Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, middle-income families are the backbone of our economy, and that is why we should not wait any longer to vote on extending tax cuts for middle-income families. Extension of these taxes have been held hostage by the discussion of whether to extend the rates for the wealthiest Americans.

Ninety-eight percent of Americans face a tax increase January 1. For the typical middle-income American family, that would be the loss of $2,000 a year. The Republican demands would mean that those making more than a million dollars a year would receive an average of $100,000 annually, and the middle-income would be saddled with the $700 billion in new debt to pay for the multimillion-dollar tax cut for billionaires.

The billionaires' lifestyles will not change, and no significant jobs will be created. If they were going to be, they would be now.

I am committed to continuing tax cuts for middle-income families on incomes up to $250,000.

Mr. Speaker, I favor jobs. Tax cuts for the rich will change nothing, but it will increase the deficit.

□ 1030

PROVIDING FDIC PROTECTION FOR IOLTAS

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

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 6398, which I was proud to cosponsor with my colleague, Congressman DOGGETT. This important measure will ensure that lawyer trust accounts, the interest income from which goes to support legal services programs across this country, will be fully insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, therefore providing to the providers of these programs an important assurance that going forward this source of funding will be protected.

For almost 20 years before I came to this body, I had the privilege of working with some of the finest legal services providers in the State of Maryland. And I want to thank them for the work they do every day to provide assistance to those underserved in our community. Every opportunity we get to support their work we should seize upon. And that's what we do with this measure. I thank my colleagues for their support of H.R. 6398.

PASS THE FREE TRADE AGREEMENTS

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

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, we all know the sad news of the expiration of unemployment benefits. And we feel very strongly about ensuring that the American people who are struggling are able to have their needs met. We also feel strongly that it must be paid for. We also feel very strongly, Mr. Speaker, that the focus should be on job creation and economic growth.

We have three pending trade agreements with Panama, Colombia, and South Korea, which not only would have far-reaching economic impacts on the United States of America, but at the same time it would have a very, very important geopolitical impact. And it seems to me that as we look at creating good manufacturing jobs for union and nonunion workers in the United States, at companies like Caterpillar, John Deere, Whirlpool, other union companies, that the single best thing to do for those workers and potential union and nonunion workers is to open up markets where there are 40 million consumers in Colombia.

The single largest bilateral free trade agreement in the history of the world would be the U.S.-Korea free trade agreement. And so, Mr. Speaker, I would like to join, and I know there is bipartisan support for this, in encouraging the administration to send up those agreements so that we can focus on what it is the American people want us to do, and that is create good manufacturing jobs right here in the United States.

TRIBUTE TO CHAIRMAN JAMES L. OBERSTAR

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

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I am struck by the comments of my colleague from California and his desire to build jobs here in America. My comments today are really directed towards the chairman of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Mr. OBERSTAR, who will be leaving this House at the end of this year, an extraordinary individual who over his 40 years in this House has led the way for good American union jobs in the construction industry.

Unfortunately, when it came time in the stimulus bill, not one Republican voted for the stimulus bill that created 1.5 million union jobs in the construction industry. Unfortunately, that was the case. You can't have it both ways, I suppose. Mr. OBERSTAR has led the way time and time again for worker safety, to make sure that Americans had the transportation, the infrastructure that they needed.

I have had the great pleasure of working with him and learning from him. I am sure I join with every colleague in this House, Democrat and Republican, to say that we will miss him deeply, and his leadership will be lost upon us.

IN MEMORY OF BOB ABBOTT

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

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I come to memorialize Bob Abbott, a young man who saw the future in terms of technology and who worked on inventing the digital ways of communicating. He was a researcher who looked around the world and saw what was needed in terms of computers. And he helped the team in Silicon Valley solve some of those problems. He died about a month ago.

He would be appalled to know that all of his hard work to bring communications together would leave out those who are unemployed. As you know, 39 percent say that not eliminating the tax cuts for those earning more than $250,000 a year would be a travesty. Bob worked so hard to address these issues through his computer communications. We have to be sure that those people who have worked so diligently in manufacturing and in other areas of technology are taken care of when they lose their jobs.

