Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I asked to speak because the whip yielded back his time.

I understand the gentleman's contention. Very frankly, we did our business in a timely fashion and got a lot done these last 2 weeks, in our opinion. We may differ on that. We got, we think, a lot done in a bipartisan fashion, really, in terms of the votes.

I will tell you, the Foreign Affairs Committee had a hearing today; it is going on now. Lee Hamilton is testifying on Iraq. We believe that is timely and important. So that committee is meeting. I just got the notice of what committees are meeting.

I only state that because I believe my friend is correct, that early on we don't have as many committee meetings. We believe that having the time available for our committees to get work done is going to facilitate having meaningful work on the floor, and we hope that we can do our meaningful work on the floor in hours where it will provide for Members not having to work until 11 o'clock and 12 o'clock at night, even though it may save them 2 or 3 hours on a Friday. But we are going to work with you. We have worked together; we are going to continue to work together. We will have differences.

I am going to work with Mr. BOEHNER, the leader, to accommodate our Members. You are my friend. The fact that we are in session or not in session is not an indication of whether Members are working. That representation was never made, nor was it ever intended to be made. It is a misrepresentation, certainly in my view, that that is any contention of mine or implication that ought to be drawn. I think the gentleman agrees with that. Members work hard whether we are in session or not in session.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, JANUARY 22, 2007

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Monday next for morning hour debate.

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

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

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

There was no objection.

PROVIDING FOR A JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS TO RECEIVE A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I send to the desk a privileged concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 38) and ask for its immediate consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the concurrent resolution.

The Clerk read the concurrent resolution, as follows:

H. CON. RES. 38

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the two Houses of Congress assemble in the Hall of the House of Representatives on Tuesday, January 23, 2007, at 9 p.m., for the purpose of receiving such communication as the President of the United States shall be pleased to make to them.

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PENSION BILL REGARDING CONVICTED FORMER MEMBERS FALLS SHORT

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

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, today Congressman Ney was sentenced to 30 months in jail after pleading guilty to two Federal felonies. Amazingly, under our law he will still collect a congressional pension funded by the U.S. taxpayer. In fact, other Members of Congress who pled guilty or were convicted of crimes collect. Congressman Rostenkowski collects. Congressman Traficant collects. Congressman Cunningham collects. All taxpayer-funded pensions.

On Monday, we will take up a very limited bill to kill pensions for Members of Congress who commit only one of four felonies. The legislation we will consider misses 17 other public integrity felonies that the House already adopted with the support of Speaker PELOSI and Speaker HASTERT in previous years. The legislation we consider on Monday has never been through a committee and the leadership will not allow any amendments to the legislation. There will be no vote permitted to add the other 17 public integrity felonies that should have been part of this needed reform. The legislation that we will consider on Monday will fall short of the potential that we had to reform this House.

□ 1200

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CHANDLER). The Chair will now recognize Members for special orders not beyond 2 p.m.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

NO NEW TAXES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about an issue that is not so much on our agenda in these first 100 hours, but I believe it will encompass much of our focus during the course of the 110th Congress. It has to do with the how and why that we will achieve fundamental entitlement reform.

President Bush and many leaders in the new majority in the House and Senate have spoken of the priority of reforming Social Security and dealing with the extraordinary unfunded obligations of our mandates in future years. The President, to his credit, 2 years ago raised the prospect of fundamental Social Security reform. But the American people rejected the President's call.

And I rise today to speak about what I believe the parameters of that debate should be from the perspective of a conservative in the minority who believes in the principles of limited government.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the American people did not reject the Social Security reform or the personal retirement accounts that the President advanced. I think they rejected the entire debate and how it unfolded. I think they rejected the notion that the predominant goal of Social Security reform was to make the numbers add up or, in the language of the wonks, to achieve solvency in Social Security. Such a yardstick expresses no opinion on how to fix an increasingly bankrupt system, and I believe that as a result it invariably blesses benefit cuts or tax increases as a result.

And while President Bush has spoken to his opposition to tax increases, Treasury Secretary Hank Paulson has repeatedly said, in conversations with Members of the House and Senate, that ''everything is on the table,'' raising the specter of the possibility of raising taxes to achieve Social Security reform. And even the President's own Press Secretary, when asked directly whether the White House was ruling out a tax increase to achieve Social Security reform with this newly minted

Democrat majority in Congress, the Press Secretary said, ''No, I'm not.''

I believe, Mr. Speaker, this is all code for a willingness within the Bush administration to consider raising taxes in exchange for achieving Social Security reform. Such a tax increase would likely come from lifting or eliminating the cap on the amount of salary and wages subject to the payroll tax. The current income that is subject to the payroll tax is $94,200.

But raising payroll taxes, I would offer, would prove devastating to working Americans, small businesses and the economy as a whole and, worse, if we eliminated the cap on income subject to payroll taxes for Social Security, would only add a brief 7 years to Social Security's financial solvency.

