control of the time passes to the Member
who led the opposition to ordering the pre-
vious question. That Member, because he
then controls the time, may offer an amend-
ment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of
amendment.”

In Deschler’s Procedure in the U.S. House
of Representatives, the subchapter titled
“Amendment to Rules” states: “a refusal to
order the previous question on such a rule
[a special rule reported from the Committee
on Rules] opens the resolution to amend-
ment and further debate.” (Chapter 21, sec-
tion 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: “Upon re-
section of the motion for the previous ques-
tion on a resolution reported from the Com-
mitee on Rules, control shifts to the Mem-
ber leading the opposition to the previous
question, who may offer a proper amendment
or motion and who controls the time for de-ate thereon.”

Clearly, the vote on the previous question
on a rule does have substantive policy impli-
cations. It is one of the only available tools
for those who oppose the Republican major-
ity’s agenda and allows those with alterna-
tive views the opportunity to offer an al-
ternative plan.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield
back the balance of my time, and I
move the previous question on the res-
olution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The
question is on ordering the previous
question.

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

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, on that I
demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant
to clause 8 of rule XX, further pro-
cedings on this question will be post-
poned.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. Poe of
Texas). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX,
the Chair will postpone further
proceedings today on motions to sus-
pend the rules on which a record vote
or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on
which the vote incurs objection under
clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions
will be taken later.

EXTENSION OF DIRECT SPENDING
REDUCTION FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I
move to suspend the rules and pass the
bill (S. 25) to direct the Secretary of
the Interior to convey certain Federal
features of the electrical distribution
system to the Wasatch Utah Valley Elec-
tric Service District, and for other pur-
poses, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 25

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Repre-
sentatives of the United States of America in
Congress assembled.

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF DIRECT SPENDING
REDUCTION FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024.

Paragraph (6)(B) of section 251A of the Bal-
anced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control
Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901a) is amended by
striking “and for fiscal year 2023” and by in-
serting “, for fiscal year 2024”.

SEC. 2. INAPPLICABILITY OF REDUCED ANNUAL
ADJUSTMENT OF RETIRED PAY FOR MEMBERS OF THE ARMY FORCES UNDER THE AGE OF 62 UNDER THE
BIPARTISAN BUDGET ACT OF 2013 WHO FIRST BECAME MEMBERS PRIOR TO JANUARY 1, 2014.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1401(a)(4)(b) of title
10, United States Code, as added by section
404(a) of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013
(Public Law 113-67), and amended by section
10001 of the Department of Defense Appro-
priations Act, 2014 (Public Law 113-76), is
amended by adding at the end the following new
subparagraph:

“(4) MEMBERS COVERED.—This paragraph applies to a member or former member of an
armed force who first became a member of a
unified service on or after January 1, 2014.”

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment
made by subsection (a) shall take effect on
December 1, 2015, immediately after the com-
ing into effect of section 403 of the Bipar-
tisan Budget Act of 2013 and the amendments
made by that section.

SEC. 3. TRANSITIONAL FUND FOR SUSTAINABLE
GROWTH RATE (SGR) REFORM.

Section 1898 of the Social Security Act (42
U.S.C. 1395lll) is amended—

(1) by adding the heading to read as fol-
loows: “TRANSITIONAL FUND FOR SUSTAINABLE
GROWTH RATE (SGR) REFORM”; and

(2) by amending subsection (a) to read as
follows:

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall
establish under this title a Transitional
Fund for Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) Re-
form (hereafter referred to as the ‘Fund’) which shall be available to the Sec-
rectary to provide funds to pay for physicians’
services under part B to supplement the con-
version factor under section 1848(b) for 2017 if
the conversion factor for 2017 is less than
conversion factor for 2013.”;

(3) in subsection (b)(1), by striking “dur-
ing—” and all that follows and inserting “dur-
ing— or after 2017, $2,300,000,000.”; and

(4) in subsection (b)(2), by striking “from
the Federal” and all that follows and insert-
ning “from the Supplementary Medical
Insurance Trust Fund.”

