human immunodeficiency virus, and for other purposes.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 5:15 p.m.

Accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 36 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 5:15 p.m.

□ 1720

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. MORELLA) at 5 o'clock and 20 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON H.R. 4380, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1999

Mr. TAYLOR of North Carolina, from the Committee on Appropriations, submitted a privileged report (Report No. 105–670), on the bill (H.R. 4380), making appropriations for the government of the District of Columbia and other activities chargeable in whole or in part against revenues of said District for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1999, and for other purposes, which was referred to the Union Calendar and ordered to be printed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XXI, all points of order are reserved.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TAYLOR of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on House Resolution 469.

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

There was no objection.

PROVIDING FOR ADDITIONAL DEBATE ON SHAYS AMENDMENT TO H.R. 2183, BIPARTISAN CAMPAIGN INTEGRITY ACT OF 1997

Mr. THOMAS. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that during the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 2183, in the Committee of the Whole, pursuant to House Resolution 442 and the order of the House of July 17, 1998, that the amendment in the nature of a substitute offered by the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS) and the gentleman from Massachusetts, (Mr. MEEHAN) be debatable for not to exceed 40 minutes to be equally divided and the time controlled by the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS) and myself.

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

There was no objection.

REPORT ON STEPS TAKEN TO END ARAB LEAGUE BOYCOTT OF ISRAEL—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 105–295)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on International Relations and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the request contained in section 540 of Public Law 105–118, Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 1998, I submit to you the attached report providing information on steps taken by the United States Government to bring about an end to the Arab league boycott of Israel and to expand the process of normalizing ties between Israel and the Arab league countries.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *July 30, 1998.*

BIPARTISAN CAMPAIGN INTEGRITY ACT OF 1997

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 442 and rule XXIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 2183.

□ 1724

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 further consideration of the bill (H.R. 2183) to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to reform the financing of campaigns for elections for Federal office, and for other purposes, with Mrs. EMERSON in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. When the Committee of the Whole rose on Friday, July 31, 1998, the amendment offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ENGLISH) to amendment No. 13 offered by the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS) had been disposed of.

Pursuant to the order of the House of Friday, July 17, 1998, no other amendment to amendment No. 13 is in order.

Pursuant to the order of the House of today, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS) and the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS) each control an additional 20 minutes of debate on the amendment of the gentleman from Connecticut.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS).

Mr. SHAYS. Madam Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to yield 10 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MEEHAN) so that he would be allowed to control 10 minutes of time.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Connecticut?

There was no objection.

Mr. SHAYS. Madam Chairman, I yield myself 30 seconds to say to the Members of this Chamber and to all my colleagues that this is truly an historic opportunity to restore integrity to the political process and vote for the Meehan-Shays substitute, which will ban soft money, the unlimited sums, from individuals, corporations, labor unions, and other interest groups, recognize sham issue ads for truly what they are, campaign ads, improve FEC disclosure and enforcement and establish a commission to further study reforms to our campaign system.

Madam Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I am pleased to say that the House, in an orderly fashion, has discussed a number of issues surrounding campaign reform and that we reach a point tonight in which a major decision will be made by the House, and we reach this point almost entirely with an open rule and mutually agreed upon unanimous consent, which indicates that even on an issue as difficult as this, if reasonable people of goodwill will sit down and resolve the issues that separate them, the House can in fact move forward.

This particular substitute, the Shays-Meehan bill, has gone through a number of permutations over the years. At one time, Political Action Committees were seen to be the primary enemy of the Republic, and the current version views the fundamental erosion of the American experiences tied to what is often called soft money.

Sometimes the terms that are used in political debate, although we have all grown accustomed to them, are sometimes confusing to people who do not make this their life's work.

The idea of hard money is simply money raised under the Federal Election Act associated directly with elections, would be hard money. Other money would be so-called soft money. What this bill attempts to do is to quote, unquote ban soft money from Federal elections.

One of the difficulties in attempting to do something like this is that we had better have a definition and a ban that works for all evenly and equally, and I think one of the fundamental flaws in the Shays-Meehan bill is that it simply does not do that. Although it purports to ban soft money, it bans soft money only in regard, for example, to political parties.

Political parties are unique institutions in the American political experience. They are the only institutions

that program public policy, work for getting particular candidates elected, and what makes them unique is they nominate those individuals for political office.

There are a number of other groups who carry on similar activities but not in total. For example, labor unions are very interested in legislation and they attempt to influence the outcome of it. They program public policy in terms of what ought to be the appropriate presentations and they spend money to try to get candidates elected but they do not nominate candidates. That makes unions different than political parties.

□ 1730

But ever since the 1970s, political parties have been treated as though they are super political action committees or they are the only ones involved in the political process and that by controlling political parties, you can control the political process.

Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, if you examine Shays-Meehan on the question of, quote-unquote, soft money and its control of soft money by political parties and how it deals with soft money vis-a-vis labor unions, you will see exactly the point that I am making. Although soft money is banned for political parties in registration and get out the vote, soft money is not banned for labor unions in voter registration and getting out the vote. It is interesting that where this legislation prohibits the party from spending money, it in fact allows labor unions to spend money, the same defined money in the same activities in which political parties are prohibited.

It just seems to me that if you are going to make an evenhanded, honest attempt to control what seems to be one of the primary evils in the system today, quote-unquote, according to this legislation, soft money, that you should create a structure which handles soft money in all its permutations, from whatever institution is utilizing it, so that you do not tilt the playing field in one direction or the other.

One of the fundamental flaws of the Shays-Meehan bill is that it in fact inhibits and prohibits political parties who want to influence candidates and legislation from using soft money but it in no way inhibits labor unions from influencing legislation and candidates with that same soft money. We will be looking at other areas, I believe, that are fundamental flaws as well as we move through this debate.

Madam Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MEEHAN. Madam Chairman, I yield 1½ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) who has played such a critical role particularly over the last year and a half in making sure that we got to this point in time.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Chairman, this vote is a test of this institution, but even more it is a test of ourselves. We have heard it said the public does not care, but that misreads what the public is really saying in oft-quoted surveys, that they believe those in power do not care how the public feels or what they want done, reform of a system where money too often counts more than the public's vote or voice.

The opposition has invoked in this debate first amendment free speech protections, though on other occasions they have not hesitated to vote for proposals to amend that vital part of the Constitution. Shays-Meehan does not hinder free speech; indeed, it protects the voices of regular citizens by controlling large sums of unregulated, undisclosed money now drowning out their voices.

We in the political maelstrom know better than anyone else that the status quo in financing campaigns is not working. Money, once said the mother's milk of politics, is increasingly becoming its poison. Shays-Meehan is a serious effort to stem and to begin to reverse this flow. It requires our support.