In memory of a young man who worked so hard to bring communication skills to all Americans, I say to him we will make a move to see that the unemployed have work in your memory.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 101, FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS, FISCAL YEAR 2011

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 1741 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 1741

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 101) making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2011, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the joint resolution are waived except those arising under clause 9 or 10 of rule XXI. The joint resolution shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the joint resolution are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the joint resolution to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations; and (2) one motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Colorado is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER). All time yielded during consideration of the rule is for debate only.

I yield myself such time as I consume.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. POLIS. I also ask unanimous consent that all Members be given 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 1741.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1741 provides a closed rule for consideration of H.J. Res. 101, making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2011, and for other purposes. The rule provides 1 hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations.

The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the joint resolution except those arising under clause 9 or 10 of rule XXI. The rule provides that the joint resolution shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions of the joint resolution. Finally, the rule provides one motion to recommit the joint resolution with or without instructions.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of approving a continuing resolution to maintain a level and consistent funding stream for our Federal Government. It is one of our primary constitutional responsibilities as Members of Congress to keep the Federal Government running through the passage of appropriations legislation. This continuing resolution will ensure that all necessary and vital functions of government will continue uninterrupted until both Chambers of our legislature have completed their work.

If we do not act now, Mr. Speaker, the Federal Government will effectively shut down this Friday, December 3. This continuing resolution is a short term, straightforward measure to keep the government running and get us through the next 2 weeks, until December 18, while bipartisan negotiations continue in the House and the Senate. It is my hope that my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will work with us to move this important bill forward and to pass a clean continuing resolution contained under this rule.

This continuing resolution will fund the Federal Government at levels already approved by the House in the fiscal year 2010 appropriations bills and the fiscal year 2009 supplementals. This includes extending the authority for the Department of Defense to execute the Commanders Emergency Response Program, an essential tool for military commanders in Iraq and Afghanistan.

□1040

It would also continue the application period for retroactive stop loss benefits through the duration of the continuing resolution.

The Retroactive Stop Loss Pay Program provides $500 for each month served in stop loss status with an average benefit of $3,700 to the brave servicemen and -women, veterans and beneficiaries of those whose service was involuntarily extended under stop loss.

This continuing resolution would also continue to fund VA hospitals already under construction, including one in my home State of Colorado, the Denver VA Hospital, which serves 58,000 veterans living in Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, and Wyoming. Millions of veterans and their families across this Nation depend on the VA for medical care and support, and we must pass this CR so we continue to build these much-needed facilities. Absent this CR, construction on these VA facilities will grind to a halt, leaving our veterans in the lurch. Our veterans took an oath to defend our country, and they deserve to come home to better care and a quality hospital that meets their needs.

This CR would also allow the Federal air marshals to maintain the existing fiscal year 2010 fourth quarter coverage levels for international and domestic flights. This funding will allow for continued training, including investigative techniques, criminal terrorist behavior recognition, firearms proficiency, aircraft specific tactics, and self-defense measures that are necessary to protect the flying public.

This funding allows the Federal air marshals to fulfill their mission of protecting air passengers and crew. Protecting our Nation and combating terrorism is a top priority for this Congress, and without the passage of this CR, those efforts with regard to our air marshals will grind to a halt, leaving the traveling public at greater risk.

This continuing resolution would also allow the commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection to maintain the level of Customs and Border Protection personnel in place for the final quarter and the final few weeks of fiscal year 2010. This provides proper funding to keep terrorists and their weapons out of the United States, secure and facilitate trade and travel and enforce hundreds of U.S. regulations, including immigration and drug laws.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection law enforcement professionals serve as America's front-line defense on our Nation's borders at ports of entry, field stations and check points across the United States. It's important that we maintain a consistent level of personnel at our Nation's borders. By interrupting these funds, we would be jeopardizing Customs and Border Protection's ability to do their job and protect America. This funding enables these officers to inspect our borders, process trade, combat terrorism and smuggling.