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant
to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsyl-
vania (Mr. FITZPATRICK) and the
gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from
Pennsylvania.

MR. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I
ask unanimous consent that all Mem-
bers may have 5 legislative days in
which to revise and extend their re-
marks and insert extraneous material
on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there
objection to the request of the gen-
tleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I
yield myself such time as I may con-
sume.

Mr. Speaker, President Washington
once said:

“The willingness with which our young peo-
ple are likely to serve in any war, no matter
how justified, is directly proportional to how they perceive veterans of earlier wars
were appreciated by our Nation.

There is no doubt that we appreciate
the service and sacrifice of each gen-
eration of veterans, from our original
veterans, patriots, to those who landed at
Normandy during World War II, to
present. We as Americans and as law-
makers are forever in debt to the dedi-
cation of our men and women who bore the pain of battle, physically
and emotionally.

While we stand here in this Chamber
each day and pledge our allegiance to
the American flag that they defend, we
are also able to acknowledge the demo-
cratic body freely elected by the people
thanks to their sacrifices, sometimes
simple appreciation isn’t enough.

We have a chance today to treat our vet-
erans with the honor they deserve by
ensuring that they are fully com-
penisated for their service during retire-
ment, while also addressing other con-
cerns facing our Nation.

Today we will take up the legislation
under consideration to ensure that all
servicemen and -women who are en-
listed prior to January 1 of this year
receive the full cost of living ad-
justments in retirement before and
after the age of 62. Furthermore, this
bill also ensures our seniors will have access to the health care services they
depend on through Medicare.

For too long, the relationship be-
tween doctor and patient has been
strained by the confusion and instab-
ility of a well-intentioned but
unaddressed problem with the Medi-
care program itself, known as the sus-
tainable growth rate or SGR. A compo-
nent of this legislation works to ensure
that seniors are able to receive the
care they depend on from the physi-
cians who know them, while also guar-
anteeing that those physicians are fairly
compensated by Medicare through a
fully-funded, long-term sustainable SG-
R is achieved this spring. In doing so,
this legislation provides much-needed
stability for the medical community
by ensuring that physicians have the
predictability in billing they need to
further their practice and to focus on
their patients.

By taking up and passing this legisla-
tion in bipartisan fashion, we can ad-
dress areas of critical concern, while
working together to make sure we are
also being fiscally responsible. This legis-
lation provides a necessary offset that
is in the same vein of the bipar-
tisan budget agreement this Chamber
passed just over a month ago.

The American people expect us to
make the tough decisions that help
them in their daily lives, be it a mili-
tary veteran looking to secure his re-
tirement after a lifetime of duty and
commitment, to the senior making
their patients.

The willingness with which our young people are likely to serve in any war, no matter how justified, is directly proportional to how they perceive veterans of earlier wars were appreciated by our Nation.

This legislation provides a path for-
ward for our Nation and this body in
addressing their concerns. I urge full
bipartisan support of this legislation.
and encourage the whole House to consider the important needs that the bill addresses.

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

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I find myself such time as I may consume.

There are a number of problems with this piece of legislation. One of the biggest ones is just the process of it. This has been dropped on us at the absolute last minute. In fact, on a bill that has profound impacts on the budget in a number of different areas, we just, moments ago, received a broad outline of a score of how it is going to impact that bill—moments ago. We did not have time to consider this legislation adequately to figure out what impact it was going to have on the budget, but there are a couple of things we do know about it that creates a major problem.

Yes, in the short-term, this pleases two constituency groups. It pleases veterans, and it pleases doctors by giving them the money that they want. But what was not mentioned in the speech talking about this bill in favor of it is how it is paid for. It is paid for by adding another year to sequestration.

