a vote or even a hearing, not a vote in committee, not a vote on the floor.

And now that the Republicans are in the majority and have a President, they want to prevent Democrats from taking the very same actions they have used. They are now trying to change the rules of the Senate in the middle of the game to try to take away the rights of the minority.

Senator Baker was correct in 1968 when he said the majority was not always right, and it is time Senate Republicans realize that their extreme power grab is not in the best interests of either this Congress or this Nation.

CONGRATULATIONS TO DEBBIE PETERSON

(Mr. PRICE of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to congratulate Debbie Peterson from my district, a social worker at Pope High School. Last week, Habitat For Humanity named her the Southwest Regional Volunteer of the Year for Georgia, Florida, and Alabama. She is one of those special educators whose energy is contagious.

For her, Habitat For Humanity is more than building a house on the weekends. Sponsoring the Student Club is her way of giving back to the school, to the community, and to those who want a hand up and not a hand out, as Habitat's slogan states.

Throughout her 31 years in public service, Debbie Peterson has always remembered that it is about the students and their accomplishments. What have they done? Increased club membership from 25 students to 525, over one-quarter of the entire student body. Raised over $160,000 for Habitat projects to build seven homes; become one of the five largest chapters of Habitat at U.S. colleges and high schools.

At the end of this school year, she will retire from Pope High School. The lessons she has taught the thousands of students who helped provide a hand up to countless others will last a lifetime.

Congratulations Debbie Peterson.

MAKING PROGRESS IN SOCIAL SECURITY REFORM

(Mr. KLINE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the progress, yes, the progress we are making towards meaningful reform of an ailing Social Security system.

Because of the efforts of my colleagues and President Bush to communicate the truth of the impending Social Security shortfall, Americans are talking, and their elected representatives are listening.

I know I am only one of many Members who have been hosting listening sessions to hear the questions and concerns of my constituents on these important issues. On every one of these meetings, ideas are put forth. Many Members have translated these ideas into legislative proposals. Though the details differ, the message remains the same: we must do something to ensure Social Security will remain strong for our children and our grandchildren.

Unfortunately, not all Members are equally committed to solving the problem. Some opponents of reform have admitted that they would rather stand in the way of honest debate than be part of the solution. Mr. Speaker, this is a disservice to the constituents they represent and the millions of Americans who would benefit from reform.

I would encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to be part of the solution, not part of the problem.

SUPPORT THE SAVE OUR WATERS FROM SEWAGE ACT

(Mrs. KELLY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my strong concerns about an EPA proposal that would allow local treatment plants to discharge inadequately treated sewage into our waterways. It is disappointing that the EPA would even consider a policy change that would worsen our Nation's water quality and threaten public health.

I am a cosponsor of the Save Our Waters From Sewage Act to prevent the EPA from finalizing this misguided initiative. The mere thought of routinely allowing human sewage that is only partly treated to be dumped into our local waterways is very disturbing.

The EPA's wastewater guidelines have generated understandable concerns among my constituents in Westchester, Dutchess, and Orange counties. They seriously undermine the protections in place for our water resources in the Hudson Valley. We have a responsibility to fully treat all wastewater.

We already face enough health and environmental risks in our local communities that are beyond our control. It is senseless to initiate a new policy that knowingly puts the public at greater health risk. When it comes to the safety of our water and our local citizens, it is far more important to do what is right than to do what is most convenient.

I want to thank my colleagues, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. STUPAK) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW), for leading the fight to protect public health and prevent the EPA from enacting this policy. I urge support for the Save Our Waters From Sewage Act.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 415

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to have my name removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 415.

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

There was no objection.

CONDEMNING THE PRESENCE OF RACIALLY RESTRICTIVE COVENANTS IN HOUSING DOCUMENTS

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

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to cosponsor H.R. 259. I recently introduced this resolution to condemn the presence of racially restrictive covenants in housing documents.

Mr. Speaker, during the early 20th century, racially restrictive covenants were used in housing documents such as plats, deeds, and homeowner association bylaws to prevent racial, ethnic, and religious minorities from renting or buying property. While they are now illegal and technically unenforceable, most were never removed from housing documents. In my district alone, one survey identified more than 1,200 documents that still contain discriminatory language.

