

Sánchez, Linda	Sires	Veasey
T.	Slaughter	Vela
Sarbanes	Speier	Velázquez
Schakowsky	Swalwell (CA)	Visclosky
Schiff	Takano	Walz
Schneider	Thompson (CA)	Wasserman
Schrader	Thompson (MS)	Schultz
Scott (VA)	Tierney	Waters
Scott, David	Titus	Waxman
Serrano	Tonko	Welch
Sewell (AL)	Tsongas	Wilson (FL)
Shea-Porter	Van Hollen	Yarmuth
Sherman	Vargas	

NOT VOTING—20

Bachus	Gosar	Scott, Austin
Bishop (UT)	McCarthy (NY)	Smith (WA)
Black	Pastor (AZ)	Stockman
Calvert	Rigell	Upton
Cramer	Runyan	Walden
Deutch	Rush	Westmoreland
Fortenberry	Schwartz	

□ 1131

Mr. CÁRDENAS changed his vote from “aye” to “no.”

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 86 on the Cummings amendment on H.R. 899, I am not recorded because I was absent due to illness. Had I been present, I would have voted “nay.”

On rollcall No. 87 on the Connolly amendment on H.R. 899, I am not recorded because I was absent due to illness. Had I been present, I would have voted “nay.”

On rollcall No. 88 on the Jackson Lee amendment on H.R. 899, I am not recorded because I was absent due to illness. Had I been present, I would have voted “nay.”

On rollcall No. 89 on the Motion to Recommit with Instructions on H.R. 899, I am not recorded because I was absent due to illness. Had I been present, I would have voted “nay.”

On rollcall No. 90 on passage of H.R. 899, I am not recorded because I was absent due to illness. Had I been present, I would have voted “aye.”

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

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

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise for the purpose of inquiring of the majority leader the schedule for the week to come, and I yield to my friend, the majority leader, Mr. CANTOR.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Maryland, the Democratic whip, for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, on Monday, the House will meet at noon for morning-hour and 2 p.m. for legislative business. Votes will be postponed until 6:30 p.m. On Tuesday and Wednesday, the House will meet at 10 a.m. for morning-hour and noon for legislative business. On Thursday, the House will meet at 9 a.m. for legislative business. The last votes of the week are expected no later than 3 p.m. On Friday, no votes are expected.

Mr. Speaker, the House will consider a few suspensions next week, a complete list of which will be announced by

the close of business today. Of note, I expect one of those suspensions to be the bipartisan flood insurance bill.

In addition, the House will consider a number of bills to address the middle class squeeze brought on by the increase in home heating costs. This winter has been one of the coldest in recent memory, and people are running their heaters longer to keep their families warm. Last fall, the Energy Information Administration predicted that 90 percent of U.S. households would see higher home heating costs this year, and low-income families already spend 12 percent of their household budget on energy costs.

America does not work if middle class families are taking home less. To lower the cost of heating a home, to increase paychecks for middle class Americans, and to build an America that works, the House will consider the following bills:

H.R. 4076, the HHEATT Act, authored by Chairman BILL SHUSTER, to make it easier to transport propane to areas with shortages;

H.R. 2641, the RAPID Act, sponsored by Representative TOM MARINO, to expedite Federal permitting for energy construction projects;

H.R. 2824, Preventing Government Waste and Protecting Coal Mining Jobs in America, authored by Representative BILL JOHNSON, to protect coal mining from excessive and unnecessary Federal regulation; and

H.R. 3826, the Electricity Security and Affordability Act, sponsored by Representative ED WHITFIELD, to protect electric utility plants from excessive and overly burdensome EPA regulation.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, given all the problems Americans are facing with the rollout of ObamaCare, the House will consider the Simple Fairness Act. This bill will provide relief and fairness to individuals, just as the administration has done for business, by making the individual mandate penalty zero dollars for the remainder of the year.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for the information he has given to me.

I want to comment on one of the statements he made, with which I agree, in which, Mr. Speaker, you just told us—again, I agree—America doesn't work if middle class families are taking home less. I would urge him, consistent with that statement, in recognition of the fact that America works better when working families are making better wages, that we would hope the minimum wage could be brought to the floor.

As the gentleman I am sure knows, in 2013 dollars, the minimum wage would now be \$10.57 if it were at the same level it was over 40 years ago in 1968. The minimum wage has eroded very substantially in its purchasing power and its ability to give middle class families, as you say, and America a decent take-home pay. We believe both the minimum wage and unemployment insurance extension for the

1.8 to 2 million people who have lost that safety net is both hurting the economy and obviously hurting families. So we agree very strongly with the gentleman's statement.

