

healer and a diplomat who inspired those around him.

Grand Forks, North Dakota, will always remember Ben Clayburgh. After serving his country in the U.S. Army as a flight surgeon, he established himself in Grand Forks as a trusted man in medicine and politics, two of his greatest passions.

He served as North Dakota's Republican National Committeeman for 12 years and, in 2004, was honored in becoming the Presidential elector for George W. Bush. His picture hangs in the Hall of Fame at the Ronald Reagan Center in Bismarck, and the memory of his tremendous character will always be in the hearts of those who knew and loved him.

May God bless Ben's memory, his wife, Bev, and the Clayburgh family, his greatest legacy.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF DONALD E. DEVANEY

(Ms. HANABUSA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HANABUSA. Madam Speaker, today I wish to honor Mr. Donald E. Devaney, Retired, the first civilian provost marshal to be appointed by the United States Army. In March 1984 he assumed the position at Tripler Army Medical Center in Hawaii.

During a nearly 30-year assignment at Tripler Army Medical Center, he established a provost marshal office and police department that gained great notoriety by many elements of the United States Government and the local community during a time of uncertainty and many wartime missions. Through Mr. Devaney's leadership, the Tripler Provost Marshal Office has been recognized as a leading law enforcement and security department.

Mr. Devaney's service as a Federal employee is built upon a 30-year career in the Army. In 1953, at the age of 17, he enlisted in the Rhode Island National Guard during the Korean conflict to join his peers in doing his part to serve America. A year later, he switched to Active Duty and was sent to locations in Japan as a military policeman.

As cochair of the U.S. Army Hawaii Retiree Council for more than three decades, he has provided invaluable service to our retiree families and, as a result, facilitated an understanding by them of the ever-improving and changing medical delivery systems we employ.

Madam Speaker, I ask you to join me as we offer our gratitude today to a man that has dedicated his life to service to our country.

DÉJÀ VU ALL OVER AGAIN

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

Mr. KILDEE. Madam Speaker, it's déjà vu all over again. Here we are just

2 weeks—5 legislative days—away from sequestration, and yet the House is about to leave town for a 9-day recess. That's unacceptable. We should be working every day to avoid this sequester and to avert it.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle seem determined to make sequestration a reality. Democrats stand ready to work in a bipartisan manner to avoid this.

Yesterday I met with Federal employees and college leaders from Michigan who are deeply concerned about how the cuts will affect middle class families, students, and senior citizens. Here's sequestration by the numbers:

- 750,000 jobs eliminated by October;
- 20 percent reduction in the Pentagon's operating budget;
- 70,000 children kicked out of Head Start;
- 21,000 fewer food and drug inspections;
- 4 million fewer meals served through the senior nutrition programs.

We need to find a balanced and responsible approach to reduce our deficit, for sure, but not let irrational, across-the-board cuts take effect. Doing so will devastate this economic recovery.

□ 1220

INVEST IN AMERICA AND GROW OUR ECONOMY

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

Mr. COHEN. I join in concern about our budget. Advancements to health would be cut in a major way. When I was a child, I had polio, and it has effects on people who have polio in later years. But because of the Federal Government's investment in research like the Salk vaccine and the Sabin vaccine, it has saved many families and children from that devastating disease. And around the world it's been successful, too. There are other diseases like heart disease, Alzheimer's, and cancer that the National Institutes of Health is primarily responsible for the research.

I'm worried about health and also jobs, and a major driver of jobs is research and development, education, and infrastructure spending by the Federal Government. Most of our great advances, whether it's railroads or the Internet or health care, have come through Federal Government partnerships with the private sector. We need to continue those to create a middle class—consumers that can grow our economy out of these problems. It's not just President Obama who says it. It's also who I call the three wise men: Krugman, Stiglitz, and Robert Reich.

Austerity hasn't worked. We need to invest in America and grow our economy.

LET'S DO THE JOB THE AMERICAN PEOPLE SENT US HERE TO DO

(Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, more and more, the voices are being raised about the devastating impact of a sequester, a self-inflicted wound of this Congress because we could not come together as the American people have directed us to do. The security of the United States will be in jeopardy if we have the sequester. Men and women who stand on the front lines in protecting this Nation will be in jeopardy. All of those who depend upon Head Start funding, early education funding, title I funds and housing funds, and opportunities for young people to go to college will be in jeopardy.

And so I think it is unfortunate that we are discussing and debating on the floor today H.R. 273, to eliminate the 2013 statutory pay adjustment for federal employees. All of those people who put themselves on the line for us and have already had a pay freeze; all we're talking about is 0.5 percent. None of that will bring down the debt or help the deficit. We're just making noise. What we should be doing is focusing on coming together around a growth and innovation budget and bringing the deficit down. What we should be doing is honoring the Sandy Hook and other victims and passing real gun violence prevention like universal background checks and storing guns.

Madam Speaker, let us do the job the American people sent us to do.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 1:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 22 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1330

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. MILLER of Michigan) at 1 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 273, ELIMINATION OF 2013 PAY ADJUSTMENT, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Mr. WOODALL. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 66 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 66

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 273) to eliminate the

2013 statutory pay adjustment for Federal employees. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and on any amendment thereto 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 Oversight and Government Reform; and (2) one motion to recommit.

SEC. 2. During any recess or adjournment of not more than three days, if in the opinion of the Speaker the public interest so warrants, then the Speaker or his designee, after consultation with the Minority Leader, may reconvene the House at a time other than that previously appointed, within the limits of clause 4, section 5, article I of the Constitution, and notify Members accordingly.

SEC. 3. It shall be in order at any time through the legislative day of February 15, 2013, for the Speaker to entertain motions that the House suspend the rules, as though under clause 1 of rule XV, relating to a measure condemning the government of North Korea and its February 12, 2013 test of a nuclear device.

SEC. 4. On any legislative day during the period from February 16, 2013, through February 22, 2013—

(a) the Journal of the proceedings of the previous day shall be considered as approved; and

(b) the Chair may at any time declare the House adjourned to meet at a date and time, within the limits of clause 4, section 5, article I of the Constitution, to be announced by the Chair in declaring the adjournment.

SEC. 5. The Speaker may appoint Members to perform the duties of the Chair for the duration of the period addressed by section 4 of this resolution as though under clause 8(a) of rule I.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. POLIS. Madam Speaker, I raise a point of order against H. Res. 66 because the resolution violates section 426(a) of the Congressional Budget Act. The resolution, waiving all points of order, waives section 425 of the Congressional Budget Act, therefore causing a violation of section 426(a).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Colorado makes a point of order that the resolution violates section 426(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

The gentleman has met the threshold burden under the rule and the gentleman from Colorado and a Member opposed each will control 10 minutes of debate on the question of consideration. Following debate, the Chair will put the question of consideration as the statutory means of disposing of the point of order.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. POLIS. Madam Speaker, I raise this point of order not necessarily out of concern for unfunded mandates, although there are likely some in the underlying bill H.R. 273, but rather as well to demonstrate that in many ways this bill and this process has been a travesty of the civics lesson that Americans learned in school.

I would like to make, Madam Speaker, a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman shall state it.

Mr. POLIS. What is the process that a Member can use to demand a division of the question on a bill?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. If a matter is divisible, any Member may demand that the matter be divided.

Mr. POLIS. Further parliamentary inquiry.

Does the rule being considered today prohibit a Member from demanding a division of the question?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will not interpret the content of the pending measure.

Mr. POLIS. Having heard from the Chair that a motion can be made by any Member to divide the question, I would like to ask unanimous consent to demand a division of the question on today's bill before us.

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

Mr. WOODALL. Madam Speaker, I object.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Objection is heard.

Mr. POLIS. I thank the Speaker, and I understand that it sounds like sitting here in the Chamber one Member objected to a division of the question. I would like to point out that over 400 Members did not object to the division of the question.

I will not ask for a recorded vote on this, although I think it's clear that my side would win over 400—some to 1, perhaps. I did not hear any additional objections from anybody in the Chamber.

Mr. WOODALL. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. POLIS. Madam Speaker, a point of parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman shall state it.

Mr. POLIS. Is the time under my control yieldable?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman controls his time and may yield.

Mr. POLIS. Thank you, Madam Speaker. If we have additional time later, I will yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Again, there was one objection, one objection in this entire body, to what I believe would be the overwhelming will of this body, which is to simply divide this question, because there are fundamentally two issues before us.

This bill, H.R. 273, introduced 3 weeks ago, was not seen or heard in any committee of jurisdiction of the House, rushed through the Rules Committee under a closed rule to the floor of the House, and yet despite the fact that this bill failed to undergo any appropriate committee of jurisdiction review process, here it is in the House with limited debate at a time when we are edging closer and closer to the spending cliff that our country faces in 2 weeks, which this bill does nothing about.

I know that many of us in this body, myself included, have been tireless advocates for supporting efforts to lower

our deficit and balance our budget through a balanced approach. But as Republicans on the Rules Committee acknowledged last night, including Congressman BISHOP, this particular bill would do nothing to solve our Federal debt, as it does not even change the spending caps agreed to in the Budget Control Act. What it does instead is include two completely unrelated measures.

When you consider that the House Republicans have here coupled a Federal employee pay freeze with a freeze on Members of Congress' salary, it leaves the suspicion that is being speculated on by many outside this Chamber that this might, this just might be being done for political purposes and posturing. And one wonders why this institution is held in such low esteem by so many members of the public. It is precisely this kind of political trick.

Let there be no disagreement: This body, since I've joined this body, has never given Members of Congress a pay raise. It simply hasn't. This has largely been an uncontroversial measure. When times are tough economically, Members of Congress should absolutely be the first in line to say, Look, we're not going to take a pay increase. And, in fact, Members of Congress have already foregone their pay increase through October of this year.

So let that come up through the appropriations process, as it is traditionally done. I'm confident this body will act with regard to Member pay. But let us not tie it up with this issue of whether all Federal employees at all different wage levels should have any raise at all this year or not.

Now, an amendment was brought forth yesterday by Congressman BERA of California and Congressman CONNOLLY of Virginia, that divided the bill, just as we tried to do today. And by overwhelming majority, 400 some to 1, we did not do, because it was unanimous consent that was required. Unfortunately, the idea was shut down by the Rules Committee.

I would like to yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY).

Mr. CONNOLLY. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the comments we've just heard. The bill before us today is just the latest partisan jab at Federal employees who are on the front lines protecting and serving our constituents every day.

□ 1340

I remind my colleagues that more than 85 percent of Federal employees do not work here in the D.C. region. They live and work in your districts. They are the law enforcement agents, park rangers, researchers, and health inspectors who make our communities safer. These are middle class families struggling to make ends meet just like everybody else, yet House Republicans have routinely used them as a punching bag, chipping away at their pay and their benefits. So far, the tab is \$103

billion and counting. It is time to say, "Enough."

I was pleased to join with Congressman BERA and 10 of our colleagues in cosponsoring the amendment Mr. POLIS referred to this partisan bill that at least would have separated the questions of freezing our pay from that of Federal employees. In fact, three such amendments were submitted, but each was rejected by the Republicans in the Rules Committee, underscoring that this really is nothing more than another political potshot at Federal employees and using us as the subterfuge.

