over our borders. But they need help and they need it now. H.R. 3983 is a good first step in this direction. The bill requires that the Secretary of Transportation do a comprehensive review of our vulnerabilities and prepare plans to reduce risk of attack. Further, the bill requires a plan to better coordinate Federal, state, and local efforts in the prevention of maritime terrorism.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation that will help to better protect our Nation's shoreline and ports.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3983, the Maritime Transportation Antiterrorism Act.

I also rise to thank Chairman YOUNG, Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Subcommittee Chairman LOBIONDO, and the subcommittee staff for all heir hard work on this bill.

In June of 2001, they agreed to work with the U.S. Coast Guard, the State of Illinois, the City of Chicago, and me on the project to improve safety and security along Chicago's lakefront. Needless to say, this project became significantly more important after the events of September 11th.

Thanks to the committee's cooperation and assistance, this bill authorizes funding for the construction of a Marine Safety Station on Chicago's lakefront.

This new Chicago Safety Station will house resources and personnel of the U.S. Coast Guard, the Chicago Marine Police, and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Conservation Police. With Coast Guard, state, and city resources stretched thin by the need for heighted security in Chicago and other U.S. ports, this project will signficantly improve public safety and law enforcement efforts in one of the busiest recreational areas in the country.

On behalf of the City of Chicago, the State of Illinois, and all of us who enjoy Chicago's lakefront, I again want to thank the Chairman for working with me to bring this project to fruition.

Mr. BENTSEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3983, the Maritime Transportation Antiterrorism Act of 2002. I commend the work of the House Transportation Committee on port security, but I also want to clearly state that much more remains to be done to secure our coastal areas from maritime threats. As a representative of a district that includes parts of the Port of Houston, the nation's 2nd largest port, I am proud that this House has set aside jurisdictional squabbles and is taking this important action.

First, H.R. 3983 directs the Department of Transportation to conduct security assessments at every one of the nation's 361 seaports. The legislation authorizes $225 million in grants through 2005 to enhance port security. I would note that the Senate has passed port security legislation with a $1.1 billion grant program, and I support increasing the House number significantly in conference committee.

Central to H.R. 3983 is the provision directing the newly created Transportation Security Administration (TSA) to develop an identification and screening system for maritime cargo entering the United States. Currently the official papers accompanying cargo manifests are rampantly inaccurate, and I believe Congress needs to remain vigilant after the passage of this legislation to ensure that the TSA does, in fact, develop an effective system. Interests do exist that desire the least amount of accountability for international cargo, and they must not be allowed to derail TSA's regulatory action directed by this legislation.

In the end, I do not believe that it makes much difference whether the development of a cargo container tracking system is undertaken by TSA or the Customs Service, but it does make a difference if those who are more concerned with jurisdiction and turf are allowed to dominate the process at the expense of those who are singly committed to long-overdue security improvements at our nation's extremely busy international ports. I understand that the conference committee on port security legislation (H.R. 398/S. 1214) will be the decisive forum for this issue, and I urge all future conferees not to delay Congressional action on port security action any longer. If House and Senate committee jurisdictional disputes are allowed to delay maritime terrorism preparedness legislation, it will be a low point in Congressional behavior post-September 11th.

In addition to potential TSA and Customs involvement in new port security measures, this legislation also contains new port security initiatives for the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), an admirable security force that I have worked closely with on a number of security issues in my district pre- and post-September 11th. I strongly support the provisions of H.R. 3983 establishing USCG anti-terrorism teams and ''sea marshals,'' both of which will act as preventive and first response forces for maritime security. Provisions establishing port employee identification requirements for secure port areas and improved passenger and crew manifest notification are also vitally important. I am pleased that H.R. 3983 authorizes $5.9 billion for the USCG, over $800 million more than requested by the Administration in March, as a result of these new tasks and responsibilities the American people are entrusting to their Coast Guard.

Despite the port security progress promised by H.R. 3983, much work will still remain. The security assessments at 361 seaports will certainly uncover a myriad of unanticipated, but glaring needs around the country. The House bill is providing merely $623,000 in grant authority per port, whereas the Senate bill provides a healthier, but still likely inadequate $3,047,000 in grant authority per port.

As an example of how expensive this undertaking will be, mobile cargo container scanners cost roughly $1 million. Only the larger 18 ports in America currently have these devices and most of these ports only have one. In addition to a lack of screening equipment is a lack of Customs personnel necessary to thoroughly examine incoming cargo manifests for high-risk shipments and man the equipment to scan the cargo. Our port security gap is as simple as not enough equipment, men, and inspections. Improving this security situation will cost a large amount of money, probably even more than the $1.1 billion authorized in the Senate-passed legislation.

I applaud all those that have worked hard on port security legislation this year, especially the USCG, Customs, local law enforcement, and Port of Houston Authority personnel on active security duty in the Houston-Galveston area. I also encourage TSA, Customs, USCG to set aside any disputes and work together for the imperative common good of port security. However, Congress and the American people must not forget that much remains to be done. I implore future Congresses to continue to revisit the issue of maritime security to see that Congressional improvements, once enacted, are made, and that any new necessary improvements are vigorously pursued. I thank the Speaker, and urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3983.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LOBIONDO. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LOBIONDO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3983, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LOBIONDO. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 3983.

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

There was no objection.

PORT AND MARITIME SECURITY ACT OF 2001

Mr. LOBIONDO. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the Senate bill (S. 1214) to amend the Merchant Marine Act, 1936, to establish a program to ensure greater security for United States seaports, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

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

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the Senate bill, as follows:

S. 1214

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Port and Maritime Security Act of 2001''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—PORT AND MARITIME SECURITY

Sec. 101. Findings.
Sec. 102. National Maritime Security Advisory Committee.
Sec. 103. Initial security evaluations and port vulnerability assessments.
Sec. 104. Establishment of local port security committees.