Obviously, the bills he refers to he believes will also have an effect on this issue, but I would hope that you would seriously consider bringing the minimum wage and unemployment insurance to the floor. We believe—although, frankly, I don't have a precise count on your side of the aisle, which I am sure does not shock you—that both of those bills would have the votes on this floor, as the Speaker has indicated, to work its will and to pass those pieces of legislation. So I would hope the gentleman would consider that.

Secondly, Mr. Leader, we are pleased that flood insurance is moving ahead, we hope, and we want to thank you for your efforts that you have made on behalf of this. I know that Ms. WATERS from the Financial Services Committee has been working very hard on our side. We very much want to see the relief extended to those who have been confronted with these extraordinary increases in premiums which are unsustainable, particularly for middle class families, but for almost everybody; and we appreciate the work that you have done with Ms. WATERS to try to make sure that the protections that are extended are sufficient, certainly in the short term, but hopefully also in the long term, to meet both the objective of making it sustainable for families, but also, over the long term, fiscally sustainable for the Nation.

So I want to thank you for that. We look forward to considering that next week and hope that will be on the floor next week.

If the gentleman wants to comment further, I yield to him.

Mr. CANTOR. I thank the gentleman for his comments about the issue of flood insurance and the need to sustain the effort to return to actuarial soundness in that program, at the same time to have affordable and sustainable increases in premiums, which is important for the actuarial soundness of the program. So I appreciate that and look forward to the bipartisan effort next week on the floor with that.

As to the gentleman's comments, Mr. Speaker, about the minimum wage and unemployment insurance extension, it is interesting, if you look at the constituents that we need to focus on, those individuals who struggle to get through the month to pay the bills, those struggling at their job each week with wages that have not increased in real terms in a decade, we could do something on the floor of this House that would be as beneficial, if not more so, to the economy and would address the concerns that we have about decreasing wages, and that is we could roll back the 30-hour workweek rule under ObamaCare. If we were to do that and return it to the 40-hour workweek again—that is a 25 percent increase in wages—we could do that, and

the wage earner at minimum wage would be about \$2 off from where that wage earner would be if you followed what the gentleman is suggesting in raising the minimum wage, as the President wants, to \$10.10. But the added benefit is, as CBO has warned, you don't have to go about harming job creation prospects at the same time, which means, an increase in minimum wage, as CBO suggested, could very likely result in less jobs being created.

So we can do this without harming the prospects for job creation and help those constituents right now who have been struggling for so long. That is how we can make America work again. Let's get America back to work, more Americans working.

So as far as the gentleman's suggestions about UI, at the end of the day, what we need to do—and I think what most of our constituents who are out of work would like, is they would like a job. And what we know today is there is a mismatch in terms of the job openings and the skills that those who are unemployed have.

We passed a bill on the floor of this House called the SKILLS Act, and it is something I have spoken to the President about and I have spoken to the Vice President about. I would like to work with the gentleman, Mr. Speaker, to see if we can resolve the differences on that bill that has passed this House to get the Senate to act so we can finally get the chronically unemployed in this country back on a path to productivity and give them a hope so they can get a job again. They need the skills.

Mr. HOYER. I thank my friend for yielding.

Let me say to him that I will ask my staff—and they usually do what I ask them to do—next week to sit down with your staff and to talk about the SKILLS Act. We have significant differences. It was passed on a largely partisan vote, as the gentleman knows, but I agree with him. As you know, I have an agenda that we call Make It In America, and it deals with skills, and it deals with a 21st century workforce education, and so the objective we agree upon. I will certainly look forward to working with him on the specifics to see if we can get an agreement, a consensus, so that we can pass a bill which accomplishes those objectives, because we share those objectives.

□ 1145

Let me say, Mr. Speaker, it is interesting, I talk about the minimum wage. The majority leader answers, Mr. Speaker, that yes, the value of wages has decreased, but if we increased the Affordable Care Act to a 40-hour criteria, and less than that, 39 hours, no health care would necessarily be available to those workers, but you would increase their salary by 25 percent. Now on that theory, Mr. Speaker, perhaps if we increased the work to 80 hours a week, we would double their

pay. Or perhaps we could triple their pay if you increased it to 120 hours a week. But, very frankly, it has eroded. The minimum wage is not worth what it was, and, very frankly, in 1969, the economy was not going bust. We weren't hemorrhaging jobs. We were doing pretty well.