According to the Heritage Foundation, eliminating the cap will increase taxes by $484 billion over the first 5 years. This 12.4 percentage point marginal tax rate increase would hit middle income families struggling to make ends meet, pay for college and save for retirement, and much of the increase would be borne by the 3 million small business owners who pay both the employer and employee portion of the tax hike. These entrepreneurs are the driving force of our economy, Mr. Speaker. And as a result, a tax increase of this nature would result in a 2 to 3 percent reduction in economic growth, causing massive layoffs across the country. And, again, eliminating the cap on income subjected to Social Security payroll tax would only extend the life of Social Security for 7 years.

Now, there are many, even on my side of the aisle, that are flirting with the notion of raising taxes. But, Mr. Speaker, we have been down this road before. It was 1990, when I was a candidate for Congress, when another President Bush teamed up with a Democrat majority in Congress and headed to Andrews Air Force Base all in the name of entitlement reform and deficit reduction, brought the American people the promise of reform in the future, and the largest tax increase in American history.

We must not go down the road of compromise again. I think the administration needs to be clear that any Social Security compromise must reject tax increases of any kind. That means no increase in the payroll tax rate and no change in the cap apart from the current indexing that happens under the law.

I would say, respectfully, to my colleagues and to the President of the United States, we should say to our good friends in the new majority, ''Read our lips. No new taxes.''

It is imperative that we bring reforms like personal savings accounts to this new deal program. I think it is imperative that we make the new deal a better deal for younger Americans, but raising taxes on small business owners and family farmers in the manner of lifting the cap or raising the rate is an idea whose time should never come.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PALLONE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

LAPSE OF SAFE AND SECURE COUNTY RURAL SCHOOLS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, as I speak here on the floor of the House today, layoff notices are being prepared for teachers, for county sheriff deputies, and other workers in counties in the Pacific Northwest and indeed, across America. This is a result of the lapse of something called the Safe and Secure County Rural Schools Act, legislation that was enacted in a bipartisan way when Bill Clinton was President of the United States and the Republicans controlled the House and the Senate. And this legislation was adopted in recognition that many counties across America are substantially owned by the Federal Government. And the Federal Government is obviously exempt from taxes. And because of major changes in Federal environmental laws, timber harvest in those counties has dropped dramatically, in some cases to near zero. Therefore, the shared revenues, under a compact with the Federal Government, of these counties and schools have shared in the revenues with the Federal Government. And now, for many counties, these revenues would be near zero without the guarantees that were enacted in the last year of the Clinton presidency. I argued at the time that they should be made permanent. Unfortunately, lobbying by the timber industry and some county commissioners who hadn't thought this through, who thought they could drive a crisis and maybe get a change in forest policy, they were made temporary. They have expired as of the 1st of October and that is why the layoff notices are being prepared now.

Congress must act to renew this legislation. Congress needs to hold up its end of the bargain with these counties and these schools across America. The formula is based on historic timber harvest, and historic timber harvest has dropped dramatically, as I said earlier. Some criticize Oregon saying, well, you get a lot of the money. Well, we have the highest Federal ownership of forest lands and the highest timber harvest on Federal lands, and we also have something that is very unique called the ONC lands, which are a vestige of a failed railroad and revestiture of Federal lands and the agreement between the counties and the Federal Government. Quite complicated.

But the bottom line is, we are just asking the Federal Government to make good on its commitment, its partnership. Otherwise, we are going to see, essentially, counties in southwest Oregon who have very little other opportunity to raise revenues, and none regarding the Federal lands. They don't get PILT payments or anything else. We are going to see them laying off vital service providers. There are large parts of southwest Oregon that could become virtually lawless with our State cutbacks in State police and the question of whether or not we will be able to have county sheriff patrols in large areas. In my home county, the size of the State of Connecticut, you know, once when this happened previously, because of a depression in the timber industry, we had no deputies in an area the size of the State of Connecticut, outside of the cities. With the meth epidemic in rural areas in the West and other things, this would be very bad, not only for Oregon and those counties, but for the entire western United States. It is in the public interest.

We are hopeful, we have asked the President to put it in his budget. Last year he sort of haphazardly put it in his budget after ignoring the issue for a number of years. Unfortunately, the financing mechanism that the President chose was immediately criticized by Republican Senators, and declared to be a nonstarter. There are indications it may be in the President's budget this year. We are hoping that the President has found a more suitable offset, something that we can bring to the Congress and begin to move this legislation through.

We need to look at the emergency supplemental for the possibility of a 1-year extension, and then I am committed to moving a permanent extension through a committee on which I serve, the Resources Committee. Greg Walden and I did that 2 years ago very quickly. But the bill stalled out in Agriculture. Hopefully, this time after we get it out of the Resources Committee, that it will move more expeditiously through the Agriculture Committee for the deliberation of the entire Congress. It is not just the Pacific Northwest at risk. It is hundreds of counties and school districts, from Florida to Maine, all across America, who are at risk. And this Congress and this President need to act to fulfill this commitment and this promise.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. POE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)