A vote against this continuing resolution is a vote to gut our border security when we need it the most.

In addition to extending the existing authority for the Department of Homeland Security to regulate chemical facilities to prevent high levels of risk, this continuing resolution would also extend the existing Federal Emergency Management Agency, or FEMA authority, to provide technical and financial assistance to States and localities for pre-disaster hazard mitigation activity.

As an example, in my home State of Colorado, this continuing resolution would mean keeping in place vital programs like the 2008 Colorado Springs Wildfire Mitigation Project that removes vegetation around critical facilities and communities; to the 2008 Denver Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan, which assists 37 communities, townships, and counties in the Denver metro area in analyzing and assessing their hazard risks; the 2007 Coal Creek Crossing affecting the town of Erie in Boulder County, Colorado, flood reduction project that helps the town of Erie modify infrastructure around the Coal Creek Crossing to eliminate future damages.

My district, Mr. Speaker, recently suffered one of the worst forest fires in the history of Colorado, which completely destroyed over 100 residences. These emergencies can strike anywhere, anytime; and if we fail to pass this continuing resolution, we will cripple the ability of the Federal Government to help with emergencies wherever they occur and whatever their nature is.

This continuing resolution would also maintain the additional $23 million in funding for the Department of the Interior's new Bureau of Ocean Energy Management for increased inspections for offshore oil rigs. In light of the recent disaster we all witnessed unfold this summer in the Gulf of Mexico, these funds should be the last thing that we want to allow to expire or to cut. These funds are critical to ensure that tragedies like the Deepwater Horizon spill are not repeated and that our oil rigs are inspected.

These funds allow existing rigs to continue operating in a manner that protects the workers on the rigs in the sensitive environmental areas in which these rigs operate, as well as protect our economy from future job loss. Interrupting these funds will put offshore oil rig workers' lives in danger, the environment in danger, and our economy in danger as well.

The continuing resolution before us also maintains the current rate of the Foreign Military Financing, FMF, program, to include the $965 million that was advanced for Israel, Egypt, and Jordan in the fiscal year 2009 supplemental. By providing assistance and aid to our allies in the Middle East, we strengthen our position and make a vital investment in global and national security.

A vote against this continuing resolution is a vote to cut off aid to our allies like Israel and the Middle East at a time when they are critical for the global fight against terrorism and to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons to Iran.

Through this continuing resolution, we also continue the rate of operations

for the Pakistan Counterinsurgency Capability Fund at $700 million. This section also continues the terms and conditions included in the fiscal year 2009 and 2010 supplementals which will help build and maintain the counterinsurgency capability of Pakistan under the same terms and conditions.

Mr. Speaker, I have not been a supporter of the escalation of efforts in Afghanistan or in Iraq, but I think there is a strong bipartisan consensus in this body that assisting the Government of Pakistan in counterinsurgency efforts is one of the most critical fronts to protect Americans from terrorism, from a resurgence of the Taliban and from allowing al Qaeda a foothold in that area.

There are vital programs that we must continue to fund without interruption. There may be some who question the need for a CR. Let me remind everyone that with the exception of fiscal years 1989, 1995 and 1997, at least one continuing resolution has been enacted for each fiscal year since 1955.

I encourage my colleagues to support the necessary rule for this CR as well as the underlying CR to prevent the Federal Government from shutting down, jeopardizing our allies and friends across the world, as well as the safety and security of Americans.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

(Mr. DREIER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DREIER. I want to begin by expressing my appreciation to my good friend from Boulder, a hard-working member of the Rules Committee, and I want to associate myself with much of what he said.

We obviously have very important priorities that need to be addressed, whether it's dealing with environmental issues, border security, FMF, the Pakistani anti-insurgency effort, all of those things are very, very high priorities which need to be addressed; and so I think he is right on target in pointing to those.

