and take over those badly run housing authorities and do so immediately. In addition, within well-run housing authorities, we ought to give the Secretary the flexibility of moving in and taking control of badly run housing projects within well-run housing authorities.

What we ought not to do is condemn the entire public housing of our country simply because it has become fashionable for politicians to identify some God-awful monstrosity where we have warehoused the poorest of the poor, never provided the necessary subsidies to, in fact, take care of those poor people, then walk in front of these awful buildings and say, ''Gosh, this is a terrible condemnation of the Lyndon Johnson Democratic commitment to the poor and it obviously does not work.''

So what is the basic solution that we have come to in the Congress of the United States to deal with this problem? Our solution is very simple. Our solution says what we ought to do is we ought to cut funding. So we have cut the funding that goes to public housing in this country and that goes to HUD from about $28 billion to about $19 or

$20 billion, a 25-percent cut across the board in housing spending.

Now, if that is supposed to solve our housing problems, it is going to be news to a lot of the poor people that live in that housing. It will be news to a lot of the housing authorities that have to take care of those poor people.

So what does the housing authority do? The housing authority, in order to stay solvent itself, says our only solution, obviously, is to throw out the very poor people that we are taking care of and to try to jack up the rents that we are going to receive that will stick to our back pocket by taking in wealthier individuals, by raising rents on those people that are currently paying and thereby allowing the housing authority to stay solvent.

Well, that is not accomplishment and, by God, we might end up with nicer public housing, but the price of that nicer public housing will have been very simply to throw more and more poor people out on the street. Now, we never hear from them. They do not vote. They do not participate in American society in too great a number. But it is unconscionable, it is unconscionable that the Congress of the United States, in view of its solutions or attempts to find solutions to our Nation's housing policy, is to simply throw more poor people out on the street and say that they do not count, we do not care, but as long as we can stand up before the American people and say, ''Gosh, we have gotten rid of all this bad public housing,'' we have a victory.

It is a hollow victory. It is a victory that is defined by ignoring the victim. At a certain point we have to reach inside ourselves, within our own consciences, and say to ourselves that we believe that our Nation's commitment to housing the poor is fundamental. It is fundamental to the basic principles that are laid out in our Constitution and in our Bill of Rights. It is what makes us the envy of the rest of the world. It is our commitment to compassion and to caring for others.

That is what I believe is really at work in this housing bill. It is an abandonment of that commitment.

Now, we have seen additional approaches. We have seen where, obviously, we have cut the funding in the budget by 25 percent. We are now saying that in terms of the number of poor people that are going to be targeted to live in public and assisted housing, where 75 percent of those individuals today live with incomes below 30 percent of the median income, we are going to raise that to 80 percent of the median income.

Eighty percent of the median income in many of the cities of this country are incomes of $40,000 a year or more. Now what will we do? Will we solve the housing problem by taking in people that are earning $40,000 a year into public and assisted housing, and that will solve the housing problems of the very poor?

It will not solve the housing problems of the very poor. It will make us look good as legislators because we are going to eliminate the very awful public housing dinosaurs that ought to be eliminated in both the Republican as well as in the Democratic bills.

We have this ridiculous mandatory work requirement. All I say is, listen, if we are going to establish a new policy in this country that anybody that gets a Federal benefit ought to contribute and volunteer in terms of America's future, I say that is great. Let us start with the oil and gas industry. Let us ask those boys, when they get a big tax write-off on their oil and gas leases, let us ask them to do a little volunteering.

Let us start with the people that invest in project-based section 8's. Let us say to every investor that makes money off of the HUD programs, let us see them volunteer as well.

Why do we just pick on the poor? Why do we just target these instances of saying we are going to wag our finger at the very poor and say they are the problem in America. They are not the problem in America. We spend less money helping poor people than any other account of the Government.

I would just say to my fellow Members of Congress that whether it is the personal improvement program or the accreditation boards or even the block grant process, these are not real reforms to getting at changing the public housing policies of this country. These are window dressing that enable us to stand up and make fancy dancy speeches to make us look like we have changed policy, when we have done nothing but get at the very poor by saying to them that we are no longer going to make them eligible for these programs. We will throw them out on the street and leave them to rot so we can look good before the American people.

That is the truth of what is behind the Republican bill, and that is why I offer the Democratic substitute and look forward to gaining support for that over the next few days.

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

□ 1500

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Chairman, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Iowa [Mr. LEACH].

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Chairman, I would just like to make 3 quick points to clarify the Record. One, no one for reasons of poverty alone will be eliminated from public housing, only for violations of terms of the lease, such as criminal behavior.

Second, the money in this bill is precisely the same as the administration requested. Third, we have to be very careful about this, but experience has shown, verified by experts as well as public consensus, that to concentrate the very poor alone in public housing is to condemn them to a kind of poverty segregation. Single dimension, lowest income housing simply has not worked anywhere in America, particularly high-rise housing.

Finally, I would say that to object to reform is to endorse the status quo. This of all Federal programs is one in which there is virtual consensus that the failure rate has been very high.

Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts. I yield myself 30 seconds to respond, Mr. Chairman.

First and foremost, when we raise the eligibility standards and we create an incentive by the public housing authorities to go out and take wealthier people in because more money sticks to the local housing authority, we do in fact displace poor people. That is the net result of the policies that my colleagues are pursuing.

Second, it is nice to say that we ought to have mixed income communities. It was my amendment at the full committee level that allowed us to do that under this legislation. It was opposed by the chairman of the committee. We end up in a negotiation achieving an accommodation on that issue, but I am glad to see that the chairman now supports that.

I would just say to the gentleman that in no way am I suggesting that we continue the status quo. I suggested in my opening remarks that we need to change dramatically those that live in public housing, but we cannot do it by simply turning our back on the poor, and you are right in pointing out the administration's funding levels are far too low for this bill as well.

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

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 30 seconds.

We are going to hear in this Chamber the same litany of things, that we are throwing the poor out. There are no poor people who are going to be thrown out because of this bill. The half of the Democratic Caucus that opposed this bill the last time may oppose it again this time, but they are doing exactly what the gentleman from Iowa said they were going to do, which is to defend the status quo, the super concentrations of poverty that destroy jobs, destroy hope, and destroy opportunity. Why anybody would stand for that and align themselves and associate themselves with that level of failure is beyond this Member. That is exactly what we are fighting against.

Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD) having assumed the chair, Mr. GOODLATTE, 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. 2) to repeal the United States Housing Act of 1937, deregulate the public housing program and the program for rental housing assistance for low-income families, and increase community control over such programs, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.