Mr. SHAYS. Madam Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. CAMPBELL), the professor from Stanford, really one of the most important leaders in this effort for campaign finance reform.

Mr. CAMPBELL. Madam Chairman, I appreciate the gentleman's kind words. This is a constitutional and appropriate piece of legislation. Shays-Meehan bans soft money, recognizes the phony issue ads for what they are, strengthens disclosure, and then creates a commission to study all of the remaining issues, and there are many that are left in this campaign finance problem. But I have been called upon today by my good friend and colleague to speak a word or two about the Constitution.

It is important for every Member of this body to make her or his own judgment as to constitutionality. But it is also important to bear in mind that this bill enhances the first amendment freedom of speech. It does not restrict it. And here is why. What it does is to allow the disclosure, so that we know who is speaking, so that that opportunity is not the opportunity to dissemble. It does nothing to restrict the content of what one wishes to say. But if one wishes to campaign and say things about a candidate 60 days before the election using that candidate's name, Shays-Meehan says, ''Own up and tell us who you are.'' That, I suggest, enhances first amendment freedoms.

The Supreme Court has frequently ruled on the question of what the first amendment means in this context as in others. What it has said is that speech may be regulated where the overwhelming purpose is to enhance the communicative purpose. Here that is exactly what Shays-Meehan does. Under the Federal Election Commission law, people are allowed to spend only $1,000 to a candidate, but they have no limit on how much they give to a political party, and that political party then comes around and works its way to help exactly the same as the candidate. And so it says, ''Speak, enhance the freedom of speech by disclosure and honesty.''

Madam Chairman, the most important point in this debate is that we honor our commitment to uphold and defend the Constitution. This bill does that. I urge my colleagues to exercise their judgment, but not to vote ''no'' because of the concern for the Constitution. The bill is constitutional. I urge its support.

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

Did the gentleman mean to say that under the Federal Election Act, individuals have no limit whatsoever on the amount they can give to political parties?

Mr. CAMPBELL. Madam Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. THOMAS. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. CAMPBELL. No, there is still the aggregate overall limit.

Mr. THOMAS. The gentleman did say there was no limit, and I knew he did not intend to convey that there is no limit under the law.

Mr. CAMPBELL. Indeed, if the gentleman will yield further, the limit is $25,000; $1,000, however, is the limit for how much you can give to a candidate.

Mr. THOMAS. That is correct. There are clear limits in the law on what individuals can give to political parties.

Madam Chairman, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HUTCHINSON) who has made enormous contributions to the House's ability to weigh options in the area of campaign finance reform, one of the principal authors of the underlying bill which Shays-Meehan hopes to substitute for and we hope it does not, the major sponsor of the freshman coalition bill.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Madam Chairman, I thank the gentleman from California for yielding me this time and for his extraordinary leadership in structuring this very open debate on campaign finance reform.

The battle for reform has been a very long journey. Many people in this body have been fighting this battle certainly longer than I have. I congratulate the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MEEHAN) for their leadership and for the way they have fought the battle for their idea on reform and for their legislation that we will vote on today.

Now, they know that I have a different viewpoint. I have a different philosophy when it comes to campaign finance reform. We both believe that we should ban soft money to the national political parties. But we have disagreements on how far you can push the Constitution. But despite that disagreement, I have opposed out of deference to them many of the amendments that have been offered so that

they can have a fair vote on their bill as it comes up on the House floor today. But today as we vote on the Shays-Meehan proposal, this is not the end of that journey that we began so long ago, but this is simply another fork in the road. Today we vote on the Shays-Meehan substitute. Tomorrow we very likely will vote on another substitute proposal. There are about eight other substitutes that remain outstanding. The base bill, the freshman bill, the Hutchinson-Allen reform bill, probably will be voted on on Thursday or Friday of this week.

Today as we vote on the Shays-Meehan proposal, if it receives more than a majority, then it will continue on that journey. But we will have an opportunity later in this week to join with other reformers and to show that the freshman bill offers the best chance for reform, offers the best ideas for reform.

The gentleman from Michigan indicated that this is a test for this body, and I agree that it is. But within that test, we can have different ideas as to what is the best proposal for reform, what can do the most for our country. I submit that the freshman bill, the Hutchinson-Allen bill, is the best proposal. Many of the things we do together, both the Shays-Meehan proposal and the Hutchinson-Allen bill ban soft money to the national political parties. Both bills increase disclosure and information to the American public. But there are still some differences. I believe the differences boil down to three points.

First of all, the bills are different as to how they treat the Constitution. I respect the gentleman from California, the professor, who talked about how this will pass constitutional muster. Well, clearly the Supreme Court case of Buckley v. Valeo indicates that it will not. But it is the hope of some reformers that, well, they will change their mind, they will go a different direction. We believe the best chance for reform is not to challenge the Supreme Court but to pass a bill that is totally constitutional, and that is different with the freshman bill as to how we treat the Constitution.

Secondly, they are different as to how they treat individuals. They both increase information for individuals and ban soft money, but what our bill does that is different is that we empower individuals by increasing their contribution limit to the rate of inflation. Since the last limitation of $1,000 was passed in the mid 1970s, there has not been any change, and therefore that contribution limit has been eroded by inflation and we empower individuals. We treat individuals differently.

The third difference is to how we treat the States. We treat the States different because we believe the States are entitled to make some decisions on their own without Federal mandates as to what their State parties can and cannot do. We ban the greatest problems to the national political parties and the problems that we experienced in the last election by banning soft money to the national parties, and prohibiting Federal officeholders from raising soft money, certainly they cannot do it for the Federal parties but in our bill they cannot do it for the States parties, either. And so there are some clear differences.

I would urge my colleagues as we take this next step on the journey to remember that there are some options out there, that it is your responsibility to pass this test of the American people by not saying we are going to pass reform, by saying we are going to pass the best reform, constitutional reform, reform that meets the obligation that we have to the States, reform that empowers the individual. I believe the best opportunity for that will come on Thursday or Friday of this week.

I urge my colleagues to take this step, but to ask the question, what is the reform that we can do the best for the American people? I believe in this body there is a majority vote for reform. And so probably today we will have a majority vote for the Shays-Meehan bill, but I believe there will be another majority vote down the road and we can distinguish these two bills and set an example for the American people that they will have more confidence in this body.

I urge my colleagues to vote for the best reform, to take the next step of the journey with the freshman bill, the Hutchinson-Allen bill.

Mr. MEEHAN. Madam Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BONIOR), the distinguished minority whip. Let me say there are a lot of people responsible for the historic vote that we are about to have, but there is no one more responsible, who has worked harder on the Shays-Meehan bill than the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. BONIOR. Madam Chairman, I thank my friend for his kind remarks and congratulate him on his outstanding effort in leading this effort and the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS) as well.