Now, there are a couple of interesting things about this. First of all, that is 8 years from now. We have heard nothing but, from the other side of the aisle, about how government is spending too much money. We have heard how the debt is out of control, and yet here we have up-front money being spent on the promise that 8 years from now we will cover those costs. And what is worse, 8 years from now, the way we are going to cover those costs is through sequestration, across-the-board cuts that will cut other entitlement, other mandatory spending programs. So we are really simply robbing one group of deserving people to pay another group of deserving people. That is hardly responsible and hardly helpful.

There are a couple of other specific aspects of this that I want to mention from the Department of Defense standpoint, focusing now just on the portion that addresses the cost of living reduction.

I want to make sure we understand what exactly that cost of living reduction was. In the military, if you serve 20 years, you can retire at that point with your full pension, which is basically half of your pay at that point. This bill took, for those people between the ages of 42 and 62, working age, and reduced their COLA by 1 percent. It didn’t reduce the pension. It reduced how much that pension would be and the debt is out of control, and yet here we have up-front money being spent on the promise that 8 years from now we will cover those costs. And what is worse, 8 years from now, the way we are going to cover those costs is through sequestration, across-the-board cuts that will cut other entitlement, other mandatory spending programs. So we are really simply robbing one group of deserving people to pay another group of deserving people. That is hardly responsible and hardly helpful.

I, for one, will associate myself with the disappointment of the offset that has been offered in this legislation. No one likes sequester.

I will add an additional point of contention is that this Nation is not broke. Economists have said over and over again that we are not broke. We can fully fund and should fund our military as it relates to preparedness. That is part of protecting the homeland, which I serve on the Homeland Security Committee.

Then of course we all have tried to deliberate on what we can do best for our doctors under what we call the SGR, or the doctor fix. Let me just say this as I rise to support this legislation, because I do come from Texas, and I do interact with veteran across the Nation and others.

As painful as the extending out of the sequester to 2024 was, I just want to offer this thought. First of all, as I have argued—and I hope maybe the little bit comes out that we are not broke, that we will rid ourselves of the sequester and begin to budget fully to provide investment in our people.

So, the reason for advocating is, as I go home every weekend, and throughout the week when I am in the district, I will run into military personnel and/or veterans, to speak about the impact that this would have on them, their families. Certainly I believe that this was one that needs to be corrected, and I would like to see us working fairly well. I think we find a way to respond to the high numbers for those costs, and as well to work with those with optional ideas. I hope before 2024
we have no sequester. As my good friend has indicated, it is a poor way of managing our budget.

Let me also say, because of the many low-income areas and the physicians that I have interacted with, who indicate it is difficult to serve my low-income patients or my patients that are elderly, that the doctor fix is crucial in the 18th Congressional District in providing health care for those who are in need, particularly those who are elderly.

So, as we look askance at this how this has been formulated—and I know that it is one that has come to us—but I would hope that we would do this fix this time, Mr. Speaker, and then work to undo the offset so that we can help seniors and doctors.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, there are no further speakers, so if the gentleman has no further speakers I will close.

I yield myself the balance of my time just really to drive home one point on the Armed Services’ side of the equation, and that is the impact that personnel costs are having on the Department of Defense. They are an increasing, growing part of our defense budget in large part because we have been very, very generous with people who serve in the military in terms of pay, benefits, and retirement, but as everyone who serves on the Armed Services Committee knows, increasing personnel costs squeezes out other portions of the budget.

I have talked a lot about readiness. I think that is incredibly important, but also procurement, making sure that the men and women who serve in the military have the equipment that they need to fight the fight. We can have a great military where everyone is very well paid, the benefits go on forever, but they don’t have the equipment or the training necessary to fight.

I will tell you, every single expert, right, left, middle, whoever, who studies this question, we just had four prominent think-tanks spanning that spectrum come out with a study on the future of the Department of Defense budget. Every single one of those experts has said that if we do nothing to rein in personnel costs, that is precisely what we will have; it will be hollow. It will not have the equipment, and it will not have the training to do what it is that we ask them to do.