If anyone's salary should be frozen as a result of our Nation's fiscal paralysis, it's ours; it's Members of Congress. That's why I introduced an alternative bill, H.R. 636, with Ranking Member CUMMINGS from the Oversight Committee, to freeze Member salaries for the duration of this Congress. Of course, my Republican colleagues fail to acknowledge that we already voted to freeze Member salaries through September of this year, as Mr. POLIS indicated, so there is no real sense of urgency here.

Why aren't we spending this time working on a bipartisan solution to avert the devastating consequences of sequestration 2 weeks from now? The \$85 billion in across-the-board cuts in defense and domestic spending for the rest of this fiscal year would slam the brakes on this economy and throw us potentially back into recession.

GDP performance in the fourth quarter shows that. It declined by one-tenth of 1 percent, largely because of shrinkage in public sector investments. That was led by a 22 percent drop in defense spending, the largest since the end of the Vietnam War. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle have shown almost no interest in addressing this threat, despite the pleadings of the Secretary of Defense.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. POLIS. I yield 15 seconds to the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. CONNOLLY. An amendment by our colleague, Mr. VAN HOLLEN from the Budget Committee, to replace sequestration was also rebuffed by the Rules Committee just last night on a partisan vote.

To make matters worse, the House is about to go into recess again tomorrow. In fact, we spent 15 of the 19 weeks from July through the lame duck in recess.

Let's do something productive for the United States economy.

Mr. POLIS. Madam Speaker, I would like to make an inquiry as to how much time remains.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Colorado has 3¼ minutes remaining, and 10 minutes may be claimed by an opponent.

Mr. POLIS. I would like to yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN).

Mr. MORAN. I thank my good friend from Colorado.

In 1729, an Irish satirist by the name of Jonathan Swift proposed a novel solution to child hunger and general poverty in Ireland. He recommended that Ireland's poor pull themselves up by their own bootstraps by selling their children as food to the rich. That would nourish the rich, earn the poor parents some much-needed cash, and solve the child hunger problem all at once. Some people took him seriously. Most realized the point that he was trying to make.

Today, the House majority has a somewhat similar kind of modest proposal, without Mr. Swift's sense of humor or irony. To ensure that our elderly are cared for, let's cut the pay of those responsible for their health. To make sure our food and drugs are safe, let's diminish the benefits of those whose job it is to screen for safety and unintended effects. To find a cure for cancer, let's punish the researcher who works daily to save millions of Americans from that disease. To care for our wounded veterans who are sent by this body to fight in foreign lands, let's make their caretakers find a second job.

Madam Speaker, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle may justify their vote today by boasting of freezing their own pay, but that was already accomplished in the fiscal cliff legislation. The bill before us today will freeze, for the third year in a row, every Federal employee's pay. It's an effort to denigrate our Federal workforce in the hope that the government becomes unresponsive, inefficient, and unworthy of our best and brightest. That's why I urge a strong "no" vote on H.R. 273. Enough is enough.

Mr. POLIS. Madam Speaker, why are we debating a bill that had to bypass regular order to rush to the floor in February when there's already a moratorium on the increase of pay for Members of Congress, and we should be debating spending, eliminating the deficit, the sequestration?

With 6 legislative days remaining before that fiscal cliff, here we are instead discussing something with regards to Member pay that doesn't even occur until October, and that which has been the tradition of this body for the last 4 years—not to allow Members of Congress a raise—and conflated it with a separate issue with regard to the proper compensation level so that our Federal employees and Federal agencies can compete in the marketplace with private employers and attract the talent they need to succeed.

This rule and this bill suffer from the stench of politicization, and the House should divide these two issues.

Madam Speaker, I'd like to ask unanimous consent to amend the rule to allow for consideration of amendment 4, the Bera-Connolly amendment, with 10 minutes of debate on each side.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The majority manager would have to yield for that request.

Mr. POLIS. Excellent. Well, I hope that no one objects.

Again, but for three votes cast in the Rules Committee by a 7-4 vote, and but for one solitary objection out of 435 Members of this House of Representatives, we would have divided the question and this body would have avoided being dragged into yet another political game that continues to jeopardize the standing of this body among the American people.

It's clear that each of these issues deserves a separate discussion and a vote. With regard to Federal employee pay, let it come through regular order. Let the committees of jurisdiction debate how the issue is handled, and let it be placed within the context of balancing our budget and an overall budget solution to the automatic cuts that are far more severe than a Member pay freeze and may include unpaid furloughs and other extreme measures within a couple of weeks instead of engaging in stale political gamesmanship.

Let's reduce our debt and deficit and avert the impending sequester.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WOODALL. Madam Speaker, I rise to claim time in opposition to the point of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 10 minutes.

Mr. WOODALL. I'd like to say to my friend that I endorse, Madam Speaker, his request to do away with stale political gamesmanship. I would put in the stale political gamesmanship category making a point of order against an unfunded mandate in the bill and then failing to make any indication that you actually believe there's an unfunded mandate in the bill, but simply using this time to talk about an issue that we have already litigated in a multihour hearing last night.

That said, I know, Madam Speaker, the gentleman's heart is felt in this issue. I would say to the gentleman that, while there was only one objection in this body, I make that objection out of great affection for the gentleman because, as I read the underlying bill, I see absolutely no way to divide this legislation into the components that the gentleman would like to debate.

The gentleman would like to debate a Member pay freeze. The gentleman would like to debate a Federal employee pay freeze.

Mr. POLIS. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. WOODALL. I yield to the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. POLIS. The way to divide them is precisely the Bera-Connolly amendment that was brought to our committee yesterday. On a functional level that does divide it.

Mr. WOODALL. I thank the gentleman. In fact, I thought that's where the gentleman's heart lay.

As the gentleman knows, the reason the Bera-Connolly amendment is not on the floor today, among others, is that it is nongermane to this legislation. We cannot subdivide this piece of

legislation to include nongermane components, which, again, I know the gentleman wants to debate those components. And, Madam Speaker, when the House schedules those bills, I look forward to having that debate, too; it's just not in this bill.

One of the great pleasures I've had in this body, Madam Speaker, has been being a part of a majority that is bringing bills that are simple to read and simple to understand. This is a front-and-back bill. I happen to have mine on two pages because I like to flip, but if I had been more conservative with my printer, it would have been a front-and-back page here, Madam Speaker.

What we talked about in the Rules Committee all last night—and it would have created more points of order for germaneness issues and others—was adding amendment after amendment after amendment that did not affect this language, but instead created brand-new debates about brand-new issues.

□ 1350

Again, I associate myself with the comments of my friend from Colorado. I think the American people are absolutely fed up with the way that this process works. But what I think they're fed up with are those bills that stack a transportation issue beside a health care issue beside a Commerce Department issue beside a military issue beside a child care issue, all of these things that are completely unrelated to one another, Madam Speaker.

In this bill, one issue and one vote. And the gentleman is absolutely right: in a vote in the Rules Committee last night, Madam Speaker, we decided not to allow this bill to be complicated with nongermane issue after nongermane issue. Those measures, these debates can actually come to the floor one item at a time, but we were not going to allow that to subsume what is also an important debate, and that's on the provisions that actually are contained in H.R. 273.

So given, Madam Speaker, that the gentleman observed no unfunded mandates in this bill, because there are no unfunded mandates in this bill, I ask the Chair to reject the point of order for there being unfunded mandates in this bill.

Madam Speaker, if I could conclude by just asking that in order to allow the House to continue its scheduled business for the day, I urge the Members to vote "yes" on the question of consideration of this resolution.

I yield back the balance of my time. The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

The question is, Will the House now consider the resolution?

The question of consideration was decided in the affirmative.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

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

Mr. WOODALL. Madam Speaker, for the purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Florida, my friend, 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.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WOODALL. I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WOODALL. Madam Speaker, House Resolution 66, this rule that we're considering today, will allow for debate on the underlying bill, H.R. 273.

This rule that we're considering today is a little bit unusual in that it not only allows for the underlying resolution, but it also takes care of some housekeeping business that we have here on the floor of the House. For example, all of America, Madam Speaker, has read of the nuclear tests that happened in North Korea, and this resolution allows us to consider tomorrow a bill under suspension of the rules to condemn that activity in North Korea. It's very important business that we are able to take care of here in the House. We would not be able to take care of it but for this rule. I'm glad we considered that here in the rule.

In this underlying bill, Madam Speaker, we're continuing what the President himself continued through March of this year. We're continuing through the end of the calendar year a freeze on the automatic increases in Federal employee pay. Again, I brought down a copy of the resolution, that small, front-and-back bill.

So often you see findings in these bills, Madam Speaker, you see findings about what the Congress believes and why this bill is coming to the floor. And I promise you, Madam Speaker, if you read this resolution—and, again, it's only a page and a half long, so it will be easy to do—you will not find one finding of contempt for Federal employees. In fact, if you had listened to the hearing in the Rules Committee last night, what you saw is universal praise for the hard work that our men and women in the civil service are doing for this country.

We have a lot of work that has to be done. I know it's a popular sport in some districts to kick Federal employees. Federal employees, by and large, work hard, though I'm happy to say you can distinguish, for example, the love and affection that so many of our constituencies have for our men and women in uniform. You see those pay-raise bills move through very quickly, versus a little suspicion that you have from time to time from folks who say, well, golly, I was just down at XYZ Federal office, and I didn't get great service. Golly, Rob, I was on the tele-

phone trying to get results from X, Y or Z agency, and they kept me on hold for 3½ hours. What are my dollars paying for?

I blame us for that, Madam Speaker. We owe better to our Federal employees than to put them in that circumstance. And gradually, not nearly fast enough, but gradually, our Federal employee system is moving towards recognizing hardworking, successful and dedicated employees through merit pay, through merit increases, through bonuses and through bumps—ways to say, do you know what, service matters. Service matters. And a one-size-fits-all pay scale does not work across the Federal system.

I'm very proud, Madam Speaker, I've just been appointed to the Oversight and Government Reform Committee in whose jurisdiction this bill is. I hope we're going to be able to take up those issues and build on that progress that has been made. But in all the conversation you'll hear on this floor—I won't say "rhetoric," Madam Speaker, because, again, I know people's hearts are in this issue—in all the debate you will hear on this House floor, what you will not hear is that \$1 is being cut from those merit bonuses. What you will not hear is that \$1 is being removed from agencies that have an opportunity to say, Do you know what, job well done. You deserve a bonus. What you will not hear is that \$1 is being taken that would have gone to recognize performance above and beyond in the service of our citizenry.

What you will hear is that in line with the recommendations of the much-discussed Simpson-Bowles Commission, a 3-year freeze on Federal automatic salary increases will be continued, upheld. It's been in effect for 2 years and 3 months, and it will continue through the end of the year.

Now, so often I hear, Madam Speaker, my constituents say, Rob, I just want to make sure that Congress is abiding by the same rules you ask everybody else to abide by.