Madam Chairman, months of delay and poison pills and death by amendment. The opponents of reform have done everything they can to kill off campaign finance reform and keep the spigot of special interest money flowing. But special interest money is precisely the problem. The American people are tired of campaigns that cost millions of dollars. They are sick of seeing their TV sets turned into battle zones. And they are disgusted by outsiders with big wallets drowning out local candidates, local issues and the voices of local voters. On election day, too many Americans are tuning out instead of turning out.

Today we have a chance to vote on a bill to clean up America's elections and restore the faith of the American people. The Meehan-Shays bill takes a sensible, fair, bipartisan approach. It will outlaw the overwhelming torrent of soft money. It will help put an end to the sudden anonymous special interest attack ads in the last days of a campaign. And most important, it will give our beleaguered electoral system back to the people it really belongs to, the voters.

□ 1745

So I urge my colleagues to support real campaign reform, restore the integrity of our system, vote to restore the faith of the American people.

Vote for the Meehan-Shays bill.

Mr. SHAYS. Madam Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. SMITH), who has been a campaign reform person going way back to her State days as well and has been really in the forefront.

Mrs. LINDA SMITH of Washington. Madam Chairman, I think first we need to go back to what the bill does. The most important thing is it stops the process of soft money.

In all of this it is hard to remember what soft money is, but it is a process of giving nearly unlimited amounts of money to the party organizations that often fund unlimited amounts of really nasty ads towards the end of the campaign. But at the bottom of them they do not say paid for by a tobacco company or whoever really paid for them, so that we really do not know who bought that ad, who is affecting the election.

I think it is important for everyone to remember that is the base of this: cleaning up the system so we can know who is paying for influencing the elections, not money washed through that we cannot track.

The other thing that this does is it deals with sham ads. It says if someone is using the face and the name of someone, it is an advertisement. It is not just informing the electorate, but it is advertising, and it does not say we cannot do it, it just says we have to come under the law and report it: who they are, what they are spending.

The other thing this bill does is something we all want. It increases the disclosure. It simply says we need to tell timely who is paying for what, and we need to inform the folks so they know again who is paying for elections and make sure that everyone knows that on a timely basis.

Then another thing it does that I think is real important is it establishes a commission to go on, to come back and tell us and give us recommendations, but it does not just fall to a commission as an excuse for doing nothing. This place is pretty great at coming up with commissions because we do not have the backbone to do what we need to do. We all know the American people are sick of the campaign system that is washing money through, and they see it nightly on their TV sets.

And finally, but not exclusively, this bill takes care of a lot of the problems that a lot of the groups had about the freedom of speech on their voter guides, and it cleans that section up and lets them have their voter guides without super management.

Madam Chairman, with that I encourage this as a positive vote.

Mr. MEEHAN. Madam Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN).

(Mr. MORAN of Virginia asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Madam Chairman, I rise in very strong support of the Shays-Meehan bill because it is both bipartisan and comprehensive.

Madam Chairman, I rise in strong support of the Shays-Meehan substitute.

I support the Shays-Meehan amendment because it is bipartisan, comprehensive, and it reforms the abuse of so-called ''soft-money.'' More than any other proposal, the Shays-Meehan amendment has taken into account the concerns of both Democrats and Republicans. It has struck an important balance and will ensure that reform will not unduly burden one party or another.

I support the Shays-Meehan amendment because it is comprehensive. It reform issue-advocacy campaigns by adopting tight definitions and reporting requirements. It attacks multi-million dollar independent expenditures by ensuring that they are truly independent. And it codifies the Supreme Court's decision in Beck versus N.C.W.A. to ensure that union dues are not misspent.

Perhaps most importantly, I support the Shays-Meehan amendment because it reforms soft money. Both political parties are to blame for soliciting soft money. In 1996, Democrats and Republicans raised over $262 million in unregulated soft money—well over 200 percent more than they raised in 1992.

Our current campaign finance laws welcome unregulated corporate and union contributions. In the last election cycle, Philip Morris Companies, Seagram & Sons, RJR Nabisco, and Atlantic Richfield each gave millions of dollars in unregulated soft money. Is there any wonder why we haven't passed a tobacco bill this year?

The financing of Congressional campaigns prevents the political, but more importantly it can prevent the legislative process. And the exploitation of these loopholes will only continue unless the Shays-Meehan solution is enacted.

I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important bill and returning the power of democracy to the average individual voters and remove that power from the wealthy ''special'' interests.

Mr. MEEHAN. Madam Chairman, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS).

(Mrs. CAPPS asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CAPPS. Madam Chairman, I rise, too, in strong support of the Shays-Meehan substitute bill.

Madam Chairman, I rise today in strong support of the Shays-Meehan substitute and I ask unanimous consent to revise and extend my remarks.

Madam Chairman, I rise today to commend my colleagues Mr. MEEHAN and Mr. SHAYS and their staffs for their tireless work and tremendous efforts to clean up our beleaguered campaign finance system.

The Shays-Meehan coalition is truly impressive. It includes Democrats and Republicans, new Members and Hill veterans, liberals and conservatives, Members from around the country.

Just last week my Republican colleague Mr. PAXON, said that ''disclosure is the key to real reform.'' I agree, and urge anyone who feels this way to vote for the Shays-Meehan proposal. This bill will effectively end the misuse of issue advertisements by requiring ads which clearly urge the support or defeat of a candidate in a federal election to be treated like other political ads.

The Shays-Meehan proposal also deals with the gripping problem of soft money, which is now the single biggest problem with our federal elections. Banning soft money would drastically reduce the role of special-interest money in elections.

Our debates have raged late into the night. This has been a marathon endurance test. But, in what has been the greatest example of bipartisan unity I have witnessed since I came to Congress, Members have closed ranks across party lines and killed 16 poison pill amendments that would have left campaign finance reform to languish unpassed yet again. We have an opportunity to do today what no one believed was possible just a few short months ago. Together, we can enact the first sweeping overhaul of our campaign finance system since Watergate.

Today we will decide whether to restore integrity to our campaign finance system, or ignore the corrupting influence of unlimited, unregulated money in federal elections.

The time for reform is now. The American people have spoken. And it is up to us, in this body—the People's House—to pass this bill and restore the public's trust in our political system.

Mr. SHAYS. Madam Chairman, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE), the former Governor.

Mr. CASTLE. Madam Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding this time to me, and I, too, rise in very strong support of the Shays-Meehan bill.