Very frankly, CBO has said that some 25 million Americans, some directly and some indirectly, would be advantaged by increasing the minimum wage and paying a wage that did not leave a worker in the richest country on the face of the Earth in poverty working 40 hours a week. That is not an acceptable alternative in America, and we have raised the minimum wage periodically. We raised it last, of course, when Democrats were in charge in 2007. We raised it to \$7.25 over time, now \$7.25, but it is substantially less and it replaces 36 percent of average wage, as opposed to in 1968, replacing 54 percent of average wage.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would hope that yes, we can take other steps that the majority leader has pointed out that I think we perhaps can reach agreement on, but that we ought to recognize that we expect people who can and are able to do so work in America, but they also expect us to pay them a wage on which they can have some degree of financial ability to support themselves, a family, and to live decently in America. So I would hope that we could do that.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, let me discuss a bill that we believe will help the economy greatly. The Chamber of Commerce believes it will help the economy greatly. Farm owners believe it will help the economy, and it is the broadest coalition that I have seen in the country on an issue in many respects: evangelicals, Roman Catholics, Jews, other faiths, all have said, 70-plus percent of America says we ought to pass comprehensive immigration reform.

Mr. Speaker, Speaker BOEHNER came forward with some principles in my State just a few weeks ago for moving forward on comprehensive immigration reform. We were very positively impressed with those principles. We may not have agreed on every jot and tittle of the suggestions, but we thought it was a very good basis to move forward on which to have a discussion and bring comprehensive immigration reform to the floor.

As Tom Donohue, the president of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States of America, said it was absolutely essential, I would hope, Mr. Speaker, that we could bring that to the floor, have a debate and have consideration of it. My view is it has the votes in the people's House to pass if it were brought to the floor. I would hope that could be done.

With that, I yield to my friend, the majority leader.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I would like to underscore and respond to that, that I don't believe there is the requisite number of votes in the House to

pass the Senate's comprehensive immigration bill. We have taken the position on our side of the aisle that we are not for that bill. The gentleman rightfully points out that the Speaker and our leadership put out some standards to provide a path for discussion about how we go about addressing a very broken immigration system.

The problem is, Mr. Speaker, we don't have a lot of trust on our side about how this administration will implement the laws we pass; nor do I think, Mr. Speaker, one can blame us given the track record of this administration in seemingly unilaterally making decisions on how to implement a health care law when it doesn't work. This is the frustration and lack of trust that has resulted from those kinds of actions.

We do need to restore the trust in our government for the people that put us here. We do need to address a very broken system, but the administration or anyone's insistence that somehow everything has to be addressed right now our way is not something that is going to sit well, especially given the fact that there is not a lot of trust given the lack of what we believe would be full and faithful execution of the laws as to what is going on with the health care law and others on the part of the administration.

So I don't in any way accept the status quo, I would say to the gentleman on immigration, but we have got to work to see a way forward that can provide a better way.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, frankly, I have heard this trust argument before. That would be an argument for not doing anything because you don't trust the administration to execute the laws and, therefore, don't pass any laws. I think that is a make-wait argument, Mr. Speaker. And, very frankly, there is a way to see who is right on this, I tell my friend, the majority leader. The majority leader says he doesn't believe that it has the votes on the floor. There is a wonderful way to test that—bring it to the floor, and we will see who is right.

The American people, over 70 percent of them, believe that we ought to pass comprehensive immigration reform. Polls on their side of the aisle and polls on our side of the aisle and independent polls largely agree: over 7 out of 10 Americans believe we ought to pass this bill. In fact, seven, or very close to 7 out of 10 of their representatives in the other body voted for comprehensive immigration reform. They had a vote. They brought it to the floor. It passed overwhelmingly. It has sat here for months, unattended, but maybe that is our alternative.

Very frankly, there have been alternatives passed out of the Judiciary Committee and out of the Homeland Security Committee by the Republicans, and they are not on the floor either, Mr. Speaker. So no immigration alternatives have been offered for a vote on this floor, the people's House, a

House in which the Speaker said when he took the gavel here, the people's will will be reflected because they would bring things to the floor. They accused us of not doing that. That was their right to do so, but now I suggest they are following a policy that they have severely criticized and said was wrong. So if they were sincere then, we would simply ask the majority leader to bring the bill to the floor and see if he is right or if I am right; to see whether we have the votes or we don't. The American people deserve that vote because they are overwhelmingly for that vote, and then they can take their own view from there as to who they agree with and who they don't agree with.

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

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, MARCH 3, 2014

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet on Monday next, when it shall convene at noon for morning-hour debate and 2 p.m. for legislative business.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARR). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

CONGRATULATING DR. ABNER WOMACK

(Mrs. HARTZLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute).