The unfortunate thing, Mr. Speaker, is what is it that got us to the point where we are at this moment.

We all know that the American people are hurting. We know that unemployment benefits have expired. We know that we have looked at the election that took place on November 2 and that, in and of itself, was evidence of a high level of anger and frustration that has been shown by the American people, I mean, the largest turnover in this institution in nearly three-quarters of a century. And by virtue of that, it seems to me that we need to realize that there is a message that has been received, and that message is a clear one.

This business-as-usual pattern cannot continue. And when I say ''business as usual,'' it's a very tragic and sad commentary as to what business as usual has become. Because in this 111th Congress, we have for the first time since passage of the 1974 Budget and Impoundment Act not passed a budget. We have not even dealt with the budget issue, and that has played a role in getting us to where we are at this moment.

The importance of keeping the government running is one which Democrats and Republicans alike acknowledge, but we also know that we have what my friend described as constitutional responsibilities; and those constitutional responsibilities, under article 1, section 9, are for us to do everything that we can to make sure that we responsibly expend those taxpayer dollars. We basically abrogated our responsibility.

So for the first time in history, we have not passed a budget. And then, Mr. Speaker, if you look at what has happened in the last 2 years, we have for the first time ever not allowed Democrats or Republicans an opportunity to participate in a free-flowing open debate on appropriations bills, which had always been the case on virtually every appropriations bill up until this Congress.

□ 1050

And it's unfortunate that we have gotten to this point, because if we had had that free-flowing debate, Mr. Speaker, I'm convinced that we wouldn't be here today with this continuing resolution. Of course, I acknowledge that continuing resolutions have taken place in the past, but I wrote down the remarks that my friend just offered when he said that this continuing resolution will continue the funding levels that we have had already in existence. That's the funding level for the massive trillion-dollar so-called stimulus bill, the appropriations bills which have seen a 91 percent increase in the past 4 years in nondefense—nondefense discretionary spending. That's what is being maintained with this continuing resolution, and that is why we are very, very concerned, Mr. Speaker, about continuing to move in that direction.

Now, I believe that there are a number of things that have to be done. And the reason that I'm concerned and opposed to the continuing resolution that we have before us is that it does perpetuate this ''business as usual.'' So I mentioned the message that came from the November 2 election. We all know that. Democrats and Republicans alike recognize that the American people are angry, they are hurting, and they want change.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we know how important this issue is that we are trying to address. We have the Debt Commission, which was scheduled to have a vote today. It's now been postponed until Friday. They are looking at attacking this issue. We have a month before the 112th Congress convenes. And it seems to me that at this moment, certainly following the outcome of the November 2 election, the responsible thing for us to do would be to take on these issues right here and now.

We are looking at the challenge of getting the economy growing, as I said in my 1-minute presentation. And I bring this up because I know my friend from Boulder shares the commitment I have to prying open new markets around the world so that we can create good American jobs for people.

In fact, I met yesterday with the new Ambassador, Gabriel Silva, from Colombia, who has just taken over from Carolina Barco, who did a spectacular job, as we all know, working diligently to try and pass that U.S.-Colombia free trade agreement which has been languishing for 3 years. And again, for the first time in history, having passed the Trade Act in 1974, we saw that measure thrown aside by Speaker PELOSI nearly 3 years ago after the deal had been signed and was sent up by then-President Bush.

The numbers that we got yesterday from this meeting that I'm going to be releasing in a ''Dear Colleague,'' that I know my friend will look at, interestingly enough is in the area of agricultural products. We have seen the level of exports of U.S. agricultural goods drop from 46 percent to 22 percent in the last 2 years from the U.S. to Colombia. And at the same time, Colombia is dramatically expanding its trade relationship with Mercosur, the four countries in South America: Paraguay, Uruguay, Argentina, and Brazil. They developed a greater linkage with Western Europe. And here in the United States of America, we could create good jobs, get our economy growing and generate revenues to deal with many of these priority items that my friend mentioned in his remarks that need to be addressed. We'd have the revenues to deal with border security, foreign policy issues, and environmental issues if we could create good American jobs by opening up these markets.