This is a bill which under the scrutiny of the light of day through debate has grown in its support and has grown in its value to American citizens. It does so much to change our election laws in a positive sense. It deals with the most significant problems of the campaign system: the explosion of soft money and sham issue ads. Passage of the Shays-Meehan bill will take away the power and influence of special interests and begin the process of returning the power of electing public officials back to the American people. It will stop interest groups from blanketing districts with unfair and anonymous advertising days before elections by redefining issue advocacy laws. We need to remember that we went through something like 586 amendments in this process, and indeed we now have one of the finest pieces of legislation which we can pass this year. I encourage everyone, all Republicans and all Democrats in a bipartisan way, to support the Shays-Meehan bill.

Mr. SHAYS. Madam Chairman, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GREENWOOD), who speaks a little more slowly.

Mr. GREENWOOD. Madam Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Connecticut for yielding this time to me.

Throughout this debate the opponents of Shays-Meehan have tried to argue that our limitation on soft money is breaking new ground. It is not. I believe it was in 1912 that Congress decided to eliminate corporate and labor union money from going to congressional candidates because that is not government of the people and by the people and for the people. It was government by the special interests. We close that loophole that has allowed that special interest money to go right to the parties and thereby influence congressional elections at the local level.

This is a return of the power back to the communities and away from the special interests. Vote for Shays-Meehan.

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

Madam Chairman, I find it ironic that the gentleman mentioned that it was corporations and labor unions, and Shays-Meehan does nothing about labor unions and soft money. One would think at some point he would understand what he was referring to.

Madam Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. FAWELL), a member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

Mr. FAWELL. Madam Chairman, I rise in some reluctant opposition here because I believe that the section 501 codification of the Beck decision in this bill is a poison pill. It simply does not do what it does state that it does. It states that it predicates a violation of the Beck decision as only involving workers who work under a union security agreement who are not members of a labor union. Thus, it basically states that the notice that has to be given to all of the workers in a union shop are only those who are not members of the union. Well, that means about 99 percent of the workers are not going to get notification of their rights under the Supreme Court decision in Beck, which basically tells workers that they need not have to pay union dues which are noncollective bargaining in nature, which can include political contributions, but which encompasses much more.

Section 501 also states that the right to object only pertains to the use of political activities unrelated to collective bargaining which is defined to be expenditures in connection with Federal, State or local elections in connection with efforts to influence legislation unrelated to collective bargaining. But Beck covered all expenditures by unions not directly related to collective bargaining, not just to political activities.

In addition, the above definition is pregnant with the implication that political activities can be related to collective bargaining, something the Beck decision never inferred.

This is not a codification, it is an evisceration, it is an obliteration of the Beck decision and makes a mockery of that U.S. Supreme Court decision. Workers, unions and non-union alike, who work under a Union Security Agreement are obligated to pay their union dues under threat of the loss of their job. For that very reason the Beck court gave these workers, union and non-union workers alike, the clear right to be apprised of the right not to pay any portion of union dues not directly required by collective bargaining. It was by no means limited to only ''political contributions''. The decision also implies that workers also have a reasonable means of implementing those rights, preferably before their paychecks are docked rather than after the fact. Section 501, under the banner of ''codifying'' Beck, alters and waters down these basic constitutional rights to next to nothing under the high sounding title of ''codification''. It is nothing of the sort. No serious student of the Beck decision sees it as anything more than a political price of organized labor to support the Shays-Meehan bill. I think the price is too high.

Mr. SHAYS. Madam Chairman, I yield myself 30 seconds to totally disagree with what we just heard.

The bottom line is the Beck decision was a decision by the courts that if someone paid an agency fee, were not a union member, they did not have to have any political money go to the union, that they did not have to have any of their agency fee go for political purposes.

I know this for a fact. My wife was a teacher. She quit the union. Her agency fee does not go for political purposes.

It is true there are other parts of the Beck decision that we did not codify because they did not relate to campaign finance law. We only codified what was Beck as it related to campaign finance law.

Mr. MEEHAN. Madam Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. RIVERS), who has been a leader on this floor many, many late nights.

Ms. RIVERS. Madam Chairman, in 1913 Woodrow Wilson said:

> Publicity is one of the purifying elements of politics. Nothing checks all the bad practices of politics like public exposure.
>
> . . . An Irishman seen digging around the wall of a house was asked what he was doing. He answered, ''Faith, I am letting the dark out of the cellar.'' Now, that's exactly what we want to do.

So said Woodrow Wilson in 1913, and it is true today. Shays-Meehan is about letting the dark out of the cellar. Shays-Meehan would ban soft money, ending an avalanche of unreported and unregulated dollars into the American political system. It would close loopholes in existing laws and would require all dollars spent on influencing elections to be open to public scrutiny. It would protect voter guides, legislative alerts, legitimate issue ads and independent expenditures, and it would operate with respect and within the First Amendment of the Constitution.

Both parties have built this system we have today, and both parties must work together to change it. We must clean up the foundation of our House, the people's House, to let the dark out of the cellar.

Vote for Shays-Meehan.

Mr. MEEHAN. Madam Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND).

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

Mr. KIND. Madam Chairman, as a member of the Freshman Finance Reform Task Force, I rise in strong support of the Shays-Meehan bill.

Madam Chairman, today we are finally given an opportunity to vote on meaningful campaign finance reform legislation. This vote is long overdue. For almost two years we have heard about the abuses in the campaign finance system. We have heard from our constituents that they feel their voice has been drowned out by the big money special interests who push their own agenda. We have heard a lot of rhetoric from leaders in Washington who say they want to clean up our elections yet have failed to allow a vote on changing the system until now, when it is too late to effect this year's elections.

There are many members of this body who are committed to reform of our broken campaign finance system. I applaud the efforts of my friends Congressman SHAYS and MEEHAN for their courageous leadership on this issue. The Shays/Meehan substitute is a good bill and I will support it's passage. The Shays/Meehan substitute will take the biggest money out of the political process and finally bring some control to the independent expenditures that have come to dominate our elections. It is a good first step to fix a problem that has no simple solution.

I have been working over the past year and a half with a bipartisan coalition of freshman members of Congress to craft our own campaign finance reform bill. That bill, H.R. 2183, is the base bill being considered today. I will support that bill when it is considered later this year. Our bill was crafted because many members remain concerned that parts of the Shays/Meehan substitute may be ruled unconstitutional. The freshman bill is more narrow in focus, but it still gets at the most common abuses in the campaign system without a constitutional threat.

Both the Shays/Meehan substitute and the freshman base bill are honest, bipartisan attempts to fix our broken election process. I believe that this House works best when we work in a bipartisan manner, and that is how both these bills were created. For that reason, both bills will offer true reform to a system badly in need of reform.