I want to make that clear. That's what my friend from Colorado was discussing. It's not actually a provision in this bill that's extra. It's a function of law. Members of Congress' pay will absolutely be frozen for just as long—just as long. The same rules that apply to everybody apply to the Vice President, Mr. Speaker, apply to the executive branch, apply to folks back home in Georgia, apply across the board to Federal employees, and apply to everybody here in this Chamber.

We had one of the longest, and I would argue most intensive, hearings of our Rules Committee cycle last night, Mr. Speaker, where we explored this bill line by line, detail by detail. I was pleased to be part of that debate. I'm glad we had an opportunity, really, for unlimited time in which to do that. But I believe we crafted a good rule, Mr. Speaker, that will allow for thorough debate of this underlying bill.

Again, I would remind you, Mr. Speaker, and all Members, this bill,

posted on the House Rules Committee Web site, front and back of a sheet of paper, is simple and direct for everyone in this House to be able to read and everyone back home to be able to read so that we can have a thorough debate on this bill this afternoon.

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend, the gentleman from Georgia, for yielding the customary 30 minutes to me. I rise obviously in opposition to the rule for consideration of H.R. 273, to eliminate the 2013 statutory pay adjustment for Federal employees.

I just heard my colleague from Georgia say that this is a good rule; but I've also heard him say what I agree with very frequently, and that is that this body should proceed toward regular order, allow the committee process to go forward in a meaningful way, to have hearings, and to let the will of the body be worked here in the people's House. I've also heard him talk about closed rules; and it's for that reason that I believe that this process is not a good process because it is a closed rule, and this couldn't, in that sense, be good. There were no hearings.

He talks about this one week, one bill. Why this week for Federal employees? Last night, I talked with six members of the American Federation of Government Employees, some of them older, some of them younger, and all of them agonizing, as are Federal employees around the country.

□ 1400

Let me get to the point. The Republicans have decided that they want to continue in the same shortsighted and counterproductive campaign against Federal employees that we saw in the last Congress. When they introduced this very same bill in the 112th Congress, it passed the House and then went nowhere and accomplished absolutely nothing. I'm quite certain—and I'll bet—that it will face the same fate this time around.

Just last week, the Rules Committee considered H.R. 444, the Require a PLAN Act, which should have been called the "Republicans Have No Plan Act." Instead of offering real solutions to the challenges facing our Nation, my Republican colleagues continue to introduce do-nothing legislation that will do nothing to help the American people.

Obviously, all of us know that we face \$85 billion in sequestration cuts in a matter of weeks. These cuts were intended to be a fail-safe. They were supposed to be so unpalatable, so horrible for everyone, that Congress would never allow them to go into effect. Yet, instead of making sure that these massive cuts don't threaten the progress that we've made, my friends on the other side would rather play politics at the expense of the middle class and the working poor, underscoring the working poor.

As the President put it in his State of the Union address: "Arbitrary deficit reduction is not an economic plan."

Deficit reduction is a means to an end, not an end in and of itself. It is just one tool that will help us get our country back on the right track. You can't build a house with just a saw. Deficit reduction needs to be part of a comprehensive economic plan, one that will stimulate growth and create jobs.

A serious economic plan is one that does not take potshots at our economy and our Nation's full faith and credit for political purposes. We must, in this people's House, move beyond politics and work to avoid a dangerous backslide in our Nation's economic recovery.

For the life of me, I can't even begin to understand why House Republicans continue to pick on Federal employees. It's as if the people that keep the Capitol clean, the police officers that keep us safe, the countless people that work right here on this Capitol complex do not deserve this paltry raise and are to be picked on.

My AFGE friends were saying to me last night that Federal employees have already contributed \$103 billion towards deficit reduction. Furthermore, Federal employees and retirees have contributed \$15 billion in savings over 10 years through an increased pension contribution. A 2-year Federal pay freeze has been in effect since 2011 and will produce an additional \$60 billion in savings. The reduction and delay of a 2013 pay increase included in the current continuing resolution will yield \$28 billion in savings.

At what point does enough, as my friend from Virginia said, become enough? What's more and puzzles me—and I asked the question of the scrivener of this bill last evening—is: Why aren't Federal contractors, who make twice as much as Federal employees, included in this pay freeze? He gave me some political fogging. I don't know what it was and don't care to even bother to try to remember.

During the debate over the fiscal cliff, Republicans said that we shouldn't ask corporations and the wealthiest in our society to pay their fair share. The reason that was put—this is a while back during the debate on the fiscal cliff—was that if we tax the wealthy, they won't work as hard if they're taking home less money. What about Federal employees? Why is it that that logic does not apply here? It's incomprehensible that we find ourselves in this position.

Mr. Speaker, if the Federal Government is not paying realistic salaries, then we can't expect to be able to provide for people to allow for themselves and their families to have a decent living.

Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that the Federal workforce is smaller now than it was in 1988, a historic low compared to the size of the national population. There are fewer Federal

workers now than at any time during President Reagan's administration. Something has got to give.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 90 seconds to say to my friend, I always appreciate the eloquence of his words. My only saving grace, Mr. Speaker, is that the facts are on my side. If the world was as the gentleman from Florida had described it, I'd probably be where the gentleman from Florida is in terms of position. That's not the case.

Every dollar we spend in this town, Mr. Speaker, has consequences. The \$11 billion that we're talking about in this bill is not money that's being cut from the Federal budget; it's money that's not being given as an automatic inflator to every Federal salary in the land. Instead, it remains available to those agencies to perform the services that they were created to perform.

Let me just be clear, Mr. Speaker. That means for every dollar that is not going into a clerk's pocket at the Veterans Affairs Administration, that's a dollar that's going to go to implement Veterans Affairs services. For every dollar that's not going to be an automatic pay increase in my hometown at the CDC, it is going to go for critical research and infrastructure there to perform the very important role the CDC was created to perform.

We have to make choices, Mr. Speaker. Google "Greece and pay cuts." Google "Greece and pension cuts." In fact, don't just use Google. Use Yahoo. Use Bing. Use anything you'd like, Mr. Speaker. You will see where we are headed.

When you refuse to make the tough decisions that my friends are refusing to make with respect to the Federal budget, you know where those cuts are going to fall.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to yield 5 minutes to one of our very distinguished freshman Members, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS).

Mr. WILLIAMS. Mr. Speaker, I stand here in support of H.R. 273, a common-sense bill to overturn President Obama's recent executive order that authorizes a .5 percent pay raise for Federal workers.

With the looming threat of sequestration just weeks away, Federal agencies should be focused on how to do more with less, like every other business does in America and every other family does in America. But the President's order would cost taxpayers more than \$10 billion over 10 years.

Here are the facts: in the last decade, the average Federal civilian salary has increased by 62 percent. When you factor in benefits and total compensation packages for Federal employees, it tops \$126,000, compared to less than \$63,000 in the private sector. I haven't heard the other side say anything about that.

I'm a business owner. I have been in business for 41 years. I still own a business, and I hope to stay in business. When I pay pay raises to my employees, it's because of their loyalty and

hard work, not simply because they're on payroll.

My constituents in the 25th District of Texas are fed up with a government that spends, borrows, and grows too much. Let's protect hard-earned taxpayer dollars and pass this common-sense solution, H.R. 273.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I would advise the gentleman that I was a businessperson, too, and there is a distinction between private businesses and civil servants of the Federal Government.

I'm pleased at this time to yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman on the Rules Committee and my good friend from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN).

□ 1410

Mr. MCGOVERN. I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, let me urge my colleagues, Democrats and Republicans alike, to vote against this closed rule. This is a closed rule by which the entire process has been shut down. The committees of jurisdiction held no hearings. There was no markup. It came to the Rules Committee. What did the Rules Committee do? They shut it down. They shut out all possibilities for Democrats or Republicans to offer amendments. My friend from Georgia is proud to defend this closed, iron fist policy, but I think it's wrong, especially on a bill like this, number one.

Number two, this is a rotten thing to do to Federal employees. It really is. I mean, these are hardworking men and women. These are people who work at NIH, who try to find cures for diseases that, by the way, will not only improve the quality of life for our people but will save money. This is about denying a pay increase to DEA agents on the borders and to the CIA agents who tracked down Osama bin Laden. This is a rotten, rotten thing to do. And for what? To score some cheap political points.

I'm a little confused. My friend from Georgia says it's really not a cut, that we're not reducing the deficit at all. The gentleman from Texas said we need to save the American taxpayers money. The bottom line is that this is a cheap political stunt. The victims here are working people, and none of us should be surprised, because this is the Republican kind of signature issue: go after working people. Do you want to find ways to balance the budget? Punish working people. Do you want to find this or that? Go after working people. Enough. Enough of this war against working families in this country.

Mr. Speaker, what is also really frustrating is that here we are debating a bill that's really going nowhere, that's about a press release. The Republicans are going to go on vacation tomorrow. We're not going to be back for a week, and then we'll have 4 legislative days left to deal with this thing called "sequestration." On March 1, all of these

across-the-board cuts go into play. And guess what? We're going to lose at least 750,000 jobs. That's not my estimate. That's what the head of OMB says. There will be 750,000 Americans unemployed because of their inaction. Guess what? What are these people going to do? They're going to have to look for employment. They're going to be without work. It's going to slow down our economic growth. Give me a break. There should be some urgency here.

My Republican friends, instead of bringing this to the floor, you ought to be finding ways to avoid this fiscal sequestration cliff that we're about to go over.

When my friends talk about the deficit and the debt, they don't talk about unpaid-for war costs, and they don't talk about all the money that they don't pay for that's sent over to Baghdad and Kabul. Instead, we have fights on the floor of whether or not to provide emergency hurricane relief aid to the victims of Hurricane Sandy in our own country. Only about 48 of my Republican friends voted for that. I mean, that's where their priorities are. We should be trying to put the American people first.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. MCGOVERN. What we should be talking about on this floor is jobs—jobs, jobs, jobs. That is how we get this economy going again. That is how we reduce our deficit. That is how we reduce our debt. Instead, you're punishing American workers. This is shameful. We should be spending our time doing something that will actually benefit this economy and this economic recovery. This is not it.

I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on this closed rule and to vote "no" on the underlying bill, and I urge the leadership to get serious about avoiding sequestration. It is not good for our country.

Mr. WOODALL. I yield myself 4 minutes to talk about cheap political stunts because I see a few cheap political stunts down here from time to time. I don't want to characterize anybody's behavior in that way as I don't think that's appropriate, but what I would say is, if we go to the very top of the GS scale and take a good senior person, like a GS-14 who is making \$84,000 a year, this one-half percent pay increase that the President did by executive order and that we're saying won't go into effect until next year is going to give that one working person, that income earner for that family, \$2,000 for that family to use over the next year.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Will the gentleman yield for 10 seconds?

Mr. WOODALL. I will yield to the gentleman to answer this question: The gentleman sees here \$10,793. That's the additional burden that the gentleman,

when he controlled this Congress for 2 years with the President of the United States, also of his party, added to this working family's burden.