And so that is why, Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that, as we look at the notion of a 17-day continuing resolution to keep the government going and the expiration of unemployment benefits, what we should be doing is we should have a laser-like effort focused on our need to create good American manufacturing jobs.

My California colleague was critical of me for talking about the importance of creating union jobs. He said that I couldn't have it both ways because I didn't vote for the nearly trillion-dollar stimulus bill and somehow want to create good union jobs by expanding market-opening opportunities for U.S. workers. Well, I believe that union and nonunion workers will benefit.

Workers from companies, as I mentioned in my 1-minute speech, like Caterpillar, like John Deere, like Whirlpool and others, companies in my State of California, would have a chance to have union members, union and nonunion workers, have opportunities that

don't exist today because we haven't opened up these markets.

And so, Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that as we look at the challenges that are lying ahead, the notion of saying we are going to continue funding at the levels that created a 91 percent increase in nondefense discretionary spending, that we're going to continue the funding levels that have created that obviously failed $787 billion, if you add interest and all, it's a trillion-dollar stimulus bill which has been decried as having failed by people all across the political spectrum, and if you look at the notion of our denying the American people a chance to have their proposals heard through their elected representatives with the kind of free-flowing debate when it comes to the notion of trying to bring about reductions in spending is just plain wrong.

That is why I'm going to urge my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, to oppose this measure. I believe that we can do better.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I agree with my colleague from California that to the extent we can grow American markets we need to work together in a bipartisan way to do that. I joined my colleague on letters to the President as colleagues on both sides of the aisle to encourage the further development of trade relationships, certainly starting with trade agreements that are very near completion with Colombia, Panama, and South Korea.

And also, I had the opportunity to host the honorable ambassador from Panama, Jaime Aleman, in my district of Colorado not too long ago, and I was able to introduce him to a number of Colorado businesses which stand to benefit from these.

Now, of course, as a matter of how this comes to pass, that these efforts could not be initiated by this body, we could not have an amendment to a CR if this was an open rule. We could not have an amendment to an appropriations bill which contained a trade agreement. It has to be negotiated and delivered to us by the administration.

And I know that President Obama has been committed to delivering and working on these trade agreements. In fact, in this very body, in the State of the Union address, President Obama very proudly talked about the export agenda and what it meant for American job creation. Of course, this means union jobs and it means nonunion jobs. It means job creation overall. The President remains committed to continuing to grow the market for American products and services across the world. That includes enforcing intellectual property provisions and it includes making sure that American products are available across the entire world.

Now, again, one of the issues that would be threatened if this continuing resolution is not passed is the flow of products across our border. The funding will run out for the Border Patrol and the ports of entry. Products coming into this country, for good reason, have to be inspected. Some of that has to do with whether there are illegal, illicit products, narcotics that are being smuggled, whether there are illegal people that are being smuggled, or whether products that are not allowed to be sold here or were not created in compliance with our existing trade agreements are created. The border security efforts would be gutted if this continuing resolution does not pass, leaving trade in the lurch and leaving American job creation in the lurch. So this bill has an important nexus in international trade.

The passage of this continuing resolution will facilitate the continued funding of our ports of entry, the continued funding of our border inspection services for both goods and people, which must continue. What degree of confidence would our negotiating partners of South Korea, Panama, and Colombia and many others have on our own ability to deliver on our trade agreements if the funding runs out at our ports of entry for goods and products? We must not allow that to happen.

□ 1100

I also certainly agree that the public, as demonstrated in the last election, they want a change in the business as usual, and I think that change has not yet fully manifested itself. Yesterday this body passed the Pickford-Cobell bill, a long-overdue bill to pass, but it had one earmark in it, a Republican earmark from the Senate, from Senator JON KYL of Arizona, a very large earmark that apparently was the price of support of getting it out of that body.