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Abner Womack, professor emeritus at the University of Missouri, for receiving the Distinguished Service Award. This is the highest award awarded by the American Farm Bureau.

As a farm boy with a knack for numbers, he has used his expertise to build the internationally renowned Food and Agriculture Policy Research Institute that provides high-quality analysis for Congress and the USDA. This system of statistical models allows congressional Members and their staff to analyze the effects and tradeoffs of competing policies. Dr. Womack's academic integrity is evidenced in the strong academic, nonpartisan reputation that FAPRI enjoys.

However, Dr. Womack's reach far exceeds that of Capitol Hill. I want to commend him for his tireless effort to reach out to farmers across Missouri and around the world. His passion for agriculture and vast knowledge of statistical models, paired with his ability to effectively communicate complex ideas in a commonsense manner, have made him a priceless asset to all he encounters.

Again, I want to thank Dr. Womack for his lifelong efforts in supporting American agriculture, and recognize him for this achievement.

RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my fellow colleagues to allow an up-or-down vote on H.R. 1010, which would give at least 25 million Americans a pay raise. For many Americans, most of whom are women, who work 40 hours a week at \$7.25 an hour, they gross a mere \$290 a week. That comes out to \$15,000 per year, just barely above the Federal poverty guidelines.

In America, no one should have to work full time and raise their family in poverty. In Georgia alone, raising the minimum wage would give more than 500,000 hardworking people a raise. Most Americans support raising the minimum wage, but my Republican colleagues refuse to give it a vote. Obviously, many of them have never experienced life working at \$7.25 an hour.

The American people are calling for an economy that works for everyone—where a hard day's work earns a decent day's pay, and everyone has an opportunity to build a brighter future.

SUPPORT LOCAL ACT

(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, today I rise in the House as an original cosponsor of H.R. 4100, the Local Organization Cooperative Agreement and Facility Maintenance Act, or the LOCAL Act.

For the past several years, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has partnered with local nonprofit organizations to cooperatively manage and maintain recreational facilities at lakes and reservoirs on these Federal lands.

In my district, the Friends of Raystown Lake Group in Huntingdon County have been able to collect and retain user fees generated from the public's use of the lake, which they then reinvest to perform operations and maintenance on that site. Recently, an administrative ruling forced the Army Corps to terminate these agreements at facilities across the country. The Friends of Raystown should be commended for their volunteerism, not penalized by Washington's bureaucracy. The LOCAL Act will allow these and other agreements to remain in force.

I would encourage my colleagues to support the LOCAL Act to ensure the Army Corps can continue these cooperative agreements that are good for the community and good for taxpayers.

CONSTITUTIONALITY OF EXECUTIVE ACTIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of Jan-

uary 3, 2013, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, these are interesting times in America. For most of us who went to law school, we were taught that for an adversarial system of justice of law to work, there has to be active participation on both sides of an issue, of a person charged with a crime, on defense, or litigation over a law itself. So Chairman GOODLATTE from just across the river in Virginia called a hearing in the Judiciary Committee this week. We had another hearing about the constitutionality, or lack thereof, of actions by this administration, and it is very alarming.

□ 1200

Professor Jonathan Turley, with whom I have disagreed on many policy issues, has a wonderful grasp of the Constitution; and he recognizes the dangers when an administration decides to pick and choose which laws will be enforced and goes further and issues executive orders, not like prior administrations that simply explain on most occasions or illuminate some law as to how they think it is to be interpreted, but to actually make law and executive orders. That is just unconscionable for somebody that took an oath to defend the Constitution.

I can't recall times that I have agreed with The LA Times before, but they had an editorial that indicates even The LA Times understands the danger of what is going on right now in this country with this administration.

We have an Attorney General who has been requested to produce documents lawfully, informally, refused to do so, been subpoenaed to produce information documents, has refused to do so unlawfully, to the point that the committee had a hearing and ultimately found the Attorney General of the United States in contempt of Congress, which came to this floor and, in a very unusual action found, the Attorney General, the highest law enforcement officer in this country, in contempt of Congress, basically in contempt of the Constitution.

This has far wider implications than most in America seem to grasp because, when the highest law enforcement officer in America refuses to comply with the law, holds himself out as being above any law, creates laws that he wants to defend—at least the administration creating laws that they want to defend or follow—and actually saying in this room—I just had the President of the United States say in this room: I am going to go around the Congress—if you don't do what I want, I am going to go around the Congress.

The ramifications for that are so staggering to anyone who has contemplated the founding of this country that it is beyond words. The Founders set up these checks and balances believing that, surely, there would be people in the judiciary—although they