Now, when you come to the House floor and profess your affection for the working people in my district and when you express that affection by ensuring that, this year, one-half percent of their pay is going to go up, you're adding \$10,000 for that worker, \$10,000 for that worker's wife, \$10,000 for that worker's oldest child, middle child and youngest child—for a family of five in my district. The gentleman added \$50,000 in debt and deficit that has to be repaid.

Now, I know the gentleman was using his heart when he passed those programs that did this. I don't question the gentleman's motivation at all. What I do is take offense that the gentleman questions my motivation in shifting \$2,000 from workers' salaries into programs—programs for veterans, programs for research, programs for health—and that he questions my commitment to working class people when, while he did this, he voted "yes" after "yes" after "yes" with no remorse whatsoever.

I'd be happy to yield to my friend, the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. MCGOVERN. What I take offense at is the gentleman's party is about to lay off 750,000 workers in this country. For the life of me, I don't know how that helps our economy. That's what I take offense at. We should be talking about avoiding sequestration. Instead, my friends on the other side of the aisle are talking about how to lay off more American workers. That's what I take offense at.

Mr. WOODALL. In reclaiming my time, I welcome my friend to the sequestration debate, the one that we tried to have last May with absolutely no assistance whatsoever.

Here we are at midnight on sequestration day, saying, Hey, let's do it. Folks, let's do it. Let's do it. Back in May, we passed a bill here. Let's do it with the bill we passed in August to solve the fiscal cliff. Let's do it with the one we passed in September. Let's do it with the one we passed in December.

There is not a person in this body I don't want to work with to solve these problems—there is not one—but when we do it here at the eleventh hour and say, Golly, I wish folks had gotten serious about it earlier. Mr. Speaker, we've been trying to get serious about it for 18 months. When the President passed the law of the land and signed this sequestration into law after the Joint Select Committee failed, the question isn't why are we having to plan for sequestration today; the question is why wasn't the administration planning for it 13 months ago, when we knew the law of the land was going to put it into effect come March 1, 2013?

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, before yielding, I would ask

my good friend from Georgia a question: If we are leaving here, as I suspect we will tomorrow for a week, why don't we just stay here and get this done rather than go on vacation or waycation or whatever we do?

Mr. WOODALL. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. WOODALL. I actually asked that question—or a version of it—of the distinguished gentleman from Maryland, the minority whip, last night.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. He doesn't control the House, Mr. WOODALL.

Mr. WOODALL. If the gentleman would continue to yield.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. I continue to yield.

Mr. WOODALL. I asked, What would it have taken to get that Joint Select Committee to succeed? Because that's why we're here in sequestration; that's why we're dealing with these things. He said he did not know what more we could have done to find agreement then.

So I say to the gentleman that those same challenges the minority whip observed last night that were preventing agreement then are those same challenges that are preventing us, whether we work until midnight tonight or not, from solving them today, though I would be happy to stay with the gentleman just as long as there is work to be done here in this House.

I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. In reclaiming my time, one thing is absolutely certain: the majority whip controls the floor, and the Speaker controls the House, and if they chose for us to stay here, we could stay here.

With that, I am pleased to yield 5 minutes to my very good friend, the distinguished gentlewoman from New York, who is my ranking member on the Rules Committee, Ms. SLAUGHTER.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I thank my colleague from the Rules Committee.

Mr. Speaker and everyone who is listening, you know by now and what you've heard by now is they want sequestration. The local papers and the ones that we've printed on Capitol Hill today all say they want sequestration. The excuse they're giving is they're going to wait and see what the Senate will do, that we're not going to take any action here, that we're just going to be bystanders until we find out they want sequestration.

Over 700,000 workers are going to lose their jobs. A lot of economists tell us that this could be worse than the Great Depression, but they're willing to do it. They're willing to do it because they want to fight this President. I think that means a whole lot more to them than doing their job here as elected Members of Congress. As we've heard before, we only have 6 legislative days left. When we come back from a week's vacation, we will have these cuts that will have this devastating impact on our economy and on the well-being of every American citizen.

□ 1420

I urge the CEOs of America who are very worried, and they've said so for months and months, that they're concerned desperately about the prospect of sequestration, to talk to their Members here and get them to change their mind, if they can.

This is really dire. We're not kidding around here. This is serious business. We are literally facing a fiscal cliff. But the solution we've made to this, as you all know, a manmade crisis here, they take a swing at their favorite punching bag and hold hostage again the people who make their living serving all of us.

Last night was the first time I really heard that what we're doing, we're not going to save anything. Now, bear in mind that the Federal employees have already given in salary give-backs over \$100 billion over the next 10 years. That should be enough sacrifice from them, but no, we're going to go for more. But we're not going to use it to reduce the deficit, it is going to be made available to agencies.

Well, there's a lot of "Alice in Wonderland" sort of sense in Congress these days. Alice, one of the things that I liked about her the most, and she's a very strange little girl, but she said that she practiced as hard as she could to try to believe six impossible things before breakfast. And I'm trying to put this in that same category, and it simply is impossible for me to believe that we gain anything in the world by taking away the salary and income of hardworking government employees to put back in Federal agencies. Frankly, if any of you can really understand that, I'd appreciate it if you'd let me know.

We had a chance—in the last 2 weeks, we've had two chances—to do away with the sequester in a commonsense way and also to cut the deficit with a sensible solution. Mr. VAN HOLLEN, who is the ranking member of the Budget Committee and deserves our respect, was not allowed to do anything.

As you pointed out, and I also heard Mr. MCGOVERN say so, the Rules Committee now runs the House. There's no committee action on any of these bills. No chance for Republicans and Democrats in the committee setup, which the Founding Fathers did, and which we followed for generations and hundreds of years here, no possibility for them to discuss it. It simply is brought to Rules.

Now, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, his sensible solution here, which really does make sense, was simply not allowed to be put on the floor so that we could discuss it and give people a vote. A bipartisan group of the Members of the House don't want this bill passed. I'm going to put a letter in from one of the most thoughtful Members and a friend, Representative WOLF from Virginia, about what he thinks this is about. He calls this a cheap political trick, and I think that pretty well sums it up.

Now, already cuts totaling \$1.5 trillion have been made to discretionary

spending. And as a result, because of the layoff of employees, our economy experienced an unexpected economic contraction in the final quarter of 2012, which we should pay heed to.

Sequestration would compound our economic troubles even further. George Mason University says sequestration would cause 2.14 million American employees to lose their jobs. Meanwhile, important Federal programs would be crippled because of irresponsible cuts. I need to mention a few of them again.

FAA, which makes flying safer, they would experience a great cutback. The people who guard the border, who do drug interdiction, who keep our border safe and strong, they would have a severe cutback. Sequestration would mean that vital research would be slowed. And as a scientist, let me assure you that research cannot be turned off and on like a faucet. It is necessary for us to maintain that research with dollars because, as it's been pointed out before, we want to keep our population healthy.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. How important that is for us, not only for our economic well-being, but for the well-being of our citizens.

This is a foolish thing that we're doing here today, and I can't imagine anybody in the Senate would even contemplate bringing it up. So all of this is simply a waste of time, as we do here so many times.

I urge my colleagues on both sides, vote "no" and please give us a chance to let Mr. VAN HOLLEN bring his bill to the floor—or some bill from the Republican side. I don't care where it comes from. We have to stop sequestration.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC.

VOTE NO ON H.R. 273

DEAR REPUBLICAN COLLEAGUE: Next week, the House is scheduled to consider H.R. 273. I urge you to vote no on this legislation.

Let's be honest: this bill is nothing more than a political stunt that targets the hardworking, dedicated men and women of the civil service, who have already had their salaries frozen for more than two years. Everyone knows they are an easy target. But we are kidding ourselves if we think we can balance the budget on the backs of federal employees. It's a drop in the bucket towards deficit reduction and a hollow gesture absent meaningful mandatory spending reforms. Worse, this is just busywork as our economy faces the sequestration meat ax.

I believe that the federal government must be able to recruit and retain qualified individuals in order to deliver government services in an efficient manner. And about half of all federal employees make less than \$60,000 a year. These are individuals who haven't had a pay raise in more than two years. And now we're talking about freezing their pay for a full third year. The president's proposed .5 percent adjustment is cheap grace (\$225, since a quarter of it has already been frozen) and won't bring civil service pay close to the private sector, but it will at least attempt to tell these employees that they are valued.

And just who are these federal employees? They are the people you call when you need help, and 85 percent of them live outside of the Washington, D.C. metro area.

They are the CIA agents who planned the raid to kill Osama bin Laden. They work side-by-side with our military. Those agents depicted in Zero Dark Thirty? They haven't had a pay raise in more than two years.

They are the FBI agents you call when your child has been kidnapped. Those agents who rescued the 5-year-old kidnapped and held hostage in a bunker in Alabama? They haven't had a pay raise in over two years.

They are the Customs and Border Patrol and DEA Agents who are working to stop illegal immigrants and human traffickers and drug runners. The border patrol agents who worked side-by-side with slain Border Patrol Agent Brian Terry haven't had a pay raise in over two years.

They are the nurses and doctors at the VA who care for our veterans and wounded warriors—they haven't had a pay raise in more than two years. I know I'm not alone in wanting the best doctors and nurses to care for our veterans.

They are the foreign service officers who represent our government at embassies in Libya, Israel, Russia and beyond. The FSO's who worked side-by-side with slain Information Management Office Sean Smith in Benghazi haven't had a pay raise in more than two years.

They are the FDA inspectors who trace E. coli outbreaks to ensure that our food is safe to eat. They are the NIH researchers working to find a cure for breast cancer, and prostate cancer, and Alzheimer's and Autism.

They are the defense civilian riggers and machinists and refuelers and engineers repairing sophisticated electronic weaponry systems at Army depots and Air Force bases and shipyards who support our military personnel;

They are the firefighters you call when a lighting strike sets a national forest on fire and homes and business are in danger. And they are the park service rangers who ensure that your constituents can safely hike and camp in our national parks and tour our battlefields.

They are the scientists working at the DOE labs. They are the meteorologist at weather service storm centers tracking hurricanes, tornadoes, tsunamis and blizzards. They are the NASA astronauts, engineers and scientists.

Over the last Congress, unlike other groups, federal employees contributed more than \$103 billion to deficit reduction—no other group was asked to sacrifice more. I know that these patriotic Americans are willing to do more, but they rightly expect all of us to fully join this effort. A vote for the bill next week isn't a vote just to cut a program, but it's a targeted vote to specifically freeze an individual's pay from a marginal increase—a personal affront to the employee and their entire family, including their spouses and children, and the retired parents who care about their children.

I get it—this vote polls well with certain groups. But we were elected to represent our constituents. Let's pass bills that actually reduce the drivers of our nation's debt and deficit. This is cheap grace. Vote no.

Please don't hesitate to contact me or Mira Lezell on my staff at 5-5136 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

FRANK WOLF,
Member of Congress.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, at this time it is my great pleasure to yield 2 minutes to a good friend here, Mr. WITTMAN.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in opposition to this bill. I'm proud to represent thousands of hardworking Federal civilian employees who selflessly serve this Nation on a daily basis. They fight crime for the FBI, root out terrorism with the CIA, and provide vital support to members of our military. They're scientists, air traffic controllers, and engineers, pursuing excellence each day to cure disease, protect our travelers, and shore up our infrastructure. They're doctors and nurses at VA hospitals, ensuring that our veterans get the highest caliber care in return for their service to this Nation. They're Border Patrol agents protecting our homeland from those who wish to do us harm. But above all, they are patriots, selfless, committed citizens who believe in serving their Nation.