I am happy to say that this continuing resolution before us today is a very clean CR, a very clean continuing resolution, that would allow during this negotiating process—and where we wind up with regard to these appropriation bills next year and the year after is a very important issue for political discussion, a very important issue between both parties to come to consensus around what we can do to pass both bodies. But it is not what we are debating here today. We are simply allowing the Federal Government to continue to operate its ports of entries, its border security, counterinsurgency efforts in Pakistan, continued aid to Israel, Egypt, Jordan, and the Middle East, continuing to allow these programs to operate for a 2-week period while we seek the bipartisan consensus that will emerge and is necessary to continue to be able to pass the appropriations bills that are necessary to allow government to continue funding.

So this CR is an important part of our democratic process, and at least one continuing resolution has been enacted for every fiscal year since 1955. Traditionally they have been in many of those cases clean continuing resolutions, and simply allowed at the previously agreed upon rates by these bodies the Federal Government to continue while the negotiations are pending.

I also believe it would strike panic in global financial markets if the Federal Government closes down and people don't have confidence that this Congress can even allow the Federal Government to continue its routine operations while the negotiating process for future agreements is still underway. So I encourage my colleagues to support this process through its conclusion over the next 2 weeks and support this continuing resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on this resolution.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, it is standard and bipartisan practice to consider continuing resolutions under a closed rule. I would say this has been the practice on both sides of the aisle. Republicans have issued closed rules for every continuing resolution that they considered in both the 108th and 109th Congresses. Our goal with this continuing resolution is to do this in as clean a way as possible that allow these vital functions of government to continue to function: facilitation of international trade, our counterinsurgency efforts in Pakistan, our border security, and our sky marshals.

In recent history, again since 1955, at least one continuing resolution has been enacted in each fiscal year except for three. And, in fact, during the entire 59-year period, from 1952 to 2010, there were only four instances when all of the regular appropriation acts were enacted on time.

Mr. Speaker, the democratic process is a time-consuming one, but it is one that is worthwhile, and it is one that ultimately will reflect the will of the American people with appropriations bills that emerge from the Senate and from the House ultimately to be signed by the President. This continuing resolution gives our democracy time to work and makes sure that the world will not lose confidence in our country. It makes sure that our vital security interests here and abroad are maintained—our aid to our allies, our security, and our ports of entry here at home. We must make sure that the safety of the American people doesn't pay the price for the time it takes for our democracy to work. I strongly encourage my colleagues to support the rule and the bill.

I would like to thank Chairman OBEY for his leadership on this bill, and his staff for their hard work and their dedication.

I urge a ''yes'' vote on the previous question and the rule.

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

The previous question was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

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

Mr. DREIER. 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, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF S. 3307, HEALTHY, HUNGER-FREE KIDS ACT OF 2010

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 1742 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 1742

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (S. 3307) to reauthorize child nutrition programs, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived except those arising under clause 9 of rule XXI. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against the bill are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Education and Labor; and (2) one motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Massachusetts is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART). All time yielded during consideration of the rule is for debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MCGOVERN. I ask unanimous consent that all Members be given 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on House Resolution 1742.

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

There was no objection.

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

H. Res. 1742 provides a closed rule for consideration of S. 3307, the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. The rule provides 1 hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Education and Labor.

The rules waives all points of order against consideration of the bill except those arising under clause 9 of rule XXI. The rule provides that the bill shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions of the bill. Finally, the rule provides one motion to recommit the bill with or without instructions.

Mr. Speaker, before I begin, as many of my colleagues know, my colleague from Florida (Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART) has decided not to seek reelection and move on to other endeavors in his home State of Florida. I just want to publicly thank him for his friendship over the years, and also thank him for his great service not only to the people of Florida but to the people of this country. This may be the last rule that we handle together, so I wanted to take this opportunity simply to acknowledge his service and to thank him.

Mr. Speaker, we have the opportunity today to pass a very good bill that will improve the lives of our children. And I believe that we must seize that opportunity.