Ultimately this debate boils down to the belief that there is too much money in campaigns. If you support that idea, as I do and most constituents I talk to in western Wisconsin do, then you support campaign finance reform. If you believe that we need more money in the system than you will oppose Shays/Meehan.

The majority of the public doesn't believe that Congress has the courage to actually change a system that appears to benefit our own interests. Tonight we have the opportunity to show the public that we can take the big money out of this system and put elections back into the hands of the people we are sworn to represent. I encourage my colleagues to support Shays/Meehan and begin the process of true reform of our political process.

Mr. MEEHAN. Madam Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT), our minority leader, who has been so instrumental in putting us to where we are right now for this historic vote in favor of campaign finance reform.

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

Mr. GEPHARDT. Madam Chairman, I rise to speak in strong support of the Shays-Meehan campaign reform bill, and I would like to begin this evening by paying tribute to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MEEHAN) and the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS). Without them we would not be here tonight, and without them and their belief in this issue we would not be on the threshold of being able to take this first very, very important step of campaign reform. They have shown us that campaign reform is an issue that can be delayed, but it will never be denied.

We are not here by accident. There is a national crisis of confidence in our system of campaign financing. It is a crisis of confidence that cuts across party lines and should disturb all of us as Democrats, as Republicans, as Americans.

The Republican mayor of New York during the New Deal years, Fiorello LaGuardia, once said:

''There's no Democratic or Republican way of cleaning the streets.''

There is no Democratic or Republican way of cleaning up our campaigns. We have reached the point in our Nation's history when too many Americans believe that special interests, lobbyists, wealthy interests wield too much influence in our campaigns and our democracy.

□ 1800

That belief, right or wrong, has corroded many Americans' faith in their government and in their country.

This is an issue that should have every Member of the House in search of a bipartisan solution to reverse this trend of alienation that divides Americans from their government. This is an issue that challenges us all to rise above the politics of the moment in search of a lasting solution, and I believe with all my heart that Shays-Meehan is that solution. This is the first real step. It may be modest, but it

is the first real step to begin the process of reform this year.

Friends of reform, the majority of our House Members, have banded together behind the bill, and, in a remarkable show of dedication we have voted down amendment after amendment, often amendments that we ourselves have proposed, in order to pass a bill that we can all accept and that will begin to get at the root of the problem, a democracy that is drowning in campaign money.

I am sorry the leaders of this House have fought to protect and preserve the current system. They have wasted the precious time of this House by making us run through an obstacle course designed to kill Shays-Meehan. But they made their choice. They stood for the power of big money and against real bipartisan change. They were never really interested in this debate. They were interested in stopping the debate and having deadlock.

But our efforts are an example of what we can do when we really work together in a bipartisan effort, putting aside party labels and party ideology and finding a practical answer to a very real problem. We were able to overcome all the obstacles.

There is only one more obstacle, and that is getting enough votes tonight to make sure that this bill is the bill that we finally vote on at the end of the process.

It can be done; it must be done. All of us are not just representatives of the People's House, we are temporary guardians of the jewel of democracy, and our role as guardians gives us the responsibility to make sure that the jewel is protected for this and for future generations.

I congratulate these two sponsors. I congratulate the Republican and Democratic Members who have stood with them in bringing this bill to this point. One more obstacle. It must be done. Vote for Shays-Meehan.

Mr. SHAYS. Madam Chairman, I yield myself 15 seconds to thank the minority leader, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT), to thank him because time and again the Democrat Conference has been there as straight-shooters, playing no games with those of us on this side of the aisle. They have been true to their pledge for this bill and campaign finance reform.

I want to thank both the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BONIOR) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT) for that, because they have been straight-shooters on this issue.

Mr. THOMAS. Madam Chairman, it is my pleasure to yield one minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING), the chairman of the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

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

Mr. GOODLING. Madam Chairman, there is one real glowing error in my estimation in this legislation, and that is the codifying of the Beck decision. That is bad enough because that is a slap in every working man and woman's face. But, beyond that, they make it much worse, because then they say the notice of rights in the bill must only be given to nonmembers of the union. Then they make it worse by saying that they will limit what it is the worker can object to as far as paying is concerned. That makes the Beck decision worse.

Now, what is the Beck decision? It says that you do not have to pay any dues not used for collective bargaining in the union security agreement. A union security agreement is when you agree, employer and union, that you must join the union and you must pay dues.

Now, how do you handle this situation? The only thing you can do, according to this legislation, is to drop out of the union. If you do that, you must still pay your dues.

However, now you are going to appeal and you are trying to get part of your dues money back. Who do you think you appeal to? You appeal to the union. What chance does the poor soul have? I mean, it is rigged, folks. It is rigged.

You could have corrected this. All you had to do is take the Worker's Paycheck Fairness Act as reported out of our committee and you would have corrected this issue once and for all.

Mr. MEEHAN. Madam Chairman, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI).

(Ms. PELOSI asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. PELOSI. Madam Chairman, I rise in strong support of the Shays-Meehan amendment. I commend the gentlemen for their leadership in bringing hope to the House that we can finally drain the swamp that is the political process we are in.

Madam Chairman, when Washington first became the capital of our country, it was built on a swamp. It is still a swamp, a swamp putrid from the huge amounts of money that pours in here, special interest money stacking the deck against the average American seeking a legitimate role in the political process.

I rise in support of real campaign finance reform. The Meehan-Shays Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act is the best chance the American people have at realizing there longstanding demand that we end the corrupting influence of big money and level the playing field so that all Americans can participate and be heard.

Meehan-Shays includes a ban on soft money at the Federal and State level; a ban on foreign money entering the system; voluntary spending limits; new limits on Political Action Committees; tougher political advertising disclosure requirements; and campaign enforcement and disclosure requirements, such as mandatory electronic filing of Federal Election Commission reports.

President Bill Clinton has endorsed the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act, and has challenged the Congress to send him campaign finance reform legislation that is meaningful, substantive and representative of real change.

I do not think there is any issue more important than this one because it is about nothing less than our oath of office. Every single person who comes to this body to serve takes an oath of office to protect and defend the Constitution against all enemies, foreign and domestic. The greatest enemy to our democracy is foreign and domestic money poisoning our system.

Vote "yes" on Meehan-Shays and give the political process back to the American people where it began and where it belongs.

Mr. THOMAS. Madam Chairman, it is my pleasure to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), the majority whip of the House.

Mr. DELAY. Madam Chairman, as everyone knows, I am opposed to this Shays-Meehan fiasco. It is not reform. This is just another example of big government picking winners and losers, and in my opinion the winners are the Democrats and the losers are the Republicans. It is amazing to me that Republicans would support this disarmament bill. It just violates our most precious freedom, the freedom of speech. It tilts the campaign playing field in favor of incumbents, and it creates a shield between voters and the Congress that is supposed to represent them.