This Congress charges these hardworking Americans with their duties, and this Congress asks them to perform these duties to the very best of their abilities. It is only appropriate then that their service be recognized and applauded rather than consistently used as a tool in the game of politics.

To be clear, I do not think that Members of Congress should receive a pay increase, and I have continually supported efforts to reduce our pay and cut our legislative budgets. But this bill is not about Members of Congress, it is about our Federal civilian workforce, which has already been under a pay freeze for the last 2 years. This legislation would continue that pay freeze throughout the end of this year.

For these dedicated citizens, life is about public service and commitment—commitment to the people of this Nation and to the ideals and dreams set forth by our Founding Fathers.

So today, I ask my colleagues: Do you want an efficient, responsible, and safe United States of America? Do you plan to ask any less of our Federal workforce?

It seems to me that we are only asking them to do more for this Nation with less without standing by them in these challenging times. We must stop continually targeting our Federal employees, and I urge a "no" vote on H.R. 273.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, would you be kind enough to tell both of us how much time remains.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida has 13 minutes. The gentleman from Georgia has 16½ minutes.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased at this time to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. BERA), a new, very thoughtful Member of the House of Representatives.

Mr. BERA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak against the closed rule. Yesterday I introduced an amendment that would have separated the pay raise for Members of Congress from the remainder of Federal employees. If

that amendment had passed, only Members of Congress would be affected by this bill.

Unfortunately, the Rules Committee reported a closed rule and will not allow an up-or-down vote on any amendments. They would not allow us to vote up or down on this. Failure to allow an up-or-down vote does not allow Congress to take a clean vote on a cost-of-living adjustment for Federal employees.

Congress needs to start working together in a bipartisan manner and start addressing issues like sequestration and the budget. We need to start making strategic budget decisions, not across-the-board cuts. That is not how you make decisions. We need to eliminate and reduce those programs that are no longer effective and begin to bring our budget under control. And if we cannot act responsibly and find a way to achieve this balance, then we don't deserve a pay raise as Members of Congress.

□ 1430

This amendment, the amendment I proposed, would have reiterated that.

Not allowing a clean vote is just wrong. We should not balance the Federal budget on the backs of our Federal employees. My amendment would have allowed us to take that vote.

Sacramento County, my home county, has over 26,000 Federal employees. These are hardworking citizens in the Defense Department. Many of them are veterans who have served our country admirably, and there are other dedicated public servants keeping our country safe. We should not ask them to make the sacrifice without asking ourselves to make that sacrifice first.

Now is the time we've got to set aside this partisanship and start working together to serve our country. However, achieving fiscal balance on the backs of our hardworking Federal employees is not a solution.

I urge my colleagues to vote against this rule. Protect our hardworking and responsible Federal employees, and work in a bipartisan manner to pass a responsible budget.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes. And I want to say of my friend from California, he gave a very thoughtful presentation in the Rules Committee last night. And as my colleague from Florida suggested, I am a big fan of open rules. It's early in the process. It's always harder to go through regular order until the committees have spun up.

But I would just say to my freshman friend from California that even if we had made an open rule controlling for this bill, the gentleman's amendment still would not have been made in order. It would have been ruled by the Parliamentarian as out of order, as being nongermane to the underlying bill.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Will my colleague yield?

Mr. WOODALL. I yield to the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. But we have the power in the Rules Committee to waive that germaneness, and we could have done that and allowed Mr. BERA's measure to go forward. I thank my colleague for yielding.

Mr. WOODALL. I appreciate my friend's comment. He's absolutely right.

So my advice to my new freshman colleague from California would be, in this case, it's not an open rule that he's after; it's his colleagues on the Rules Committee working their Rules Committee magic to waive the rules. It would have actually taken a waiver of the House rules to allow the gentleman's amendment to come.

But he made a very passionate case last night, Mr. Speaker, and I know his heart is in this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I want to be clear about what this bill is and what this bill isn't. And what it isn't is a pay freeze for Federal employees, and, in fact, what has been the law of the land for the last 2 years has not been a pay freeze.

All of the increases that come with longevity have been taking place. All of the increases that come with promotions have been taking place. All of the increases that come with meritorious pay and bonuses and all of those activities have still been going on.

What this is, however, is a 9-month suspension of the automatic, across-the-board .5 percent increase that the President directed by executive order in December. That is all this bill is, and that's all this bill will be under this rule.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL), my good friend, the former mayor of his city.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, we need a balanced approach to reducing our deficit which makes responsible cuts while also raising revenue. This bill is not the way to do it.

I have great respect for the gentleman's intellect, but this is one of the dumbest bills I've ever seen come to this floor.

Let's take a look at it, Mr. Speaker. I rise in strong opposition to this rule and the underlying bill.

As part of the fiscal cliff deal, we promised Federal employees that they would see their first pay raise in over 2 years on March 27. This is a modest pay adjustment, half a percent. When you say \$10 billion, you're talking about \$1 billion a year.

Now, a little more than a month before the increase takes effect, the bill before us today would break that promise. Do you think, America, that this is going to solve the fiscal problems that the Congress and President created?

My home State of New Jersey suffered devastating damage from Sandy this past fall, as did a few other States.

Employees from FEMA, the Army Corps of Engineers, HUD, and many other agencies were on the ground immediately.

How dare you ask this pejorative question about, well, what if we took the dollar from the clerk and then provided it to our Armed Forces?

What kind of negotiation is that?

What kind of bartering are we doing?

And we're doing the same thing with our own staffs, the very people that are sitting alongside us and behind us, which is not germane to this legislation, but we're doing the same thing. They haven't had a raise in 2 years.

Oh, wonderful, we're saving the country because we're doing that. These are human beings too. They're not chattel. They're not numbers.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. PASCRELL. They're not stick figures. They walk the streets, navigating through flooding, debris, downed power lines, these Army Corps, these FEMA folks, in order to assess damages and reach out to the victims. They're not nameless. They're not faceless bureaucrats. These are heroes who continue to contribute each and every day to our ongoing rebuilding.

And darn it, we allowed this to happen 5 or 6 years ago when we laid off thousands and thousands of police officers and firefighters and teachers and we called it saving the country.

Federal workers are also law enforcement officers and firefighters who put their lives on the line for us every day. They work for the Defense Department. They protect us in our times of need, and we need to be there for them.

They've done and continue to do their part. I am tired of us using Federal, State, local, county employees as the scapegoats for our ineptness. Maybe it's the politically correct thing to do to capitulate and join the forces and cut everybody. That's what we should do? I don't think so.

I will debate you anytime on the Federal workers.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 3 minutes to say to the gentleman—he heard it from the gentleman from Virginia on my side of the aisle—the respect for Federal employees and the job that they do is not a question that's being debated here today.

The admiration that I have for the folks at the CDC, in my neck of the woods, the support that, led by the Speaker of the House from my State, Speaker Gingrich, to double the NIH budget, and then double it again. The kind of work that goes on here is undisputed.

But I want to show you, Mr. Speaker, what my constituents also see in their tough times, because it's not just the clerk at the VA that hasn't gotten a raise in 2 years.

I was talking with a friend of mine who's a clerk at a furniture store, sin-

gle mom, child, son, 6 years old, hasn't gotten a raise in 2 years, makes \$11 an hour.

Average median Federal wage, \$74,000.

What I show you here is a chart from the CBO, the same organization that sites the job loss figures that you've quoted here earlier, that compares the work of folks with high school degrees, with a little bit of college, with college, in the private sector, the salaries and the benefits in the private sector with that of the public sector.

Now, I say to the gentleman, in no way, Mr. Speaker, do I want to minimize the tremendous responsibility placed on our Federal civilian workers. Again, I have chosen a career of public service, as have they, and I admire them for it. I know it's at great sacrifice to themselves and their families.

Mr. PASCRELL. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. WOODALL. After this one sentence, and that is, in this tough time, until we can get our handle on the debt and the deficit, my constituents continue to look at how their tax dollars appear to be paying salaries and benefits higher to Federal employees than what my folks are getting back home.

I hope the CBO will produce a different report that shows a different result; but until it does, I wish my friends wouldn't categorize what's going on here as some sort of hateful act, disrespectful act towards Federal employees and could recognize it as a balancing of salaries and benefits that our own Congressional Budget Office has suggested is actually an inequity that exists today.

With that, I would be happy to yield to my friend, the gentleman from New Jersey.

□ 1440

Mr. PASCRELL. I wouldn't use the two words that you used. I would use the word "demeaning." We have demeaned our staff, which is not included in this, I understand that. But you want to know something? Those unemployment figures for the last 6 years would be so different if we hadn't laid off those very same Federal employees whom you are now deciding to take a half a percent away from them at this particular time. And for some crazy idea that you'll give the money to the agency to do with it what it wishes, I don't think you meant that, really. I don't think you meant that at all.

Mr. WOODALL. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased at this time to yield 2 minutes to my friend, the distinguished gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I thank my dear friend from Florida for the leadership on the issue, the number of Members who have already spoken, and my good

friend on the Rules Committee who is the manager of this particular bill and, in essence, bringing this bill to the floor of the House, and that is what you hear the discourse about. Many times this discourse, this debate becomes confusing because we are trying to compare apples and oranges. And so let me first own up to the fact that a congressional pay freeze is already in place. Our salaries have been frozen. When it expires, we'll rise to the occasion and freeze it again. We're elected by the people, and those decisions can be made on behalf of the people.

We're not talking about congressional salaries today. They're in place. They exist. What we're talking about is the ICE officer that I'm meeting with in the Rayburn Room who works every day to protect this country and has seen that, because of the \$103 billion that Federal employees have already given to reduce the deficit, necessities of work are being challenged. Customs and Border Protection, DEA officers, FBI, Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control physicians, research at NIH and those scientists, all of those persons are working for the greater good—those who had to address the West Nile virus, FEMA employees who are right now on the ground with Hurricane Sandy. I have no question that there are private sector employees that are addressing this question, but they've gotten a 4.7 percent raise.

Let me tell you what the issue is. Let's stop fooling around and address the question of sequester. Protect those who need a social safety net and Social Security and Medicare. Realize that if you dice and cut and slash under the sequester, that will be the issue. None of these amendments were allowed in.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. I yield the gentlewoman 1 additional minute.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I thank the gentleman.

Last night at the Rules Committee, there were amendments to bring forward the right way of addressing the question, and they indicated that was not germane. I know these words are confusing, but that could have been a waiver. We all know what that means. It doesn't match, it doesn't fit, but we waive you in. That could have been debated on the floor of the House.

My amendment said that we should take a pause. I simply said this bill shouldn't be brought up. I struck the entire language of the bill so that we could get to the point of providing a debate on the sequester to make sure that the American people's voices are heard. They don't want an across-the-board cut when you begin to cut the resources that they need. But we can do better.