I want to thank Speaker PELOSI and Chairman MILLER, Congresswoman DELAURO, Congresswoman MCCARTHY, and others who have worked so hard on this issue. And I want to say a special thank you to First Lady Michelle Obama. She has been an incredible champion for our children, particularly in the areas of nutrition and obesity.

□ 1110

She has challenged us to live up to one of our highest moral obligations—to make sure that the children of this Nation have the nutritious food they need to grow, to thrive, and to succeed.

Mr. Speaker, as many of my colleagues know, I chair both the House Hunger Caucus and the Congressional Hunger Center, and I've said many times that hunger is a political condition. We have the resources to end hunger, particularly childhood hunger, and what we need is the political will to make it happen.

President Obama has pledged to end childhood hunger in America by 2015. If we support that goal, then we must pass this bill. I hope that the Members of this House, all of us, Democrats and Republicans, can come together today to summon the political will necessary to move forward on this issue.

There is not a single community in America that is hunger free. Talk to any food bank. They will tell you that the demand has never been greater, and far too many of the people who need help are children.

The child nutrition bill that we will take up today gives us a chance to provide healthy meals to hundreds of thousands of children who need them. It's also important to remember that hunger and obesity are two sides of the same coin. The fact is that highly processed, empty calorie foods are less expensive than fresh, nutritious foods. That's why so many families are forced to make unhealthy choices. This bill increases the reimbursement to schools for meals by 6 cents a meal, 6 cents, and that's the first increase in 30 years.

Too often, the only nutritious food our kids get is in a school setting, and this bill also increases access to after-school programs. And the bill helps communities to establish farm-to-school networks, which are not just good for children, but they're also good for our local farmers.

Now, it's no secret, Mr. Speaker, that I've had concerns with how this bill is paid for, and I remind my colleagues that this bill is fully paid for. The cuts to the SNAP, or food stamp, program don't make a lot of sense to me. I don't believe we should be taking access to food away from some people in order to provide it for others. But we have been assured, repeatedly, by the President and the White House that they will work with us to restore these cuts, and I look forward to working with the administration and my colleagues to make sure that the White House lives up to that commitment. Quite frankly, if I did not believe that this commitment to restore SNAP funding was real, I would have had a hard time voting for the underlying legislation.

Mr. Speaker, this bill, this exact same piece of legislation, passed unanimously in the Senate. Every single Member in the Senate, including a Who's Who of the most conservative Republicans, voted for reauthorizing our child nutrition programs. Unfortunately, from what I heard in the Rules Committee last night, that probably won't happen today in the House.

Some of my friends on the other side of the aisle have no problem expanding wasteful weapons systems. They have no problem expanding tax cuts for millionaires and billionaires on Wall Street, but apparently, some of them have a problem with expanding access to nutritious food for our children.

They say it's an outrageous example of Big Government or that a high school basketball team would be prohibited from having a bake sale. Nonsense. Utter nonsense. As the president of the national PTA has said, ''The measure will effectively eliminate the constant presence of junk food in school while allowing reasonable practices like periodic PTA or other school group fundraisers, such as bake sales, and the sale of hot dogs and sodas at after-school sporting events.''

An extra few million for a hedge fund manager who doesn't need it? No problem, so my Republican friends say, but heaven forbid we spend another 6 cents to make sure our kids have a more healthy school lunch. Those may be their priorities, Mr. Speaker, but they're not mine, and they're not the priorities of the people in my district.

Some of my friends on the other side will say that they want no children in our country to go hungry. Fair enough. Here's their opportunity to put their vote where their rhetoric is. Here's their opportunity to demonstrate that their concern for the hungry in this country is more than just lip service.

Mr. Speaker, I understand the politics here. It's pretty simple. If the President's for it, my Republican friends are against it. But I would ask them and I would plead with them to check those politics at the door just this once. Please don't sacrifice an opportunity to improve the lives of millions of our children on the altar of partisan politics.