Now, we may not think that the 1 percent cut that was done here in the COLA is the best way to go. I can certainly understand veterans who were promised this, who expect to receive it. If it is not that, what is it? What is on the table? All we have done in this Chamber is to try to do no more to every offset. The Department of Defense has put out there to try to rein in this spending, to try to rein in this spending, as I said, so that we can have a military that lives up to what we want it to live up to. This is a very, very real issue.

Once again, we are punting it and completely ignoring it, completely unaddressed by supporters of this bill. They are just addressing this narrow area, making the broader problem worse.

As I said in the beginning, also, once again, adding sequester back in the lexicon for another year. This is not a solution to any problem, other than a series of political ones. We have just too many difficult choices to make to simply rely on politics with every bill that we bring up here. We have got to make some hard choices. This bill doesn’t do it. It punts once again in every conceivable way. It simply makes the problems worse.

I know it is not going to happen, but I would nonetheless urge this body to oppose this bill and make some responsible choices, actually make choices as to what is important to those of us in this Chamber to keep our promise made to our Nation’s veterans. What is before the House today is an extension of current policy that was passed in overwhelming bipartisan fashion right here in this Chamber less than 2 months ago.

In addition, it does protect the promises that the Nation has made to our veterans. So, I encourage my colleagues to vote in favor of the bill, to care for those who have borne the battle, and to send that message to all who can hear it.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, it is always responsible to keep promises made to our Nation’s veterans. What is before the House today is an extension of current policy that was passed in overwhelming bipartisan fashion right here in this Chamber less than 2 months ago.

In addition, it does protect the promises that the Nation has made to our veterans. So, I encourage my colleagues to vote in favor of the bill, to care for those who have borne the battle, and to send that message to all who can hear it.

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

Mr. DeFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, due to heavy snow in Oregon, and the associated cancellations of flights out of the State, I am unable to be present for the vote on S. 25. I plan to vote in favor of S. 25. I voted against the Murray-Ryan Budget that put in place the unacceptable cuts to military retirement cost of living adjustments (COLAs). These cuts would have reduced annual COLA for military retirees by 1 percent every year until the service member turns 80. That could be as much as an $83,000 cut over the lifetime of a typical enlisted member who retires after 20 years of service. It is unconscionable that Congress would try to balance the budget on the backs of our military retirees, and I am glad that S. 25 preserves the COLA cuts from going into place for all current military retirees and future retirees who are currently serving.

I am also pleased that S. 25 sets aside some funding for preventing Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) cuts to Medicare and TRICARE reimbursements. I voted against the creation of the faulty SGR formula in 1997 and have fought to fix it ever since. Unfortunately, instead of fixing the SGR Congress has delayed it year after year. This means that if Congress fails to act by March of this year, doctors would face a cut of approximately 27% in their Medicare and TRICARE reimbursements. This is not acceptable.

I am hopeful that Congress will use the funds set aside by S. 25 to help pay for a permanent fix to the SGR rather than another delay.

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, while I support the effort to fix the cut to veterans’ pensions included in S. 25, I am staunchly opposed to extending sequestration cuts to Medicare. Given that the cut to veterans’ pensions is due to occur many years before the sequestration extension, I am supporting this bill, with the hope that Congress will undo this additional extension of sequestration cuts to Medicare. Again, let me state clearly: I oppose extending sequestration cuts to Medicare, and I will be working to convince the Senate to find an alternative way to fund the fix to veterans’ pensions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 25, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The previous question on House Resolution 475; Adopting House Resolution 475, if ordered; and Suspending the rules and passing S. 25.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3193, CONSUMER FINANCIAL FREEDOM AND WASHINGTON ACCOUNTABILITY ACT; PROVIDING FOR PROCEEDINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM FEBRUARY 13, 2014, THROUGH FEBRUARY 21, 2014; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on ordering the previous question on House Resolution 475, which is reported as follows:

Mr. Chairman, this resolution authorizes House and Senate conferees to work on the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to strengthen the review authority of the Financial Stability Oversight Council of regulations issued by