

stripped of your guns, your means of protection, but you are stripped of your constitutional rights. And that was what was done to the people of New Orleans whose guns and protection for their family was actually occurring in front of their very eyes. So, you know, this body is all about adopting laws that are meant to face situations that we haven't faced before, and certainly Katrina was one of those instances we did not face before, a storm of this magnitude.

So, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill. I think it is a terrific bill to insure the second amendments rights to the people of not only New Orleans and future disasters, but certainly the people of this country. And I would urge all my colleagues to support it.

Mrs. CUBIN. Mr. Speaker, I hail from a state where we cherish the fundamental Second Amendment right of law-abiding citizens to own firearms. The Second Amendment is one of the most meaningful ways in which the founders of our great Nation worked to guarantee our freedom and liberty.

Nowhere does the principle of liberty exist more fully than in the right to protect yourself, your loved ones and your property. With the breakdown of law and order in New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina, thousands were confronted with grave threats to their health and safety. Calls to 911 went unanswered. Police failed to stop the violence and looting. Many of the law-abiding people of New Orleans were on their own to protect themselves.

I was outraged that authorities illegally confiscated firearms from many of these citizens at the time they needed them most. The government rendered individuals and families defenseless and helpless in the face of imminent danger. In one case, a search and rescue team was banned from assisting in relief efforts because some of them had firearms. There are also reports of officials arbitrarily searching homes, cars, and boats in search of firearms. This is not only unacceptable, it is a violation of our Nation's Constitution.

I cosponsored the Disaster Recovery Personal Protection Act of 2006 to ensure that the confiscation of firearms in New Orleans will not become a precedent for crises in the future. H.R. 5013 will prohibit federal officials, or state and local officials under federal control, from seizing firearms or restricting firearms possession outside of applicable federal, state or local law.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation, which makes it clear that citizens can count on their constitutional right to bear arms at times when they need it the most.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to oppose this bill, the Disaster Recovery Personal Protection Act.

As you may know, I am from Florida. I do not hide that fact and am very proud of it. Occasionally, we get hurricanes in Florida and it is dangerous for us to stay in our homes.

When I go to a shelter, I do not want to have to worry that the person next to me has a gun. The shelter is a safe haven, and if that man over there has a gun, I am not safe.

The police are there for a reason. If a person has a gun, that is a threat to the public safety.

Looting is bad. I do not deny that. However, possessions can be replaced. Things are just that: things.

Your life cannot be replaced.

Vote no on this bill today.

Let us debate this bill in Committee and hold hearings to hear all sides of the issue before we decide whether we are putting our first responders into greater danger.

Mrs. DRAKE. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to come to the floor today to voice my support for H.R. 5013, the Disaster Recovery Personal Protection Act.

In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, we heard reports regarding the seizure of firearms from law-abiding citizens by representatives of the federal government. I was disheartened by these reports.

As we know, the Second Amendment to the Constitution firmly establishes our right to keep and bear arms. This fundamental right is all the more necessary in the aftermath of a major disaster when government is unable to provide reliable protection from crime. The denial of this right by federal officials in the aftermath of Katrina was deplorable.

The Second Congressional District of Virginia, which I represent, encompasses the entire Atlantic coastline of the Commonwealth. While we have not experienced a natural disaster on the scale of Hurricane Katrina, the Second District is itself very susceptible to the threat of Hurricanes and other natural disasters.

With enactment of this legislation, we will codify the right of law-abiding citizens in areas affected by disasters to be able to protect themselves, their families, and their property.

I am a cosponsor of the Disaster Recovery Personal Protection Act because I believe this Congress should be committed to protecting our Constitutional right to keep and bear arms. I am proud to support this legislation and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. KUHL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5013, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. KUHL of New York. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

AUTHORIZING ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE KENNEDY CENTER

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5187) to amend the John F. Kennedy Center Act to authorize additional appropriations for the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts for fiscal year 2007.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 5187

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

SECTION 1. JOHN F. KENNEDY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS.

(a) MAINTENANCE, REPAIR, AND SECURITY.—Section 13(a) of the John F. Kennedy Center Act (20 U.S.C. 76r(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1) by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in paragraph (2) by striking “, 2006, and 2007.” and inserting “and 2006; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following: “(3) \$19,100,000 for fiscal year 2007.”.

(b) CAPITAL PROJECTS.—Section 13(b) of such Act (20 U.S.C. 76r(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1) by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in paragraph (2) by striking “, 2006, and 2007.” and inserting “and 2006; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following: “(3) \$20,000,000 for fiscal year 2007.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 5187.

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

There was no objection.

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

H.R. 5187 was introduced by Chairman YOUNG and Ranking Member OBERSTAR on April 25, 2006. The bill amends the John F. Kennedy Center Act to authorize additional appropriations for the Kennedy Center for fiscal year 2007.

The current authorization for fiscal year 2007 is \$36 million for the capital projects and the maintenance, repair and security accounts. H.R. 5187 raises the previously authorized level for fiscal year 2007 from \$36 million to \$39.1 million to align the authorized level with that requested in the President's budget.

The slight increase in authorization will allow the Kennedy Center to proceed with the scheduled renovation of the Eisenhower Theater. Programming for the theater has been cancelled because of the renovation. It is critical that renovation proceed as scheduled to minimize the time the theater is offline. The additional authorization will also allow the Kennedy Center to continue necessary operations, maintenance requirements, including many life safety upgrades.