□ 1100

In many jurisdictions, the process of removing racially restrictive covenants is administratively burdensome, time consuming and costly. This resolution urges States to adopt legislation similar to California and commends the Missouri State Senate for passing a bill that streamlines the process for removing these relics of the Jim Crow era.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to cosponsor H.R. 259 and join me in condemning racially restrictive covenants.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2361, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2006

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 287 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 287

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2361) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2006, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of

order against consideration of the bill 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 Appropriations. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. Points of order against provisions in the bill for failure to comply with clause 2 of rule XXI are waived except as follows: beginning with the colon on page 46, line 3, through ''account'' on line 14; section 109; page 67, line 17 through the semicolon on page 67, line 22; beginning with ''That'' on page 68, line 23, through ''and'' on page 69, line 3; beginning with ''That'' on page 69, line 19, through the comma on line 22; page 73, line 14 through line 22; section 413; beginning with ''notwithstanding'' on page 121, line 11, through the comma on line 12; beginning with ''notwithstanding'' on page 121, line 22, through ''laws'' on line 23; beginning with ''Notwithstanding'' on page 124, line 6, through line 7; and page 124, line 15 through 25. Where points of order are waived against part of a paragraph or section, points of order against a provision in another part of such paragraph or section may be made only against such provision and not against the entire paragraph or section. During 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 8 of rule XVIII. Amendments so printed shall be considered as read. When the committee rises and reports the bill back to the House with a recommendation that the bill do pass, the previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

This resolution provides for an open rule on H.R. 2361, the Interior Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2006, and provides for 1 hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking member of the Committee on Appropriations.

For the purpose of amendments, this rule provides for priority recognition to Members who preprinted their amendments in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, and the rule also allows for certain points of order to be raised in the course of consideration of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, this bill deals with filibusters in the U.S. Senate. Actually, Mr. Speaker, it does not, but until you say that magic word the media does not send its attention to the fact that the House is actually continuing on with the input of good government in our processes, so this bill actually, for which I am pleased to stand before the House and support the rule on the underlying legislation, is the Interior Appropriations Act.

I appreciate the hard work and the hard choices that the subcommittee chairman, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. TAYLOR), the gentleman from California (Chairman LEWIS), the gentleman from Washington (Mr. DICKS), and many others have put into making and putting this essential funding bill together, which does live within the budget discipline, and in fact reflects the priorities of this Congress.

At the same time, it reflects important committee priorities within the budget itself. We realize that this Congress, this Nation, does not have the money to do everything. But what we decide to do we should do well.

By prioritizing the needs, this provides, for example, an increase in six of the eight EPA programs for the environment. It provides for a $118 million increase for Indian health services, a $25 million increase over last year's funding level for restoration of the Everglades.

These are simply examples. A few others. Provides for National Heritage Area grants and historic preservation, something that to an old history teacher I appreciate. This bill provides important resources to help manage our Nation's public forest resources and our national parks.

It includes, for example, a $70 million increase for the national parks base funding, but at the same time $440 million to help reduce the backlog of national park maintenance. That is how these bills and these monies should be prioritized, to help preserve and enhance these unique national treasures.

It also provides for a record amount of funding to the national fire plan, and gives the Department flexibility in these accounts to help prevent and fight the annual onslaught of raging fires on public lands in the West, which have plagued many areas, especially California in recent years.

I am also pleased in particular that the gentleman from North Carolina (Chairman TAYLOR) has been diligent in funding the vital Payment in Lieu of Tax Program, or PILT, which so many western and rural counties depend upon for these vital public services.

Since this is an open rule, any Member will be allowed to offer germane amendments. This is a good rule. I think it supports a good bill. I strongly urge their adoption.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of the rule.

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume. I thank the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) for the time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to this rule, not because of what it allows but rather because of what it does not allow. As my colleague from the majority noted, this rule permits Members to offer amendments to the Interior and Environment Appropriations bill under the House's 5-minute rule if they do not need waivers of the House rules.

As someone who will be offering an amendment to that bill later today, I appreciate that the majority structured the rule in such a manner. However, I am greatly concerned that the rule blocks the ranking Democrat of the Appropriations Committee, my friend the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY), from offering a critical amendment which would have added $500 million to the bill to fully restore EPA's State and Tribal Grant Program, and Clean Water State Revolving Fund to their fiscal 2004 levels.

These two programs allow communities around the country to repair and modernize their water systems, and the underlying legislation greatly underfunds each account.

For the fiscally conservative in the House, the amendment of the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) was revenue neutral, paying for itself by capping the tax cut for millionaires at just over $138,000. The amendment of the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) could have benefited literally millions of Americans by making their drinking water cleaner. But the Rules Committee, on a straight party line vote, prohibited the House from considering the gentleman's amendment.

