

with us as we make one step after another toward realizing the vision of restoring our area and rebuilding it to a new, better, higher place.

I look forward to this walk with this Congress over the next months and years. I hope that we will stay engaged as fully as we are in these early days throughout this lengthy process.

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

Mr. MCCRERY. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I would be remiss if I did not thank the Bush administration, the Department of Treasury and the IRS for administratively doing a great many things that they could do without legislation to make sure that the needs of the victims of Hurricane Katrina are met vis-a-vis the Tax Code. I want to thank the administration for their important work on this subject as well.

I also want to reiterate my thanks to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JEFFERSON) for working so closely with me and my staff to craft these very important individual tax provisions that, thanks to the leadership on both sides of the aisle, we have been able to bring to the floor in such a speedy manner.

Lastly, I would thank the chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means for lending the full support of his staff to this effort over the past couple of weeks. That will continue for some time to come.

I urge all Members to support this important legislation and get this needed relief to individuals who were affected by Hurricane Katrina.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. EMERSON). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. MCCRERY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3768, 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. MCCRERY. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 3768, the bill just passed.

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

There was no objection.

ESTABLISHING THE SELECT BIPARTISAN COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE THE PREPARATION FOR AND RESPONSE TO HURRICANE KATRINA

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 439, I call up the resolution (H. Res. 437) to establish

the Select Bipartisan Committee to Investigate the Preparation for and Response to Hurricane Katrina, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 437

Resolved,

SECTION 1. ESTABLISHMENT.

There is hereby established the Select Bipartisan Committee to Investigate the Preparation for and Response to Hurricane Katrina (hereinafter referred to as the "select committee").

SEC. 2. COMPOSITION.

(a) The select committee shall be composed of 20 members appointed by the Speaker, of whom 9 shall be appointed after consultation with the Minority Leader. The Speaker shall designate one Member as chairman.

(b)(1) The Speaker and the Minority Leader shall be ex officio members of the select committee but shall have no vote in the select committee and may not be counted for purposes of determining a quorum.

(2) The Speaker and the Minority Leader each may designate a leadership staff member to assist in their capacity as ex officio members, with the same access to select committee meetings, hearings, briefings, and materials as employees of the select committee and subject to the same security clearance and confidentiality requirements as staff of the select committee.

SEC. 3. INVESTIGATION AND REPORT.

The select committee is authorized and directed to conduct a full and complete investigation and study and to report its findings to the House not later than February 15, 2006, regarding—

(1) the development, coordination, and execution by local, State, and Federal authorities of emergency response plans and other activities in preparation for Hurricane Katrina; and

(2) the local, State, and Federal government response to Hurricane Katrina.

SEC. 4. PROCEDURE.

Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives, including the items referred to in paragraphs (1) and (2), shall apply to the select committee:

(1) Clause 2(j)(1) of rule XI (guaranteeing the minority additional witnesses).

(2) Clause 2(m)(3) of rule XI (providing for the authority to subpoena witnesses and documents).

SEC. 5. JOINT OPERATIONS.

The chairman of the select committee, in conducting the investigation and study described in section 3, shall consult with the chairman of a Senate committee conducting a parallel investigation and study regarding meeting jointly to receive testimony, the scheduling of hearings or issuance of subpoenas, and joint staff interviews of key witnesses.

SEC. 6. STAFF; FUNDING.

(a)(1) To the greatest extent practicable, the select committee shall utilize the services of staff of employing entities of the House. At the request of the chairman in consultation with the ranking minority member, staff of employing entities of the House or a joint committee may be detailed to the select committee to carry out this resolution and shall be deemed to be staff of the select committee.

(2) The chairman, upon consultation with the ranking minority member, may employ and fix the compensation of such staff as the chairman considers necessary to carry out this resolution.

(b) There shall be paid out of the applicable accounts of the House \$500,000 for the expenses of the select committee. Such payments shall be made on vouchers signed by the chairman and approved in the manner directed by the Committee on House Administration. Amounts made available under this subsection shall be expended in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Committee on House Administration.

SEC. 7. DISSOLUTION AND DISPOSITION OF RECORDS.

(a) The select committee shall cease to exist 30 days after filing the report required under section 3.

(b) Upon dissolution of the select committee, the records of the select committee shall become the records of any committee designated by the Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 439, the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) and the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H. Res. 437.

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

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, this debate that we are beginning here is about a very clear choice that is before us. Will we take the responsibility delegated to us as Members of the People's House by the framers of our Constitution to ask the hard questions, admit our mistakes and improve our Nation's government for the benefit of all? Or will we rely on proxies to do our work for us because we have judged ourselves incapable of carrying out our constitutional duty to ensure that we are providing for the general welfare, which is what the preamble of the Constitution clearly states we have a responsibility to do.

I, for one, believe as James Madison, the father of our Constitution, did, that the Constitution vests this responsibility with us. I am ready to accept the challenge as a Member of the House of Representatives. I believe that we have already started this work.

Last night, in the Committee on Rules, many of my Democratic colleagues asked excellent questions. The gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER), my friend from Rochester, asked very thoughtful and important questions that need to be raised. I noted that the gentlewoman from Sacramento, California (Ms. MATSUI) similarly asked some very, very good questions that should be posed to those dealing with the preparation for and the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

Just yesterday the governor of my State, Pete Wilson, and I should say the former governor of my State, Pete Wilson, testified. I do know very well that we have a new governor. His name