And let me just say to you, in Texas, there are 251,000 Federal employees; California, over 400,000. These are not folks inside the beltway. They're the ones that are in the Nation's national

forests, on the border, in hospitals, dealing with drug cartels.

I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that this is not what we should be doing today. This is unfair to our Federal workers, and I won't stand for it.

Vote against the rule and the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to explain my amendment #5 to H.R. 273, "to eliminate the 2013 statutory pay adjustment for federal employees and to reject this frontal assault on federal employees."

My amendment would have struck the entire text of this bill. Why? Because the premise underlying the bill, to freeze federal salaries, is flawed.

And let me be clear: this bill does not add a dime to deficit reduction efforts. Yet my friends on the other side insist on this game of charades, pretending to be concerned with deficit reduction, but the folly of it all is that it's only a not-so-well-disguised game of political one-up man ship.

If you are really looking to cut government spending you should have made the Amendment submitted by my colleague, Mr. VAN HOLLEN of Maryland in-order. Mr. VAN HOLLEN's amendment was not perfect as it cut subsidies for large oil companies, among other things; but it represents a balanced approach to deficit reduction.

And as we look for ways to address our fiscal issues we cannot continue to use the salaries and retirement options of federal employees as our Congressional Savings and Loans.

Federal employees have contributed more than their fair share to addressing this problem. We need creative and long term solutions with a heavy emphasis on job growth.

H.R. 273 continues to freeze the salaries of federal employees who are vital to implementing the very laws and regulations that are generated by Congress and federal agencies.

As the Ranking Member on Homeland Security Committee, Subcommittee on Border and Maritime Security, I can attest that it is in our national security interest to have the ability to recruit and retain the best and the brightest employees to keep our borders safe from harm.

As a Representative from Texas, I can further attest that is again in our nation's best interest to have qualified high skilled professionals reviewing drilling applications for off shore well sites.

Federal employees help to ensure that the air we breathe, the airways that we travel upon, and the food we eat are safe.

Most Americans encounter their first federal employee when they meet their postal carrier. Men and women who faithfully deliver the mail: rain or shine.

After 911 with our need to improve airline security, we turned to federal employees . . . the very employees who are amongst the first to react when there is an attack on our soil.

Federal employees operate in every state cross our nation with only 15% of all federal employees working in Washington D.C., continuing to freeze their compensation is not a long term solution to our fiscal problems.

Our long term fiscal problems will not be solved by cutting Social Security, Medicaid, or Medicare.

Our problems will not be solved by freezing the pay and benefits of federal employees.

Our problems will not be solved on the backs of seniors, low and middle income

Americans, or the disabled. Our problems can be solved by putting forth legislation that will put hardworking Americans back to work, advance training for high skilled and high wage jobs. By putting forth legislation that inspires innovation, and through addressing the long term needs of all Americans rather than a few.

Most federal employees are not living the lifestyles of the rich and famous. The majority of Federal employees are middle class Americans. Over 60 percent of all federal employees make less than \$75,000 a year.

According to the Federal Salary Council (FSC) annual report federal employees are paid 34.6 percent less in salary than their private-sector counterparts.

There are those who have cited a study by the Congressional Budget Office which found that federal workers on average earned slightly more than private-sector workers; however, that study did not take into account the level of job responsibility, specialized training, or length of tenure of each employee. Which we all know should be taken into account.

There are those who claim that the federal government is too large. In reality, the federal government is smaller today that it was in 1968.

The IRS has 20,000 fewer employees than they did in 1995, yet are required to process 236 million more complicated tax returns.

The Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid has 7 percent fewer employees serving 64 percent more enrollees.

Most growth in the number of federal workers has been in Homeland Security and Defense as a result of 9/11.

From 2001 to 2010, employment in non-security federal agencies as a percent of population actually fell by 4 percent.

Even though overall there are less federal government employees serving each American today than there were 30 years ago. They have still contributed \$103 billion worth of budget savings since the beginning of 2011.

\$60 billion from a federal pay freeze in 2011 and 2012.

\$15 billion from increased retirement contributions for newly-hired federal employees. As a result new hires will not receive 2.3% less compensation than their federal counterparts.

\$28 billion from a pay increase of .5 percent which is well below the Cost of Living Adjustment of 1.7 percent.

Additional funds will also be generated as a result of a mandatory reduction in the Department of Defense civilian work force.

Federal Employees have given enough.

They have not seen a cost of living adjustment in going on 3 years. There appears to be a growing attitude that this freeze should go on indefinitely.

The freeze was originally enacted to cover only 2011 and 2012; however, it was extended through late March as part of a temporary budget measure. Again, this was supposed to be a temporary solution not a permanent cure.

We must do more to recruit and retain the best and brightest.

We must do more to inspire innovation and job growth.

We must do more to protect middle income Americans, like federal employees.

The way to address our long-term fiscal problems is not be using federal employees as a Congressional Savings and Loans.

Again, it is not through cuts to Social Security, Medicaid, and Medicare. It is by advancing creative long-term solutions that encourages jobs growth and innovation that will allow us to fix our current fiscal issues.

FAST FACTS

H.R. 273, freezes a 0.5% statutory pay adjustment slated to go into effect in March. It also extends the Congressional pay freeze through the end of the year.

My amendment nullifies the entire bill.

According to the Office of Management and Budget the federal workforce is virtually as small today as it has ever been in the modern era.

In 1953, the federal government employed one worker for every 78 residents. In 2009, one worker was employed for every 147 residents.

In the IRS today, there are 20,000 fewer employees than there were in 1995, processing 236 million more complicated tax returns. And, in the Department of Health and Human Services Medicare and Medicaid staff, there are 7 percent fewer employees serving 64 percent more enrollees.

Most growth in the number of federal workers has been in Homeland Security and Defense as a result of 9/11. From 2001 to 2010, employment in non-security federal agencies as a percent of population actually fell by 4 percent.

Only 15 percent of federal employees work in the Washington, DC, metro area. Continuing to freeze the pay of federal employees so they are not in keeping with the cost of living will have Cutting federal a negative impact on the economy of every state.

Currently there are 281,571 federal employees working in my home state of Texas. In California, there are over 350,000 federal employees. There are hundreds of thousands of hardworking Americans who are going to be impacted by this continued pay freeze across the U.S.

Over 93 percent of federal employee jobs are non-clerical positions.

The federal workforce is a highly-educated and skilled workforce, including doctors, attorneys, scientists, IT specialists, CPAs, engineers, and other highly trained experts in virtually every discipline.

Nearly 50 percent of federal employees have a bachelor's or higher degree.

About 21 percent of federal employees have professional degree or doctorate versus compared to only 9 percent in the private sector.

The federal workforce is the most highly-educated in the nation, with professionals in virtually every discipline.

If we want to continue to recruit and retain the best and the brightest in the federal government we can not continue to use their wages and benefits as a Congressional Savings and Loans. Provide services that are vital to our daily lives.

I do not believe that Americans wish to sacrifice vital services that impact the health, safety and well-being of their families because the federal government failed to invest in its most important asset . . . human capital.

The federal workforce has declined, on a per-capita basis, from one employee for every 78 U.S. residents in 1953 to one employee for every 147 residents in 2009.

About 85 percent of federal employees work in other cities and towns across the nation.

Federal employees have contributed \$60 billion over 10 years toward deficit reduction

through a two-year pay freeze, and another \$15 billion in pension contribution increases.

Federal workforce cuts will hurt American families through fewer food inspections, decreased monitoring of air and water, and fewer people protecting consumers in the financial markets, just to name a few.

Continuing attempts to freeze federal employee pay, cut retirement benefits, and reduce the federal workforce will more than likely result in a workforce that is not as productive, not as efficient, and not as competent.

Because these types of measures make it even more difficult to attract and retain highly skilled and qualified federal employees. We must consider the long-term impact of short-sighted decision making.

Mr. WOODALL. I yield myself 2 minutes.

I just want to read from the Simpson-Bowles Commission report. And I want to read from it not because I support everything the Simpson-Bowles Commission had to say. I want to read from it not because it's a bill that has passed here on the floor of the House—it's been introduced but it hasn't passed—but I want to read from it because it was put together by the President to be a thoughtful, nonpartisan, deliberative body that would try to find those things in the Federal Government that should change to right the fiscal ship that is the United States of America. And this is what that group, appointed by President Obama, Republicans and Democrats, a thoughtful deliberative body, had to say:

Out of duty and patriotism, hardworking Federal employees provide a great service to this country. But in a time of budget shortfalls, all levels of government must trim back. In the recent recession, millions of private sector and State and municipal employees have had their wages frozen or cut back, and millions more lost their jobs altogether. In contrast, Federal workers' wages increase annually due to automatic formulas in law, providing them with cost-of-living adjustments totaling more than 5 percent in the last 2 years. This proposal would institute a 3-year government-wide freeze on Federal pay at every government agency, including the Department of Defense civilian workforce. This proposal will save \$20.4 billion in 2015.

In 3 years, the President, to his credit, implemented the first 2 years of this proposal. Perhaps there was consultation with someone in this body. It wasn't with me. I serve on the Oversight and Government Reform Committee. The President, by executive order in December, decided he was not going to extend it a third year and was instead going to give a half percent pay raise.

These are issues that can absolutely be debated, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. WOODALL. I yield myself an additional 30 seconds.

This isn't a Republican idea; it's not a Democrat idea; it's not something that was created in the minds of folks who hate Federal employees and the Federal Government. It's an idea that came directly from the commission appointed by President Barack Obama to

solve exactly the kind of fiscal problems that we are facing today.

Like it, don't like it, but don't say it's something that it's not, Mr. Speaker. This is an idea from the President's fiscal commission, and we're bringing it to the floor today.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I would alert my colleague from Georgia that I have no further requests for time, and I'm prepared to close.

Mr. WOODALL. I also have no further requests for time and am prepared to close.

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

I really like and have great affection for my friend from Georgia, and I understand exactly what he just did with reference to the President's commission as appointed by Senator Simpson and Erskine Bowles, but the fount of wisdom with reference to what is required in order for this Nation to right its ship doesn't emanate from just any one commission. And while this particular proposal may be listed as an idea from the Simpson-Bowles Commission, I would urge my friend from Georgia to read the whole thing, which does contemplate shared sacrifice. And that's what I tried to get across to my colleagues here in this institution.

As a person that lived as a child during the Second World War, I saw what sacrifice meant, and I saw the people that did the sacrificing. And they did it together, differently than us today. And that's why I think it's wrong to cherry-pick and then use a sledgehammer against Federal employees for something that is not likely to become the law of the land. It's a waste of time.

The only good thing that I have to say about the bill before us today is that it has zero chance of becoming law. I anxiously wait for my friends on the other side, particularly the leadership, to actually start considering legislation that will help, not hurt, the American people.

□ 1450

Mr. Speaker, if we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment which would allow the House to vote on replacing the entire sequester for 2013 with savings from specific policies that reflect a balanced approach to reducing our national debt.