Mr. Speaker, we live in trying times with enormous fiscal constraints, many of which have been brought upon ourselves. As the chairman and ranking Democrat of the Interior and Environmental Appropriations Subcommittee will probably note today, they did the best that they could with what they were given.

Indeed they did. Mr. Speaker, I commend the gentleman from North Carolina (Chairman TAYLOR) and the gentleman from Washington (Mr. DICKS) for their hard and perhaps most importantly bipartisan work on this legislation. I do believe that they did the best with what the majority gave them.

The underlying legislation includes funding which is essential to Everglades restoration, in my district and throughout South Florida. The bill maintains funding for the National Endowment of the Arts at its current level, and it increases funding for the National Endowment for the Humanities by a little less than $500,000.

The bill also increases funding for operations at our national parks, as well as a $67 million much-needed increase in funding for the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Despite these increases the underlying legislation makes major cuts in funding to some of our most important environmental and health programs. $240 million has been cut from the Clean Water State Revolving Fund. $110 million from the State and Tribal Assistance Grant Account.

Conservation funding is about $750 million below, or less than half of what was promised when Congress passed the Conservation and Restoration Act in 2000. Overall, EPA's budget has been cut by $300 million.

This is only the second of 13 appropriations measures which this body will consider over the next few months. It is also the second appropriations bill in which we can see the drastic and dramatic effects of the Bush tax cuts. Republicans are going to try and associate domestic funding cuts with the cost of the war in Iraq. It seems like a plausible reason, and certainly one that the public could believe. But the truth is that domestic spending cuts are not occurring to pay for the war, they are happening to pay for the President's tax cuts.

The Republican budget that Congress approved 2 weeks ago only set aside $50 billion for Iraq and Afghanistan combined. The remaining costs, probably another $50 billion or more, if this year is any indication, will be funded by Congress through so-called emergency supplemental appropriations. These emergency costs will be added to the national debt, because we irresponsibly did not budget for it though we knew they were obvious. What has ensued is not the fault of the Appropriations Committee, Mr. Speaker, it is the fault of those who supported the budget resolution.

Later today, some Members will seek to improve the funding shortfalls, which the chairman and ranking Democrat sought to avoid.

For example, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) will offer an amendment that restores the President's 33 percent cut for environmental justice programs to the fiscal year 2005 level.

The gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) will also offer an amendment that will increase funding for the cleanup of brownfields sites by $2 million.

Additionally, I will offer an amendment that will require EPA to identify and take the necessary steps to protect minority and low income communities from bearing a disproportionate burden of poor environmental policy which adversely affects their health and well being.

All communities currently do not share in the burden of health and environmental risks, and my amendment expresses Congress' support for EPA doing what is necessary to protect these communities.

Mr. Speaker, individuals in our country on their own are not going to force power companies to reduce mercury emissions from smokestacks. Individuals on their own are not going to conduct major environmental restoration, and they certainly do not have the capacity to clean up our drinking water. But collectively, collectively, Mr. Speaker, we can all make this happen.

When utilizing the Clean Air Act, EPA can force power plants to come into compliance with new standard reviews. When enforcing the Clean Drinking Water Act, EPA can require cities and counties to provide their residents with safe drinking water.

□ 1115

With innovation that can only occur in a consortium of stakeholders, the Department of the Interior can make major environmental restoration projects a reality.

Enforcement is not free and neither is environmental restoration. Everyone in America shares in the responsibility of contributing his or her own fair share. Is there any Member in this body who is unwilling to pay just a little more to ensure that everyone in America has clean air to breathe? If given the chance, who would not be willing to pool his or her resources with others in his or her neighborhood to collectively ensure that everyone, everyone, has safe drinking water, or that no child will be forced to grow up playing in backyards polluted by dangerous levels of mercury and other toxins.

I do not blame or fault the appropriators for the funding cuts in the underlying legislation; but I do fault the majority in this body for creating a situation in which failure to adequately fund America's needs has become imminent. The American people will feel the same way when they wake up tomorrow and realize that their children and grandchildren will be paying for our fiscal mismanagement for generations to come.

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

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, once again with this particular rule being open, it allows any Member who wishes to, to bring an amendment to the floor. It is the wonderful prerogative of the Members to do that. It is also very nice to note that the Committee on Appropriations which is tasked with trying to prioritize needs and fund those that are truly significant in that prioritization, and in this particular situation, the gentleman from North Carolina (Chairman TAYLOR) and the gentleman from Washington (Mr. DICKS) in a very collegial way have done just that, and have presented a good and balanced bill.