Many of my colleagues have taken the House floor to denounce what they say is too much money in American political campaigns. Well, such cries are rhetorically effective but factually deficient.

Congressional candidates in 1996 spent less than $1.25 per citizen during the course of the campaign. Is that too much money to spend on democracy? Americans spend twice as much per year on yogurt than they spend on political campaigns.

But do we have the will in this Congress to actually change the Constitution and limit freedom of speech in order to reform our campaign laws? Most of the Members of this Congress said "no" in voting against a constitutional amendment that would actually limit it.

What you are talking about is limiting the speech of our constituents and hiding behind the name "reform." Any casual observer of this debate will have noticed the true reason why many Members support this bill. It is an incumbent protection bill. The bill itself bans photoguides and score cards, and it bans these so-called sham ads that Members hate to see run against them because it makes them uncomfortable when their voting report is brought before the American people. The American people have a right to know where their elected officials stand on the issues of the day, and this bill turns that principle on its head.

When we debated the right to third party groups to send out issue alerts, to rally their supporters, the supporters of Shays-Meehan called those ads a sham. One Member even said an ad that says "Congressman Smith voted

against a tax cut'' should be banned and that we should manage free speech.

Of course, we have the views that we just heard from the distinguished House minority leader, who happens to have over $3 million in his campaign account and wrote the laws that we are living under today. He said, ''What we have here is two important values in direct conflict: freedom of speech and our desire for healthy campaigns and a healthy democracy. You can't have both.''

That is the minority leader of the House saying that you cannot have freedom of speech and healthy campaigns.

Madam Chairman, we must have both. Whether they want to admit it or not, the supporters of this bill believe there is such a thing as too much information about our government and that Americans are too stupid to sort out what is true and what is false. These free speech prohibitionists want to restrict Americans' political dialogue and debate. To me, I cannot think of anything more self-righteous.

My friends, we are talking about core political speech that is protected by the First Amendment of the Constitution. The First Amendment is at the very core of what our Republic stands for. It allows any of us to criticize the politician who governs us, to voice unpopular ideas and to engage in debate.

This bill does the opposite. It shields Members of Congress from public criticism by the very people who elect us. I do not think Americans need Washington restricting and censoring the information that we have access to. Why should Washington be able to judge what speech is good and what speech is bad? But that is what this bill does. It does just that.

I have been told privately by a number of our Members that they know that the bill is unconstitutional but they want to take a free vote. They have told me they know that the bill gags citizen groups and voters. They have said they want to vote ''no,'' but their local editorial board supports the bill, and because the Senate will never take up the bill, they can safely vote ''yes''.

Well, Madam Chairman, to those Members, I plead with you, do the right thing; uphold your oath of office; do not violate the First Amendment of the Constitution.

My friends, this is not a free vote. There are over 100 citizen groups that have written you to urge you to oppose this bill. Many of those groups will score your vote tonight.

To my Republican colleagues, let me just simply say that this is not reform. This is not good government. This is political disarmament. It does nothing to protect union members from forced union dues, while putting a shackle on our traditional supporters who use voter guides and score cards and independent expenditures to keep the American people informed of what goes on in this House.

You do not have a free pass to violate our Constitution. Support free speech and vote down Shays-Meehan.

Mr. SHAYS. Madam Chairman, I yield myself 45 seconds to respond to the comments just heard from the majority whip.

Madam Chairman, first off, this is not disarmament, and it would be an absurd thing to suggest unilateral disarmament. How could it be unilateral disarmament to ban soft money to both political parties? Is the inference that Republicans benefit more from soft money than Democrats?

Why would it be unilateral disarmament when we call sham issue ads what they truly are, campaign ads? It is not a freedom of speech issue. We do not say you cannot advertise. We do not say people cannot say whatever they want. They are just campaign ads, and you call them campaign ads.

When you call them campaign ads, two interesting things happen; you cannot use corporate money and you cannot use union dues. How could it be unilateral disarmament to improve the FEC disclosure and enforcement? How could it be unilateral disarmament to allow the commission to deal with other issues that we have not yet dealt with?

The bottom line to this bill, it is about restoring integrity to the political system. Both parties, individuals, corporations, labor unions, everybody has to play it by the same rules.

Mr. MEEHAN. Madam Chairman, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from California (Mr. FARR), who has been such a leader in campaign finance reform.

Mr. FARR of California. Madam Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and congratulations to the authors.

Shame, shame, shame on those that will try to tell you that this bill does all kinds of things that it does not do. It does four things, very simple things. It brings control back to people who run for the House of Representatives. It takes soft money out. That is outside the system. That is not candidates' money. It bans soft money.

It bans sham ads. Since when are sham ads in the interests of candidates? Those are done by third-party organizations that do not have anything to do with the campaign. You or the candidate should be able to speak your own words, not have outside interests speak for you.

It has more power for the FEC to look into disclosures and to enforce them. We certainly need that if you are going to enforce the law.

Lastly, it sets up a commission to study it. That is all it does. How can one not vote for this?

Mr. MEEHAN. Madam Chairman, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) who was so instrumental in forging this coalition that we have, in merging this coalition that we have through merging the commission bill.

(Mrs. MALONEY of New York asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Chairman, I rise in support of this bill. We have the power to make history tonight and to succeed where past Congresses have failed by passing true campaign finance reform, and we owe it to the American people. I rise in support of the Meehan-Shays bill.

I rise in strong support of the Shays-Meehan substitute.

Not because I think it's the ''cat's meow''—it has its imperfections. But it certainly has nine lives.

It's dodged a number of death threats and I'm proud to say that reformers have done a great job of keeping it alive.

The bill before us today—is our last best hope.

It bans soft money, increases disclosure, and strengthens the means of disclosure.

It also provides an on-going process in the form of a commission to come back and do more to repair our broken down elections process.

This bill brings the American people back into the elections process.

I applaud Mr. SHAYS and Mr. MEEHAN for their dedication . . . and success so far.

And I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for the Shays-Meehan substitute.

□ 1815

Mr. SHAYS. Madam Chairman, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Mrs. ROUKEMA).

(Mrs. ROUKEMA asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Madam Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

Madam Chairman, I say that we know what the issue is. We have seen it on all these amendment votes. We should not be trying to face our constituents in November unless we have been able to vote for this historic measure to stop the corruption and restore honor to our election system.

Madam Chairman, I rise in strong support of the Shays-Meehan substitute and urge my colleagues to pass this landmark legislation.