There are only 6 legislative days left until the sequester hits. Now is the time to act. Smart government is not about sequesters; it's about solutions. And it's time to work together for the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of my amendment in the RECORD along with extraneous material immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" and defeat the previous question.

I urge a "no" vote on the rule, and I yield back the balance of my time with the final thought that we don't have that much time to waste, and we are wasting the American people's time.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to say the gentleman believes we're wasting the American people's time. An equally precious commodity is the American people's money.

I talked earlier about the \$10,000 per American inhabitant. A lot of folks do their numbers by American tax-paying families, Mr. Speaker. A lot of folks do their numbers by per adult or per children. I didn't want to game the system like that.

The chart I have right now, Mr. Speaker, \$52,381. If you take today's \$16.5 trillion debt that America has and divide it by every single human being that the Census Department tells us is in America in January 2013, you will find that we have borrowed and spent \$52,381 for every human being in America.

I don't minimize the burden that will be on a family of four in my district when they don't receive that half a percent pay bump that the President tried to do by executive order that we're rescinding here today. I don't minimize that at all. But it is minimal compared to the \$52,000 for each member of that family of four. That half a percent pay raise is minimal compared to the \$208,000 that that family owes as its share of the Federal debt.

The gentleman from Florida, Mr. Speaker, made a very passionate presentation last night, and I believe he is absolutely right. He referenced himself and our ranking member as the only two folks in that committee who know anything about sacrifice. I always go through my grandparents' stuff. I was one of those kids who loved being in the attic. You always find neat stuff in the attic and the basement. I have all the ration stamps, Mr. Speaker—sugar, rubber. I don't know what that's like. I don't know what that's like for a Nation to come together with such a sense of purpose that they say we're going to police ourselves and our own family. We're going to have the posters up on the wall that say "loose lips sink ships," and don't waste because we need it for the war effort, and we're going to come together and make that happen.

In fact, the last time, Mr. Speaker, this country had the kind of debt as a percentage of the size of its economy that it has today was when we were coming out of World War II. In that time, when we were rationing rubber and sugar, when we no longer minted our currency with copper because we didn't have enough to go around—or nickel—we were using steel to put the coins together at that time. In that time of crisis, Mr. Speaker, when we

thought the freedom of the world was on the line, we borrowed the largest amount of money ever borrowed in the history of this country to win World War II.

As we stand here today, we have borrowed trillions more in actual dollars, but that same gargantuan number of 100 percent of our economy. And for what? What does that leave us when the next crisis comes—and I promise you it will. The next crisis will come, and the tools that we have to address it will have been eroded by the policies of today.

I take no pleasure in being down here today managing the rule that will extend into year 3 a Federal employee pay freeze. I told folks in my constituency, Mr. Speaker, I said I want to come back home and I want to tell you how much I've been doing good work for you in Washington and doggone it I deserve a pay raise. I want us all to be so successful that we can go back home and tell folks we deserve it. But with \$16.4 trillion in debt, 4 years of no budgets at all coming out of this town, trillion-dollar annual deficits, we don't.

If you think the pain of a 3-year pay freeze is bad, Mr. Speaker, Google Greece, Bing Greece, do your Yahoo search on Greece—not half a percent freezes, but double-digit cuts to Federal benefits; double-digit cuts to pensions that seniors are relying on; double-digit cuts to salaries; layoffs, double-digit percentages. It doesn't get better on its own, Mr. Speaker. We have to do it.

My friend from Florida is so right, Mr. Speaker: we have to come together to solve the bigger problems. This is not the bigger problem. At best, this is a symptom of a problem. At worst, it's just something we're trying to do to manage through.

In this body, Mr. Speaker, and the Senate, the President, we put six of our best minds from the House, three Democrats and three Republicans, six of our best minds from the Senate, three Democrats and three Republicans, and we locked them in a room for about 3 months and said do anything, do anything you want to with the Federal budget. Dream your biggest dreams. Come up with your best ideas. Get outside the box. And we're going to close the door so you can have that conversation with the utmost candor, Republicans and Democrats alike, House Members and Senate Members alike.

After 3 months, Mr. Speaker, having looked at literally hundreds of trillions of dollars of Federal spending going out for decades, they found that they could agree on not even one dollar, not one dollar in changes.

Mr. Speaker, as you well know, and as the freshman Members of this body are going to learn, we only control one-third of the budget here, just one-third of the budget, that discretionary spending, one-third of the budget. That's where the Federal employee sal-

aries are, one-third of the budget. So everything we do to try to get a handle on \$52,000 in debt per man, woman and child in America, everything we do to try to get our fiscal ship sailing straight once again is coming from that one-third.

Because to get to the real drivers of the debt, Mr. Speaker, to get to the real drivers, we've got to get into the two-thirds, the two-thirds that can only get to the table when the House and the Senate and the President all agree.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. I know you're on a roll, but will my friend yield for just 5 seconds?

Mr. WOODALL. As highly unorthodox as that is, my great respect for my friend requires that I do.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. I thank you so very much.

I just want to say America ain't Greece; it ain't going to be Greece.

Mr. WOODALL. Reclaiming my time, Mr. Speaker—and again, pleasure to yield—I say to my friend, I fear it's thinking like that that's going to take us exactly there.

□ 1500

Mr. Speaker, again, I take no pleasure in this freeze today. I believe in shared sacrifice across this country to solve our problems. The only thing that would be permissible in this legislation is to ensure that Members of Congress and fellow employees are both frozen together, as is ensured in this legislation.

I urge my colleagues to support this rule, bring this bill to the floor, support this underlying resolution, and remember that until \$52,381 per man, woman and child in this country reads "zero," we're going to have these discussions again and again and again.

The President, Mr. Speaker, I'm told is planning to produce a budget. It's not going to be this month. It may come next month. Do you know that in the 2 years I've been here as a Member of Congress, the President's budgets never, ever, ever pay down one penny of this debt? We're complicit in this, Mr. Speaker; and, together, we can get ourselves out of it.

The material previously referred to by Mr. HASTINGS of Florida is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 66 OFFERED BY
MR. HASTINGS OF FLORIDA

(1) At the end of the resolution, add the following:

SEC. 6. Notwithstanding any other provision of this resolution, following debate on H.R. 273 it shall be in order to 1 consider the amendment received for printing in the Congressional Record pursuant to clause 8 of rule XVIII and numbered 1, if offered by Representative Van Hollen of Maryland or a designee. That amendment shall be in order without intervention of any point of order, shall be considered as read, shall be separately debatable for one hour equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, and shall not be subject to a demand for a division of the question.

(2) On page 2, line 5, insert "with or without instructions" after "recommit".

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308-311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as "a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge." To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that "the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition" in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: "The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition."

The Republican majority may say "the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever." But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: "Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment."

In Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled "Amending Special Rules" states: "a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the I Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate." (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: "Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon."

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). The question is on ordering the previous question.

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of adoption.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 229, nays 194, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 41]

YEAS—229

Aderholt	Graves (GA)	Perry
Alexander	Graves (MO)	Petri
Amash	Griffin (AR)	Pittenger
Amodei	Griffith (VA)	Pitts
Bachmann	Grimm	Poe (TX)
Bachus	Guthrie	Pompeo
Barletta	Hall	Posey
Barr	Hanna	Price (GA)
Barton	Harper	Radel
Benishek	Harris	Reed
Bentivolio	Hartzler	Reichert
Bilirakis	Hastings (WA)	Renacci
Bishop (UT)	Heck (NV)	Ribble
Black	Hensarling	Rice (SC)
Blackburn	Herrera Beutler	Rigell
Bonner	Holding	Roby
Boustany	Hudson	Roe (TN)
Brady (TX)	Huelskamp	Rogers (AL)
Bridenstine	Huizenga (MI)	Rogers (KY)
Brooks (AL)	Hultgren	Rogers (MI)
Brooks (IN)	Hunter	Rohrabacher
Broun (GA)	Hurt	Rokita
Buchanan	Issa	Rooney
Bucshon	Jenkins	Ros-Lehtinen
Burgess	Johnson (OH)	Roskam
Calvert	Johnson, Sam	Ross
Camp	Jones	Rothfus
Campbell	Jordan	Royce
Cantor	Joyce	Runyan
Capito	Kelly	Ryan (WI)
Carter	King (IA)	Salmon
Cassidy	King (NY)	Scalise
Chabot	Kingston	Schock
Chaffetz	Kinzinger (IL)	Schweikert
Coble	Kline	Scott, Austin
Coffman	Labrador	Sensenbrenner
Cole	LaMalfa	Sessions
Collins (GA)	Lamborn	Shimkus
Collins (NY)	Lance	Shuster
Conaway	Lankford	Simpson
Cook	Latham	Smith (NE)
Cotton	Latta	Smith (NJ)
Cramer	LoBiondo	Smith (TX)
Crawford	Long	Southerland
Crenshaw	Lucas	Stewart
Cuellar	Luetkemeyer	Stivers
Daines	Lummis	Stockman
Davis, Rodney	Marchant	Stutzman
Denham	Marino	Terry
Dent	Massie	Thompson (PA)
DeSantis	Matheson	Thornberry
DesJarlais	McCarthy (CA)	Tiberi
Duffy	McCaul	Tipton
Duncan (SC)	McClintock	Turner
Duncan (TN)	McHenry	Upton
Ellmers	McKinley	Valadao
Farenthold	McMorris	Wagner
Fincher	Rodgers	Walberg
Fitzpatrick	Meadows	Walden
Fleischmann	Meehan	Walorski
Fleming	Messer	Weber (TX)
Flores	Mica	Webster (FL)
Forbes	Miller (FL)	Westmup
Fortenberry	Miller (MI)	Westmoreland
Fox	Miller, Gary	Whitfield
Franks (AZ)	Mullin	Williams
Frelinghuysen	Mulvaney	Wilson (SC)
Gardner	Murphy (PA)	Wittman
Garrett	Neugebauer	Wolf
Gerlach	Noem	Womack
Gibbs	Nugent	Woodall
Gibson	Nunes	Yoder
Gingrey (GA)	Nunnelee	Yoho
Gohmert	Olson	Young (AK)
Goodlatte	Palazzo	Young (FL)
Gosar	Paulsen	Young (IN)
Granger	Pearce	