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) with whom I serve on the Committee on Rules.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the rule and in strong opposition to what I consider a very bad bill. This Department of the Interior appropriations bill as written is a direct assault against our Nation's environment, and it should be defeated.

I am particularly outraged that the bill completely zeros out the stateside grant program of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, a program that has been an enormous help to our local communities and the families who live in them.

The stateside Land and Water Conservation Fund has helped to preserve open space, slow urban sprawl, and give our children safe places to play. It is a true partnership with Federal grants requiring a full match from States and local communities. It is a program that has worked, and it has worked well. But this Republican bill completely eliminates the program. It zeros it out, walks away from our local communities.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund, LWCF, is based upon a simple concept: it takes revenues from offshore oil and gas drilling and invests them in our Nation's public land, letting States take the lead. For 40 years this program has a proven track record and benefited from strong bipartisan support.

When Congress decided to open the outercontinental shelf to oil drilling, we pledged to use some of its revenues for the public good. With the goal of meeting the Nation's growing need for recreation sites, Congress established the LWCF trust fund and agreed to reinvest an annual portion of OCS revenue into Federal land acquisition and State-assistance development programs.

Now even though LWCF takes in $900 million annually from oil and gas receipts, in recent years just a fraction of this funding has been used for its rightful purpose. And today, the Republican leadership has taken their pillaging a step further by completely eliminating the stateside program and using the money for something else.

This bill breaks our promise to the American people by not spending this funding the way we are supposed to. In all, the stateside program has helped communities by funding 40,000 projects nationally, success stories that can be found in every State and in 98 percent of U.S. counties.

I urge my colleagues to ask their Governors and their mayors and county commissioners if they want the stateside program to be eliminated. If the answer is no, vote against this bill.

This cut is particularly harmful to our Nation's underserved areas. In fact, in many low-income urban communities, the stateside grant program is responsible for virtually all parks.

This is about priorities, Mr. Speaker. This bill demonstrates that for the Republican leadership, tax breaks for the wealthy few are more precious than open space. For this leadership, millionaires are more important than kids who need a safe place to play. And for this leadership, lobbyists win and families lose.

We will hear the rhetoric from the other side claiming they did the best they could with what they had. They will complain that the allocation given to the subcommittee just was not big enough. They should save their crocodile tears because those same Members voted for the budget that created those

allocations. They created this mess, and now the families of this country are paying the price. I urge my colleagues to vote against this rule and reject this bad bill.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I appreciate the comments from the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), and I commend the gentleman for the one statement he asked us all to do which is to go to our State and local leaders and find out what their priorities happen to be.

I would like to do something unique so far in today's debate and talk about something that is actually in the bill, and something about which we will be debating later, and preface it with the comment of why, when we try to prioritize, should we spend new taxpayer money for new recreation areas and programs when some of the existing programs, long-time recognized, long time in the bill, are not totally and fully funded.

If I could, Mr. Speaker, I come from a western State that has a great deal of Federal land. In fact, 67 percent of my State is owned by the Federal Government. If we add military lands on top of that, it is almost 80 percent owned by the Federal Government. And, unfortunately, my State is not the worst situation. There are States that have more of their land owned by the Federal Government.

Oftentimes I have Members come to the floor and say these lands belong to all of us, but the cost of maintaining those lands is not borne by all of us; it is borne by the citizens who happen to reside within those particular States.

Now I am an old teacher, and as I look at the situation of education, I find a unique phenomenon that the area of this country in which education funding is growing the slowest, the area of this country where the classrooms are the largest, the area of this country where the student population is increasing the fastest, and the area of this country where State and local commitment in tax base is being paid by their citizens all happen to be found in the 13 States of the West. And the common denominator for all is the amount of public lands that happen to be in these particular States.

Those Members east of the Rocky Mountains sometimes do not comprehend the concept because there is very little of your land owned by the Federal Government, and you can maximize the amount of input, but you cannot do it in the West.

One of my counties has an area known as the Black Box, something that no one in Utah would ever try to raft down. One of our good constituent friends from another State decided to come and raft in the area of the Black Box; and, unfortunately, he lost his life doing it.

The problem is my County of Emery had to expend its resources and have their rescue team risk their lives to retrieve the body. All of the money that was budgeted for that year's critical rescue missions was expended on that one individual entering from the east using all of these public lands. All of the cost of that was borne by the citizens of that particular county, which means once again these lands belong to all of us, but the expense attached to these lands do not belong to all of us.

There is a program that we have long had called ''payment in lieu of taxes,'' which recognizes the burden placed upon the West and the burden that should be funded. From the mid-1970s until the early 1990s, virtually no new money was placed in this program. It was flat funding for almost that whole period of time. This Congress put $1.4 million of new money into the burgeoning problem of trying to pay for the Federal lands in the West. Under the direction of the gentleman from North Carolina (Chairman TAYLOR) and others on the subcommittee, that has increased significantly, almost doubling. They have recognized the need, but they have never fully funded the cost imposed on western States through payment in lieu of tax funding.

This last year, this program, traditionally run through the Bureau of Land Management, was taken over by the Department of the Interior with the idea of prioritizing it. They did not. Instead of prioritizing this program, they recommended a cut in this program and increased funding to the administrative overhead of the Department of the Interior.

I commend the gentleman from North Carolina (Chairman TAYLOR) for recognizing the unfairness of this and by increasing the payment in lieu of taxes to last year's level plus $3 million, but it is still not close to full funding.

I am confident and hopeful that we will discuss that particular issue because it is a well-established program. It is not new, and we should be funding those well-established programs fully before we launch into new endeavors.

I commend the gentleman from North Carolina (Chairman TAYLOR) for zeroing out the land acquisition budget except for necessary administration costs because it comes up with the same policy: we do not start buying new land until we fully fund those lands that we already own.

We have an opportunity of expanding this in conference. This is one of the issues in this free-flowing open rule that we will be discussing later on. This is an issue where I commend the chairman for doing what he has done in this bill and urge him to continue on, because the citizens of the West, the kids in the West, the education system of the West have been harmed too long by policies that all of us in Congress for over 30 years have been implementing. It is an unfairness that must be dealt with.

I commend the gentleman from North Carolina (Chairman TAYLOR) and the committee for moving the first step forward. But I hope that we can look at other amendments as this debate goes forward that would look at funding the programs we already have that have been there for many years that desperately need to be fully funded before we launch into others, and that is specifically what an appropriations process should do. It should prioritize our needs. Once again, we can go back to the concept that we cannot fund everything, but what we fund, we should fund well.

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am a bit confuzzled by the continuing argument of my colleague and friend on the Committee on Rules that his State is impacted by virtue of education formulas. I do not disagree with what the gentleman says, but I find it interesting that the State of Utah, while the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) is arguing that they are not getting enough money for education, the State of Utah legislature passed measures saying they do not want any Federal money for education. They need to make up their mind so we know what all they are doing out there.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 7 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY), ranking member of the Committee on Appropriations.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I will be voting against the previous question on the rule, and after the bill is considered, unless it is substantially changed, I will be intending to vote against the bill itself for a variety of reasons.

My main reason is this bill represents gross negligence of our responsibility to clean up the Nation's air and water pollution. This bill provides huge cuts, 40 percent cuts over a 2-year period in the clean water revolving fund. If there is any Member of this Chamber who has a district that does not have a community that needs more loans to fix their sewer and water problems, would you please raise your hand. I would like to see one Member who thinks that they have enough money.

I note no Member of the House present has raised his hand.

□ 1130

Mr. Speaker, I would say there is a great deal of hypocrisy surrounding the budget process. Every time that those of us on this side of the aisle point to the shortcomings in the budget that the Republican majority has just passed, we hear, ''Well, we can't do anything about these shortages in the appropriation bills because, after all, we have limited resources.''

The gentleman who just spoke, the gentleman from Utah, said the appropriations process, quote, ''should prioritize our needs.'' I fully agree.

That is what I wanted to be able to try to do by offering an amendment which this rule would preclude me from offering. Because what I wanted to do is to change the judgment, change the priority judgment that the majority party made when they decided it was more important to give a $140,000 tax cut to someone who makes a million bucks this year, they decided that was more important, that was a higher priority, than cleaning up our air or cleaning up our water. I do not think that represents the priority choice that the American people would make but it is the priority choice that the majority party has made.

The only way that we can change that priority judgment is by offering the amendment that I wanted to offer, which would have scaled back the size of those tax cuts for anybody making a million dollars a year or more. It would have scaled back those average tax cuts from $140,000 to $138,000. Imagine those poor souls having to get by with a tax cut of only $138,000. I remind you, those are people who make more than a million dollars.

I do not begrudge, I do not denigrate in any way people who have managed to strike it rich and who are managing to make a million dollars a year. I hope everybody in this country at some point in their lives can do that. But I do believe that people who are the most blessed in our society ought to pay their fair share and the budget resolution which was imposed on this committee by this House does not allow us to reach that kind of fair distribution of tax burden.

So if we object to that what I regard to be not just ill-advised but immoral allocation of resources, the only device that we have to try to change that is to try to make our point on each of these appropriation bills trying to get the majority party to understand that just as they reconsidered their unilateral actions on Ethics Committee changes a couple of weeks ago, we would also like them to reconsider their poor judgment on the budget resolution.

Because the Rules Committee would not allow that amendment, I am going to vote against the previous question, and I am going to vote against the bill because the bill is grossly negligent in dealing with the air and water pollution problems facing this country. I am also not at all thrilled by the fact that for the first time in all the years I have been in Congress there will not be a single dollar provided for land acquisition programs. The gentleman may not want it in his State, but there are key tracts of land that we want the government to acquire in my State, there are key tracts of land we want the government to acquire, for instance, at George Washington's birthplace before real estate developers destroy that beauty for all time.

I am an old real estate broker, so I have nothing against real estate developers but I do not think they ought to be able to get their gloms on the most pristine land in this country and turn it into a shopping mall when we have our population increase by one-third since I came to this body and when we have an increased need for resources that the average family can enjoy.

But most of all the biggest problem with this bill is that it walks away from our obligation to help State and local governments clean up some of the dirtiest rivers and dirtiest lakes in the country. It walks away from our responsibility to prevent communities like Milwaukee from dumping their surplus sewage into Lake Michigan every time there is a storm. That is an outrageous neglect of our stewardship responsibilities. I think this bill makes it even easier to ignore those responsibilities, and I think that is a disgraceful act.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I will be asking Members to oppose the previous question. If the previous question is defeated, I will amend the rule so we can consider the amendment of the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) that was rejected in the Rules Committee last night on a straight party-line vote.

Mr. Speaker, the Obey amendment would add $500 million to the bill to restore funding for the EPA Clean Water State Revolving Fund Program to its fiscal year 2004 levels. This program allows communities around the country to repair and modernize their water systems. I find it incomprehensible that we do not understand the dynamics of that or that most if not all of us in this body do not have communities that would benefit from modernizing our water systems. The Obey amendment offsets these expenditures by capping at just over $138,000 the tax cut for people making over $1 million this year. The Obey amendment pays for itself and adds nothing to the Federal debt while maintaining funding levels in every other program in the bill.

This amendment will correct one of the most serious shortfalls in this bill. It is absolutely critical that this funding be restored. We can fix this today if we allow the Obey amendment to be considered on the floor. But the only way that will happen is if we defeat the previous question.

I want to assure my colleagues that a ''no'' vote will not prevent us from considering the Interior Appropriations bill, but a ''no'' vote will allow Members to vote on the Obey amendment. However, a ''yes'' vote will block consideration of the Obey amendment.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of the amendment immediately prior to the vote.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. I urge my colleagues in the House to vote ''no'' on the previous question.

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

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I appreciate the opportunity coming here and discussing this particular open rule that allows for us to discuss the prioritization which is the key element of what we do in every appropriations issue. The gentleman from Wisconsin is free to come here on the floor and talk about whether he believes the prioritization of this committee is accurate or not, whether he believes the Democrat approach would be a tax increase or not. But the same discussion also takes place in another area and it takes place in the committee process before it ever comes to this bill. I am here to still contend that the committee, both Republican and Democrat, did a good job in coming up with a prioritization process.

When the gentleman from Wisconsin talks about the desire for having new land, I do not dispute that nor do I oppose it necessarily. What we are saying is it is part of the prioritization. I would support acquisition of new land once we finally fully fund and take care of the lands we have. This committee has looked into that. This committee put significant new money not just into national parks but to maintain the backlog that we have of maintenance in our national parks. That is prioritization.

This committee recognized by putting PILT up to at least the level it was last year that there is a prioritization that takes place there at the same time. I was saying with PILT, and I will say it again, that what we have to do is fully fund it because it has been looked at for too long, especially when the minority party was in charge here and there were basically no increases in PILT funding, it has been looked at for too long as welfare for the West. It is not. It is rent that is due on that land and if you prioritize the budget, you prioritize those programs first before you expand anything else. I have to commend this committee for actually doing that.

I think there are some areas in which I think they could go ahead and move forward in those particular areas but once again prioritizing those commitments we have already made and fully funding those first. That is what this committee has tried to do. Whether you like or dislike their end product, they should be congratulated for coming that close.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I have to reiterate the fairness of this open rule and urge its adoption because of that along with the underlying appropriation legislation. No bill is perfect. I am sure we can all come up with issues here and there in the appropriations bill or, for that matter, in any other bill we have where we would like to have it come out differently had we had our way, but in judging this bill as a whole and the process that has been through it to get to the point, I believe it is worthy for Members to support this particular piece of legislation.

And then I do want to talk to my good friend from Florida about what we really did with education in Utah. He is summarizing the New York Times, not reality. But other than that, we will forget that point right now. I will talk later to him about that.

Again, I urge Members to support this rule.

The text of the amendment previously referred to by Mr. HASTINGS of Florida is as follows:

PREVIOUS QUESTION ON H. RES. 287—RULE FOR H.R 2361 FY06 INTERIOR APPROPRIATIONS

At the end of the resolution, add the following new sections:

SEC. 2. Notwithstanding any other provision of this resolution, the amendment printed in section 3 shall be in order without intervention of any point of order and before any other amendment if ofered by Representative OBEY of Wisconsin or a designee. The amendment is not subject to amendment except for pro forma amendments or to a demand for a division of the question in the committee of the whole or in the House.

SEC. 3. The amendment referred to in section 2 is as follows:

AMENDMENT TO H.R. 2361, AS REPORTED OFFERED BY MR. OBEY OF WISCONSIN

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. (a) The amount otherwise provided in this Act for ''Environmental Protection Agency—State and Tribal Assistance Grants'' (and the amount specified under such heading for making capitalization grants for the Clean Water State Revolving Funds under title VI of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act) is hereby increased by $500,000,000.

(b) In the case of taxpayers with adjusted gross income in excess of $1,000,000 for calendar year 2006, the amount of tax reduction resulting from enactment of the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001 (Pub. L. 107–16) and the Jobs and Growth Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2003 (Pub. L. 108–27) shall be reduced by 1.562 percent.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for electronic voting, if ordered, on the question of adoption of the resolution.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 215, nays 194, not voting 24, as follows:

[Roll No. 190]

YEAS—215

Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Bachus
Baker
Barrett (SC)
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bass
Beauprez
Biggert
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Bradley (NH)
Brady (TX)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Calvert
Camp
Cannon
Capito
Carter
Castle
Chabot
Chocola
Coble
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Cox
Crenshaw
Cubin
Culberson
Cunningham
Davis (KY)
Davis, Jo Ann
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeLay
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Doolittle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Ehlers
Emerson
English (PA)
Everett
Feeney
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick (PA)
Flake
Foley
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gohmert
Goode
Goodlatte
Granger
Graves
Green (WI)
Gutknecht
Hall
Harris
Hart
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Hensarling
Herger
Hobson
Hoekstra
Hostettler
Hulshof
Hunter
Hyde
Inglis (SC)
Issa
Istook
Jenkins
Jindal
Johnson (CT)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Kelly
Kennedy (MN)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Kline
Knollenberg
Kolbe
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Latham
LaTourette
Leach
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Lungren, Daniel E.
Mack
Manzullo
Marchant
McCaul (TX)
McCotter
McCrery
McHenry
McHugh
McKeon
McMorris
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Moran (KS)
Murphy
Musgrave
Myrick
Neugebauer
Northup
Norwood
Nunes
Nussle
Osborne
Otter
Oxley
Paul
Pearce
Pence
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Pombo
Porter
Price (GA)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Ramstad
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reynolds
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Royce
Ryun (KS)
Saxton
Schwarz (MI)
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Sherwood
Shimkus
Shuster
Simmons
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Sodrel
Souder
Stearns
Sweeney
Taylor (NC)
Terry
Thomas
Thornberry
Tiberi
Turner
Upton
Walden (OR)
Walsh
Wamp
Weller
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—194

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Andrews
Baca
Baird
Baldwin
Barrow
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd
Brady (PA)
Brown (OH)
Brown, Corrine
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cardin
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carson
Case
Chandler
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Cramer
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
Davis (TN)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Edwards
Emanuel
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Evans
Farr
Filner
Ford
Frank (MA)
Gonzalez
Gordon
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hastings (FL)
Herseth
Higgins
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jefferson
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy (RI)
Kildee
Kilpatrick (MI)
Kind
Kucinich
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Lee
Levin
Lipinski
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lynch
Maloney
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
McCarthy
McCollum (MN)
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McKinney
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Menendez
Michaud
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (VA)
Murtha
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pelosi
Peterson (MN)
Pomeroy
Price (NC)
Rahall
Rangel
Reyes
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sabo
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanders
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schwartz (PA)
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sherman
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Spratt
Stark
Stupak
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor (MS)
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Towns
Udall (NM)
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Wexler
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn

NOT VOTING—24

Boustany
Burgess
Cantor
Fattah
Gingrey
Harman
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Keller
Larson (CT)
Lewis (GA)
Lucas
Matsui
Millender-McDonald
Ney
Ryan (WI)
Shays
Simpson
Strickland
Sullivan
Tancredo
Tiahrt
Udall (CO)
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)

□ 1209

Mr. SESSIONS, Mrs. MUSGRAVE, and Mr. BRADLEY of New Hampshire changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, on May 19, 2005, I was unable to be present for rollcall vote No. 190, on ordering the Previous Question to provide for consideration of H.R. 2361, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 39, 2006 and for other purposes. Had I been present I would have voted ''yea'' on rollcall vote No. 190.

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 190 I was inadvertently detained. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yea.''

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 190 I was traveling with the President in Wisconsin. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yea.''

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOOZMAN). The question is on the resolution.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY COMMITTEE ON RULES REGARDING AMENDMENTS TO H.R. 1851, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2006

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

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, the Committee on Rules may meet the week of May 23rd to grant a rule which could limit the amendment process for floor consideration of H.R. 1815, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006. The Committee on Armed Services ordered the bill reported late last night and is expected to file its report in the House tomorrow, May 20.

Any Member wishing to offer an amendment should submit 55 copies of the amendment and one copy with a brief explanation of the amendment to the Committee on Rules in room H–312 of the Capitol by 10 a.m. on Tuesday, May 24.

Members should draft their amendments to the text of the bill as reported by the Committee on Armed Services which should be available tomorrow for their review on the Web site of both the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Rules.

Members should use the Office of Legislative Counsel to ensure that their amendments are drafted in the most appropriate format. Members are also advised to check with the Office of the Parliamentarian to be certain their amendments comply with the Rules of the House.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TAYLOR of North Carolina. Mr. 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. 2361.

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

There was no objection.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2006

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 287 and rule XVIII, 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. 2361.

The Chair designates the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) as chairman of the Committee of the Whole, and requests the gentlewoman from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO assume the chair temporarily).

□ 1213

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. 2361) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2006, and for other purposes, with Mrs. CAPITO (Acting Chairman) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

Under the rule, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. TAYLOR) and the gentleman from Washington (Mr. DICKS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. TAYLOR).

Mr. TAYLOR of North Carolina. Madam Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Chairman, today we present for consideration by the House the Interior, Environment and Related Agencies fiscal year 2006 Appropriations bill as approved by the House Committee on Appropriations.

The bill provides a total of $26.2 billion in funding for programs for the Department of the Interior, Environmental Protection Agency, Forest Service, Indian Health Service, the Smithsonian Institution, and several other environmental and cultural agencies and commissions.

□ 1215

The bill is $823 million below the fiscal year 2005 level, and $435 million above the administration budget request.

This is a balanced, bipartisan bill. It provides significant increases for our national parks, Indian schools, hospitals and clinics, wildfire programs; forest health is a high priority, and the Healthy Forest Initiative is fully funded.

The Payments in Lieu of Taxes program has a healthy increase of $30 million above the budget request, and more than $3 million above the 2005 level. Despite our very tight allocation, the Committee believes it is important to provide this increased funding for PILT.

There is an increase of $64 million for operations of our National Park System, including a $30 million increase specifically designed for individual units of the National Park Service. This targeted park base increase will benefit all of our parks.

The bill also restores critical funding for science programs, historic preservation programs, National Forest Systems programs, and Save America's Treasures grants. Finally, we have restored critical environmental education, research and rural water programs in the Environmental Protection Agency, and provided some limited increases for initiatives proposed in the budget request, including Superfund, homeland security, school bus retrofits, the Clean Diesel Program, Methane to Markets Initiative, and the Brownfields Program.

The budget request for EPA, while substantially below last year's level and proposed increases in that budget request, were funded by elimination of many critical mission essential programs.

We heard from nearly every Member of the House asking that we provide funding for EPA programs that were eliminated or reduced in the budget. The program restoration and increases for the various programs and agencies in this bill are offset by the decreases in land acquisition, construction, and State grant programs, and by lowering the amount provided for the increases proposed in the budget request.

This is a balanced bill. It is within the 302(b) allocation for budget authority and outlays. It provides the needed funding to keep the agencies in the bill operating at a reasonable level.

It does not provide a lot of funding for new initiatives. The choices made by the Committee were tough and fair and responsible. I urge all of my colleagues to support the bill.

At this point, I would like to ask that a table detailing the accounts in the bill be inserted in the RECORD.