H.R. 5187 will help ensure that the Kennedy Center is authorized to use all funds appropriated in support of the President's budget for fiscal year 2007.

I support this measure, and urge my colleagues to do the same.

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

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Pennsylvania has indeed explained the principal provisions

of the bill. We did here increase the capital program authorization to \$20 million for fiscal 2007 from the current \$18 million. And we increase the maintenance, repair and security authorization to \$19.1 million, from the previous level of 18 million. That will allow the Center to proceed with renovation of the Eisenhower theater, and life safety projects associated with the roof terrace.

A major assessment of the Center indicated needs to enhance safety, and these are costs in addition to what the Center is capable of providing, so the authorization level will be consistent with those recommendations.

And the bill is also consistent with the administration's budget request to provide funding, and for the appropriation amounts included in the Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriation bill.

The Kennedy Center is the Nation's outstanding center for the performing arts. It is a world renowned center for the performing arts, and is a national treasure. It is, in fact, a national historic site. It is under the jurisdiction of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. We treat it as a national treasure.

These are investments in the future well-being of that structure. And the investments that we have made through this committee over many years at the time that the chairman of the subcommittee, the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. SHUSTER, and the previous chairman of the full committee, Mr. SHUSTER, has seen to the needs, the investment that keep this Center for the Performing Arts a world premiere facility.

As President John F. Kennedy said, "a Nation without the arts has nothing to look backward to with pride, nor forward to with hope."

The investment that we make in the facility of the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts allows us to look forward with hope to the grandeur and the joy of the spirit, the human spirit that is provided by the performing arts.

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

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, we have no further speakers. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5187.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS IN SUPPORT OF A NATIONAL BIKE MONTH

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 145) ex-

pressing the sense of Congress in support of a national bike month and in appreciation of cyclists and others for promoting bicycle safety and the benefits of cycling.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 145

Whereas there are over 57 million adult cyclists in the United States;

Whereas it is estimated that 100 million United States citizens of all ages cycle each year;

Whereas 5 million United States citizens commute by bicycle to work;

Whereas the bicycle industry generates more than \$5 billion dollars a year and is an important part of the economy of the United States;

Whereas recreational cycling is a safe, low-impact, aerobic activity for all ages;

Whereas when an individual cycles as a form of regular exercise, the health of the individual may be increased;

Whereas a national bike month would provide an opportunity to educate United States citizens about the importance of bicycle safety and the health benefits of cycling;

Whereas most communities in the United States officially recognize May 20th as Bike to Work Day; and

Whereas the month of May has officially been celebrated as National Bike Month by the League of American Bicyclists and the majority of the international cycling community since 1956; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that—

(1) United States citizens should observe a national bike month to educate citizens of the United States about the importance of bicycle safety and the health, transportation, recreational, and environmental benefits derived from cycling;

(2) health and transportation professionals and organizations should promote bicycle safety and the benefits of cycling; and

(3) United States citizens should salute the more than 57 million cyclists in the United States and the national and community organizations, individuals, volunteers, and professionals associated with cycling for promoting bicycle safety and the benefits of cycling.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. PETRI) and the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H. Con. Res. 145.

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

There was no objection.

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

Since 1956, the international cycling community and the League of American Bicyclists have celebrated May as National Bike Month. This resolution expresses the sense of Congress that U.S. citizens should observe a National Bike Month.

Over 100 million American citizens of all ages cycle each year. In addition, 5

million people commute by bike to work.

But these people are the exception, not the rule. Over 57 million people in the United States are overweight. 78 percent of Americans do not meet the recommended basic levels of activity.

During this time when childhood obesity and type II diabetes are rising at alarming rates, it is important that we encourage people to a more active lifestyle.

Cycling is a safe, low impact, aerobic activity for all ages. As more people participate in activities such as cycling, the recent trends in obesity and type II diabetes can be reversed.

Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Bike Caucus and cosponsor of this bill, I support efforts to publicize the benefits of cycling and of bicycle safety. My home State of Wisconsin is a leader among the States in the number of trails our residents can enjoy and more than half a million people in Wisconsin ride a bike at least once a month.

On the business side, we are the proud home of manufacturers of bikes and bike products. Even the President of the United States rides a Trek, headquartered in Wisconsin, as does seven-time Tour-de-France winner Lance Armstrong.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support H. Con. Res. 145. By establishing a National Bike Month we are providing the opportunity to educate people about the importance of bicycle safety and the health benefits of cycling.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, this is the 50th year we have observed Bike Month, and it has been somewhat delayed coming to the floor this year, but I think it is all the more significant.

We just witnessed this last week, American Floyd Landis in his heroic victory in the Tour-de-France, just in time for him to proceed with surgery to replace his hip.

We have watched this summer as gasoline prices have exceeded \$3 a gallon across the country, and record high oil prices. To say nothing of the continued congestion, pollution and parking nightmares suffered by so many Americans. It is appropriate for us to reflect on the contributions of the bicycle today and its potential for the future.

□ 1530

The bicycle is the most efficient form of urban transportation yet designed by man. It is fun, healthy, inexpensive. It is often identified with kids; and that is appropriate. We are working hard to make it safe and attractive for children. The recent reauthorization of the Surface Transportation Act authorized almost two-thirds of \$1 billion for our historic Safe Routes to School program. We are watching safety education for young cyclists around the country.