Madam Chairman, after years of newspaper headlines, months of testimony before this congressional committee or that congressional committee, special investigations by the Justice Department, one thing is crystal clear: Our campaign finance system is out of control. Costs are skyrocketing. Candidates of all kinds are finding themselves devoting more time and energy to fundraising—at the expense of their public service duties. Our airwaves are jammed with attack ad piled upon attack ad.

Madam Chairman, our campaign system has become twisted and abused to the point where it is the biggest threat our democracy faces today. It fuels the cynicism of an already cynical American electorate. It promotes voter apathy among an electorate that has become convinced that elections are bought and sold by the interest group with the fattest wallet.

My colleagues let's be honest if we defeat this legislation it will be on our backs to explain to the voters why we voted to protect this

corruption, and against restoring power back to the ordinary citizen.

With the Shays-Meehan bill, we have a historic opportunity to correct many of the problems that beset our campaign system. And yes, this legislation is by no means perfect. But we can not let the perfect be the enemy of the good. And this bill represents the good.

Among other important reforms:

Shays-Meehan bans fundraising on Federal property (and many of the amendments we've added to this bill relating to the White House and Air Force One strengthen this substitute amendment).

Shays-Meehan expands the ban on franked mail to 6 months before any election.

Shays-Meehan contains new prohibitions and new penalties for foreign contributions.

Shays-Meehan takes aim at those sham campaign ads and protects voter guides and the ability of citizen groups to lobby their elected officials.

But most importantly, Shays-Meehan bans soft-money—perhaps the most corrosive development in campaigns today.

In the last election cycle, unions, corporations, and wealthy individuals pumped over $260 million of soft money into the political environment! That's triple the amount that was raised in the 1992 cycle.

These funds are raised and spent outside the reach of Federal election law and are directly connected to many of the scandalous practices now the focus of numerous congressional investigations: the Lincoln bedroom, mysterious foreign contributors, White House "coffees," and the like.

The Shays-Meehan bill is the only substitute amendment that contains a hard ban on soft money. It doesn't have the loopholes that some of the other reform proposals have and will not allow the parties to launder their money through the State parties.

That alone is reason enough to pass this important amendment.

Now, over the past several weeks, this House has voted on many amendments. Frankly, in a different context, I would have voted for several of them. But I recognize that the only way for us to begin the real process of real reform, is to pass Shays-Meehan and its hard ban on soft money as is.

Let's get on with. Pass Shays-Meehan today. Reject the other substitutes and move to final passage of.

Let's give the United States Senate a "going away present." After years of resistence, let's present them with the opportunity to redeem themselves by joining us as reformers.

Support Shays-Meehan.

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

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MEEHAN) is recognized for 2½ minutes.

Mr. MEEHAN. Madam Chairman, there comes a time in a legislator's life when he or she has to be held accountable for his or her vote. That day has arrived for the Members of the 105th Congress. Once in a generation Members of Congress take it upon themselves to change our campaign finance laws, once in a generation. Madam Chairman, that day has arrived for the Members of the 105th Congress.

Madam Chairman, there are Members of this House on both sides of the aisle who have worked diligently over a period of years. On the Democratic side, there is the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SANDY LEVIN), who has been working so hard; the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN MALONEY), who I mentioned earlier; the gentleman from Maine (Mr. TOM ALLEN), who came to this body as a freshman, working diligently; the minority leader, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT), and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BONIOR), who have played such a critical role in getting us to the point where we are now, on the verge of this historic vote.

And yes, Madam Chairman, on the other side of the aisle there is the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ZACH WAMP), the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. LINDA SMITH), the gentleman from California (Mr. STEVE HORN), and the coauthor of this legislation, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. CHRIS SHAYS), who has stood up, at times in very difficult circumstances, to the leadership of his own party and taken that leadership on so we could get to where we are right now, on the eve of a very, very historic vote.

We have a piece of legislation that abolishes soft money. After all we have heard and witnessed, is it not about time that we abolish soft money? I did not hear any Members of this House, with over 60 amendments offered to try to defeat this bill, I did not hear anybody trying to defend the corrupt soft money practice that we have seen abused in the last election cycle. I did not hear anybody. I heard excuses, I saw amendments, but nobody stood up to defend the soft money corrupt system that we have spent so much money holding hearings over the period of the last year and a half.

Madam Chairman, my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, this is, indeed, an historic opportunity that only comes once in a generation, because it is not usual when Members of the House have a bill with bipartisan support, a bicameral bill, so when we send this bill to the other body, they have already spent time with the majority Members supporting.

This is an historic opportunity, because even though we end for summer recess, the other body is ready to pick up this legislation. Let us rise to the challenge tonight and meet our responsibilities, Members of this House of Representatives, and pass the Shays-Meehan legislation by a wide majority and get it over to the other body.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS) is recognized for 1 minute.

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

Madam Chairman, I am tempted to rise for a unanimous consent request, speak for 2 minutes, and then yield myself the 1 minute, but I will accept the 1 minute the Chair gives me.

Madam Chairman, no amount of volume, no amount of vehemence, covers up the fundamental flaws in this bill. It took my breath away when the gentleman from California said that he could tell us exactly what the Supreme Court would do on the express advocacy section. The fact of the matter is in all probability the court will hold it unconstitutional.

Therein lies the rub, because there is a severability clause in Shays-Meehan. It means the courts will continue to write what the law actually is. The only bill left that has merit is the Hutchison–Allen freshman bill, because it does not have a severability clause. If in fact a section is declared unconstitutional, it will come back here. We will write the law.

The fundamental flaw in Shays-Meehan is its severability. It has unconstitutional provisions. The court will continue to write the law. Vote no on Shays-Meehan if Members want to continue to write the law and not let the Supreme Court do it.

Mr. SHAYS. Madam Chairman, to close debate, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ZACH WAMP), really a hero on campaign finance reform.

Mr. WAMP. Madam Chairman, what an honor to close the debate on this most important issue that affects every single Member of this House and the political parties, and most importantly, the American people.

I say to my colleagues that tonight really is the moment of truth. The truth is that for a generation, the majority in the Congress opposes reforming the current system and the minority supports reform. Before we took a majority 4 years ago, the very same people who opposed reform tonight supported the same kind of reforms, because they were in the minority. That is the truth. It is inherent, supposedly, upon the majority to support the current system.

However, I come from the majority. I come from the freshman class of the 104th Congress. We have reformed a lot of things. We have changed this place in many respects, but we are pulling up short if we do not reform our own campaign system.

It is important that we face the truth. The truth is that banning soft money cuts across the spectrum. Everybody gets treated the same. If we find it offensive that tobacco can give a half a million dollars on a single night at a fund-raiser when tobacco legislation is pending before the Congress, vote for this bill. It does away with that.