NAYS—194

Andrews	Green, Gene	Owens
Barber	Gutierrez	Pallone
Barrow (GA)	Hahn	Pascarell
Bass	Hanabusa	Pastor (AZ)
Beatty	Hastings (FL)	Payne
Becerra	Heck (WA)	Pelosi
Bera (CA)	Higgins	Perlmutter
Bishop (GA)	Himes	Peters (CA)
Bishop (NY)	Hinojosa	Peters (MI)
Blumenauer	Holt	Peterson
Bonamici	Honda	Pingree (ME)
Brady (PA)	Horsford	Pocan
Bralley (IA)	Hoyer	Polis
Brown (FL)	Huffman	Price (NC)
Brownley (CA)	Israel	Quigley
Bustos	Jackson Lee	Rahall
Butterfield	Jeffries	Rangel
Capps	Johnson, E. B.	Richmond
Capuano	Kaptur	Roybal-Allard
Cárdenas	Keating	Ruiz
Carney	Kennedy	Ruppersberger
Carson (IN)	Kildee	Rush
Cartwright	Kilmer	Ryan (OH)
Castor (FL)	Kind	Sánchez, Linda
Castro (TX)	Kirkpatrick	T.
Chu	Kuster	Sanchez, Loretta
Cicilline	Langevin	Sarbanes
Clarke	Larsen (WA)	Schakowsky
Clay	Larson (CT)	Schiff
Cleaver	Lee (CA)	Schneider
Clyburn	Levin	Schrader
Cohen	Lewis	Schwartz
Connolly	Lipinski	Scott (VA)
Conyers	Loeb sack	Scott, David
Cooper	Lofgren	Serrano
Costa	Lowenthal	Sewell (AL)
Courtney	Lowey	Shea-Porter
Crowley	Lujan Grisham	Sherman
Cummings	(NM)	Sinema
Davis (CA)	Luján, Ben Ray	Sires
Davis, Danny	(NM)	Slaughter
DeFazio	Lynch	Smith (WA)
DeGette	Maffei	Speier
Delaney	Maloney,	Swalwell (CA)
DeLauro	Carolyn	Takano
DelBene	Maloney, Sean	Markey
Deutch	Markey	Thompson (CA)
Dingell	Matsui	Thompson (MS)
Doggett	McCarthy (NY)	Tierney
Doyle	McCollum	Titus
Duckworth	McDermott	Tonko
Edwards	McGovern	Tsongas
Ellison	McIntyre	Van Hollen
Engel	McNerney	Vargas
Enyart	Meeks	Veasey
Eshoo	Meng	Vela
Esty	Michaud	Velázquez
Fattah	Miller, George	Visclosky
Foster	Moore	Walz
Frankel (FL)	Moran	Wasserman
Fudge	Murphy (FL)	Schultz
Gabbard	Nadler	Waters
Gallego	Napolitano	Watt
Garamendi	Neal	Waxman
Garcia	Negrete McLeod	Welch
Grayson	Nolan	Wilson (FL)
Green, Al	O'Rourke	

NOT VOTING—8

Culberson	Gowdy	McKeon
Diaz-Balart	Grijalva	Yarmuth
Farr	Johnson (GA)	

□ 1522

Messrs. BERA of California, ISRAEL, PETERS of California, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Messrs. MURPHY of Florida, CASTRO of Texas, PETERS of Michigan, COSTA, Ms. ESHOO, and Mr. GALLEGRO changed their vote from "yea" to "nay."

Messrs. SHUSTER, WOLF, HUELSKAMP, FLEMING, CALVERT, HUNTER, YODER, and JONES changed their vote from "nay" to "yea."

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

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. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 227, nays 192, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 42]

YEAS—227

Aderholt	Granger	Pearce
Alexander	Graves (GA)	Perry
Amash	Graves (MO)	Peterson
Amodei	Griffin (AR)	Petri
Bachmann	Griffith (VA)	Pittenger
Bachus	Grimm	Pitts
Barletta	Guthrie	Poe (TX)
Barr	Hall	Pompeo
Barton	Hanna	Posey
Benishek	Harper	Price (GA)
Bentivolio	Harris	Radel
Bilirakis	Hartzler	Reed
Black	Hastings (WA)	Reichert
Blackburn	Heck (NV)	Renacci
Bonner	Hensarling	Ribble
Boustany	Herrera Beutler	Rice (SC)
Brady (TX)	Holding	Rigell
Bridenstine	Hudson	Roby
Brooks (AL)	Huelskamp	Roe (TN)
Brooks (IN)	Huizenga (MI)	Rogers (AL)
Broun (GA)	Hultgren	Rogers (KY)
Buchanan	Hunter	Rogers (MI)
Bucshon	Hurt	Rohrabacher
Burgess	Issa	Rokita
Calvert	Jenkins	Rooney
Camp	Johnson (OH)	Ros-Lehtinen
Campbell	Johnson, Sam	Roskam
Cantor	Jones	Ross
Capito	Jordan	Rothfus
Carter	Joyce	Royce
Cassidy	Kelly	Runyan
Chabot	King (NY)	Ryan (WI)
Chaffetz	Kingston	Salmon
Coble	Kinzinger (IL)	Scalise
Coffman	Kline	Schock
Cole	Labrador	Schweikert
Collins (GA)	LaMalfa	Scott, Austin
Collins (NY)	Lamborn	Sensenbrenner
Conaway	Lance	Sessions
Cook	Lankford	Shimkus
Cotton	Latham	Shuster
Cramer	Latta	Simpson
Crawford	LoBiondo	Smith (NE)
Crenshaw	Long	Smith (NJ)
Daines	Lucas	Smith (TX)
Davis, Rodney	Luetkemeyer	Southerland
Denham	Lummis	Stewart
Dent	Marchant	Stivers
DeSantis	Marino	Stockman
DesJarlais	Massie	Stutzman
Diaz-Balart	McCarthy (CA)	Thompson (PA)
Duffy	McCaul	Thornberry
Duncan (SC)	McClintock	Tiberi
Duncan (TN)	McHenry	Tipton
Ellmers	McKeon	Turner
Eshoo	McKinley	Upton
Farenthold	McMorris	Valadao
Fincher	Rodgers	Wagner
Fitzpatrick	Meadows	Walberg
Fleischmann	Meehan	Walden
Fleming	Messer	Walorski
Flores	Mica	Weber (TX)
Forbes	Miller (FL)	Webster (FL)
Fortenberry	Miller (MI)	Wenstrup
Foxx	Miller, Gary	Westmoreland
Franks (AZ)	Mullin	Whitfield
Frelinghuysen	Mulvaney	Williams
Gardner	Murphy (PA)	Wilson (SC)
Garrett	Neugebauer	Wittman
Gibbs	Noem	Womack
Gibson	Nugent	Woodall
Gingrey (GA)	Nunes	Yoder
Gohmert	Nunnelee	Yoho
Goodlatte	Olson	Young (AK)
Gosar	Palazzo	Young (FL)
Gowdy	Paulsen	Young (IN)

NAYS—192

Andrews	Barrow (GA)	Beatty
Barber	Bas	Becerra

Bera (CA)	Heck (WA)	Pascrell
Bishop (GA)	Higgins	Pastor (AZ)
Bishop (NY)	Himes	Payne
Blumenauer	Hinojosa	Pelosi
Bonamici	Holt	Perlmutter
Brady (PA)	Honda	Peters (CA)
Braley (IA)	Horsford	Peters (MI)
Brown (FL)	Hoyer	Pingree (ME)
Brownley (CA)	Huffman	Pocan
Bustos	Israel	Polis
Butterfield	Jackson Lee	Price (NC)
Capps	Jeffries	Quigley
Capuano	Johnson, E. B.	Rahall
Cárdenas	Kaptur	Rangel
Carney	Keating	Richmond
Carson (IN)	Kennedy	Roybal-Allard
Cartwright	Kildee	Ruiz
Castor (FL)	Kilmer	Ruppersberger
Castro (TX)	Kind	Rush
Chu	Kirkpatrick	Ryan (OH)
Cicilline	Kuster	Sánchez, Linda
Clarke	Langevin	T.
Clay	Larsen (WA)	Sanchez, Loretta
Cleaver	Larson (CT)	Sarbanes
Clyburn	Lee (CA)	Schakowsky
Cohen	Levin	Schiff
Connolly	Lewis	Schneider
Conyers	Lipinski	Schrader
Cooper	Loebbeck	Schwartz
Costa	Lofgren	Scott (VA)
Courtney	Lowenthal	Scott, David
Crowley	Lowe	Serrano
Cuellar	Lujan Grisham	Sewell (AL)
Cummings	(NM)	Shea-Porter
Davis (CA)	Luján, Ben Ray	Sherman
Davis, Danny	(NM)	Sinema
DeFazio	Maffei	Sires
DeGette	Maloney,	Slaughter
Delaney	Carolyn	Smith (WA)
DeLauro	Maloney, Sean	Speier
DeLenc	Markey	Swalwell (CA)
Deutch	Matheson	Takano
Dingell	Matsui	Thompson (CA)
Doggett	McCarthy (NY)	Thompson (MS)
Doyle	McCollum	Tierney
Duckworth	McDermott	Titus
Edwards	McGovern	Tonko
Ellison	McIntyre	Tsongas
Engel	McNerney	Van Hollen
Enyart	Meeks	Vargas
Esty	Meng	Veasey
Fattah	Michaud	Vela
Foster	Miller, George	Velázquez
Frankel (FL)	Moore	Visclosky
Fudge	Moran	Walz
Gabbard	Murphy (FL)	Wasserman
Gallego	Nadler	Schultz
Garamendi	Napolitano	Waters
Grayson	Neal	Watt
Green, Al	Negrete McLeod	Waxman
Green, Gene	Nolan	Welch
Gutierrez	O'Rourke	Wilson (FL)
Hahn	Owens	Wolf
Hanabusa	Pallone	

NOT VOTING—12

Bishop (UT)	Gerlach	King (IA)
Culberson	Grijalva	Lynch
Farr	Hastings (FL)	Terry
García	Johnson (GA)	Yarmuth

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1529

Mr. RYAN of Ohio changed his vote from “yea” to “nay.”

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated against:

Mr. GARCIA. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 42, had I been present, I would have voted “nay.”

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, had I been present on Thursday, February 14, 2013, I would have voted “no” on the motion on ordering the previous question on the rule

and “no” on H. Res. 66, the rule providing for consideration of H.R. 273.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker’s appointment, pursuant to 15 U.S.C. 1024(a), and the order of the House of January 3, 2013, of the following Members on the part of the House to the Joint Economic Committee:

Mr. CAMPBELL, California
 Mr. DUFFY, Wisconsin
 Mr. AMASH, Michigan
 Mr. PAULSEN, Minnesota
 Mr. HANNA, New York
 Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ, California
 Mr. CUMMINGS, Maryland
 Mr. DELANEY, Maryland

NATIONAL RECREATIONAL THERAPY MONTH

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, in February we celebrate National Recreational Therapy Month. Leading a healthy life means not only the absence of illness, but a level of physical, cognitive, emotional, social, and leisure well-being, which is the underlying focus of the recreational therapy profession.

Recreational therapists are caring professionals who touch the lives of individuals facing life-changing disease and disability all across the Nation. These professionals help individuals navigate these challenges, achieve healthy outcomes and, ultimately, an overall better quality of life.

Having worked in this profession for 28 years, I witnessed firsthand how the services of this profession made significant differences in the lives of so many. These services are provided by professionals nationally certified by the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification as certified therapeutic recreation specialists.

Recreational therapy ultimately aims to improve an individual’s functioning and keeps them active, healthy, and as independent as possible.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the caring professionals of the therapeutic recreation profession during the month of February for the services they provide each and every day.

PROTECT VOTING RIGHTS OF ALL AMERICANS

(Ms. LEE of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, the upcoming Shelby County, Alabama v. Holder Supreme Court case presents a direct threat to section 5 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which is the