If Members find these ads run by these outside groups offensive in the final 60 days of a campaign, where they do not have to tell the truth and they come in unlimited and unregulated, all we are saying is they have to abide by the same rules that I do as a candidate or a political action committee does. We are not restricting their right to speak; we are saying, you have to play by the same rules as everybody else from now on.

If Members want candidates to have better reporting, better disclosure, more accountability, vote yes on this bill. It is the moment of truth. If Members think that a commission can report back recommendations for the rest of the details of campaign finance reform, vote yes on this bill. All four of these things are a step in the right direction.

The truth is, this bill is as fair to Republicans as it is to Democrats. The truth is that it affects any outside groups. It is the same for Wall Street or the labor unions, the same for the Christian Coalition or the ACLU. Everybody gets treated the same. Is that not fair? Is that not reasonable?

I say to my colleagues in the majority, this is the moment of truth. I ask Members, will they please put the public interest above their personal interest? Will they please put good government above their political party? Will Members please do the right thing for the American people, and send the signal that we have gone the distance on reform? Vote yes on Shays-Meehan.

Mr. EVANS. Madam Chairman, we are about to take a significant step forward in our efforts to restore public confidence in the American political system by passing the much needed reforms contained in the Shays-Meehan substitute.

Under the current system, many average, hard-working Americans feel their voices can't be heard above the call of special interests.

And who can blame them?

The roar of unaccountable advertising campaigns financed by unlimited soft money donations dominates our elections. Where the voters seek an informed discussion of the issues, they find only slogans and rhetoric.

Long after the need for reform became clear to the voters, its opponents resisted. Opponents of reform would have the American people believe that the only change necessary is increased disclosure, that unlimited sums of soft money pose no threat to the foundation of our democracy, the principle of one person, one vote.

Against the will of the voters, opponents of reform sought to deny consideration of Shays-Meehan. Having failed in their delaying action, opponents of reform then waged a war of attrition, attempting to amend Shays-Meehan to death. Once again, supporters of reform stood tall and these efforts were defeated.

Today, I am proud to join my colleagues, Democrat and Republican, to vote for the Shays-Meehan substitute, to pass meaningful campaign finance reform legislation, and to fulfill the commitment we have to the American people to ensure that their voices will be heard.

Mr. BAESLER. Madam Chairman, this has been a great debate over Shays-Meehan, and I am proud to have played a role in advancing the issue to this critical point. I only wish I weren't the only Kentucky Member who fought for this bill.

As we prepare to vote on Shays-Meehan/McCain-Feingold, it's important to remember Senator THOMPSON's investigation and report. The Thompson report identified the exact problems we're trying to reform here and the Shays-Meehan bill was offered up to solve these problems:

Shays-Meehan outlaws foreign money once and for all!

It outlaws Soft money—a loophole exploited by BOTH parties!

It outlaws fundraising on government property!

It reforms our campaign issue ad laws by reigning in sham issue ads!

In fact, it is the only bill that addresses all these problems which were documented after the 1996 election.

Now, although I'm the only Kentucky reformer in the House, maybe there have been some converts. The people of Kentucky care about this issue. I spoke at a campaign finance reform town meeting in Louisville about a month ago. Over 150 people packed a church on a Monday night, and stayed way beyond the scheduled time to express how badly they wanted to reform our out-of-control campaign finance system.

It would be an outrage to have spent $8 million of Kentuckians and other Americans' tax money on these investigations and then not do anything to solve the problem. The problems of too much money in the political system are documented. We know what we need to do. The question now is whether we have the WILL to do it.

So I urge my Kentucky colleagues, I urge all my colleagues, to vote for Shays-Meehan.

Mrs. KENNELLY of Connecticut. Madam Chairman, I rise in enthusiastic support of campaign finance reform legislation offered by my colleagues CHRIS SHAYS from my home state of Connecticut and MARTY MEEHAN from our neighboring state of Massachusetts. Further, I strongly commend Mr. SHAYS and Mr. MEEHAN for their bi-partisan effort to bring before the House the most sweeping changes to the way we finance political campaigns in over two decades.

For the past month, amendments have been offered to weaken the reform provisions in the Shays-Meehan legislation. Conscientious members from both sides of the aisle have joined repeatedly to vote down these destructive amendments.

This is a critical vote for the 105th Congress. Passage today of the Shays-Meehan campaign finance reform bill will begin to correct the abuses of our current system of financing political campaigns. But even more important, it will begin to restore the integrity of our election system and the confidence of the American people in their elected officials.

Four comprehensive campaign finance reform bills were passed by this House when the Democrats were in the majority, but never was enacted into law.

Let'f finish the job that began a decade ago and vote for historic campaign finance reform. Vote yes on the Shays-Meehan bill.

Mr. FAZIO of California. Madam Chairman, I rise today in support of Shays-Meehan.

The bipartisan bill will:

Eliminate soft money contributions to political parties from individuals and organizations:

Require disclosure of contributions for issue ads that target specific candidates within 60 days of an election; and

Prohibit state parties from spending any soft money on activities that affect a federal race.

Most importantly, it would return the electoral system to the American people by limiting the amount of unregulated, unreported money in local politics.

Madam Chairman, every Member of this body has heard from constituents who have lost their faith in the system.

The American people no longer see an opportunity to participate in the system.

Each campaign cycle, we see an increase in the amount of money funneled into local races by outside special interest groups that have no ties to the community.

In 1996, the top two dozen outside groups spent $150 million dollars on independent negative ads.

Such free, uncontrolled spending has perverted a fair, democratic system into a bidding war by unknown entities.

The American people are tired of unregulated negative attack ads and the Shays-Meehan substitute takes a major step forward in regulating undisclosed funds to launch negative attack ads.

The time has come to pass meaningful campaign finance reform.

The American people want it, editorial boards across the country have endorsed it; and in vote after vote last week it became clear that the majority of this House supports a clean, bipartisan bill that achieves real reform.

The CHAIRMAN. All time has expired.

Mr. THOMAS. Madam Chairman, I move that the committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PEASE) having assumed the chair, Mrs. EMERSON, 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. 2183) to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to reform the financing of campaigns for elections for Federal office, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5 of rule I, the Chair will now put the question on each motion to suspend the rules on which further proceedings were postponed earlier today in the order in which that motion was entertained.

Votes will be taken in the following order: H.R. 3743, by the yeas and nays; and Senate Joint Resolution 54, by the yeas and nays.

The Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the time for any electronic vote after the first such vote in this series.

IRAN NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION PREVENTION ACT OF 1998

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and passing the bill, H.R. 3743, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3743, as amended, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were— yeas 405, nays 13, not voting 16, as follows: