

Mr. Speaker, businesses like North Oaks Health System, Rouses Markets, Big Mike's Sports Bar and Grill, and Ferrara Fire Apparatus are all businesses that are members of the Chamber of Commerce.

Congratulations to the 500 businesses that are members of the Livingston Parish Chamber of Commerce, to Wayne, April, and all the folks in Livingston Parish.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON) laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, October 21, 2015.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker, U.S. Capitol, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on October 21, 2015 at 9:14 a.m.:

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 322.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 323.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 324.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 558.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 1442.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 1884.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 3059.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 10, SCHOLARSHIPS FOR OPPORTUNITY AND RESULTS RE- AUTHORIZATION ACT, AND PRO- VIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 692, DEFAULT PREVENTION ACT

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 480 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 480

Resolved, That at any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 10) to reauthorize the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Act, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. The amendments recommended

by the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform now printed in the bill shall be considered as adopted in the House and in the Committee of the Whole. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. No further amendment to the bill, as amended, shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each further amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such further amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill, as amended, to the House with such further amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto, to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 692) to ensure the payment of interest and principal of the debt of the United States. 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 Ways and Means; and (2) one motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from North Carolina is recognized for 1 hour.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 480 provides for consideration of H.R. 10, the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Reauthorization Act, and H.R. 692, the Default Prevention Act.

These bills are important steps forward on two issues of great importance to Americans: education and fiscal issues.

H.R. 10, the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Reauthorization Act, also known as the SOAR Reauthorization Act, would continue important funding provided to help young

students here in Washington, D.C., reach their full potential. This legislation would provide \$60 million annually for 5 years, split equally among the District's public schools, charter schools, and the District of Columbia Opportunity Scholarship Program, which enables low-income students to attend a private school that would otherwise be out of their reach.

Two amendments to the bill have been made in order for consideration, one by a Republican and another by a Democrat.

I have great confidence that the SOAR Reauthorization Act is a positive step for students in the District of Columbia and that, through its example, it will provide a model for success that could be adopted by States across the country.

The rule also provides for consideration of H.R. 692, the Default Prevention Act. As my colleagues are all aware, the Treasury Department has asserted that its ability to use extraordinary measures to avoid reaching the statutory debt limit will be exhausted in coming days, possibly by November 3.

The legislation before us is a vital step to take default off the table, should extraordinary measures be exhausted, providing certainty to financial markets and hardworking Americans that we will pay our debts and meet our obligations.

The Default Prevention Act would authorize the Secretary of the Treasury to issue debt obligations necessary to continue making principal and interest payments on our debt, and would also ensure continued access to the funds in the Social Security trust fund necessary to pay Social Security benefits in full.

Mr. Speaker, it is simply common sense that we permanently close out the possibility of default and give seniors and other Social Security beneficiaries confidence that they will continue to receive the funds they rely on.

We can protect the full faith and credit of the United States and ensure that our credit ratings and economy are not impacted by policy battles here in Congress over future spending policies.

Mr. Speaker, I commend this rule and both of the underlying bills to my colleagues for their support.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I thank the gentlewoman from North Carolina for yielding the customary 30 minutes to me for debate.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to this rule, which provides for consideration of both H.R. 10, the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Reauthorization Act, and H.R. 692, the Default Prevention Act. Once again, we are playing grab bag rules, and I maintain that that is not the process of regular order.

Each time I have the privilege of managing a rule which, with only four

members of the minority on the committee, happens quite often, I find myself in the same position: frustrated with my friends, the House Republicans', complete disregard for regular order; their use of one rule to consider multiple unrelated pieces of legislation; and, most significantly, disillusioned that, in a time when so much can and must be done for the American people, we continue to spend precious time with partisan, dead-on-arrival measures.

H.R. 10 would reauthorize the Opportunity Scholarship Program through the years 2021. OSP is the only federally created and funded elementary and secondary private school voucher program in the United States.

Last night, my friend from Utah came forward and spoke, as is his responsibility. And I would just ask him, do they have the same program in Beaver, Utah, or Centerville, Utah, or Altamont?

I didn't know they had an Altamont. I come from Altamonte Springs, Florida. They spell it without the E. But they don't have this voucher program that they are trying to foist on the District of Columbia.

The program, which awards need-based scholarships to children in the District of Columbia to attend a participating private school of their choice, was created in 2004 and last reauthorized in 2011.

I would like to note from the outset that the current school voucher program is authorized through September 2016. That is almost a full year from now. Given the numerous pressing and time-sensitive matters facing this body, I can't help but feel bewildered as to why we are rushing to reauthorize D.C. school vouchers, yet we continue to ignore our Nation's crumbling infrastructure, income inequality, the need for jobs, immigration reform, the need for sensible gun control in the wake of mass shootings and countless other deaths at the instance of guns, particularly children, and our lack of a long-term budget. I continue to await a straight answer from my Republican colleagues and hope that we can get this question answered before today's debate concludes.

Now, I also want to make something clear. The members of the Washington, D.C. City Council have said that they do not want the D.C. voucher program to be reauthorized.

□ 1245

In a letter to the chairman of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, the majority of the members of the D.C. Council expressed their belief that "Federal funds should be invested in the existing public education system—both public schools and public charter schools—rather than being diverted to private schools."

They go on to describe past findings on vouchers, saying that "the evidence is clear that the use of vouchers has

had no statistically significant impact on overall student achievement in math or reading, or for students from schools in need of improvement."

Despite this very clear letter, in what I can only describe as "typical Republican fashion," this body is going full steam ahead in its efforts to impose its political will regardless.

I remind those here today and watching at home that Washington, D.C., is a Federal district. Congress maintains the power to overturn laws approved by the D.C. Council, can vote to impose laws on D.C., and gets final approval of the D.C. Council's budget.

Washington, D.C.'s Delegate to the House of Representatives, my very good friend and a mentor to all of us not only on this issue, but countless others, Ms. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON, who has served in this body for 24 years, is not permitted to vote on final passage of any legislation, let alone legislation directly intended to govern the jurisdiction which she was elected to serve.

One might hope that Congress would consider the wishes of the representatives of Washington, D.C., and the nearly 660,000 residents of the District who are taxpayers without representation. But, as we see today, that simply isn't the case.

Mr. Speaker, the underlying legislation would make significant changes to the way in which the program is evaluated, and that is a problem.

In 2012, The Washington Post published an article titled "Quality Controls Lacking for D.C. Schools Accepting Federal Vouchers." The piece examined some of the schools receiving vouchers.

Among them were "a nondenominational Christian school" that "occupies a soot-stained storefront between a halal meat shop and an evening wear boutique." The school consists of two classrooms, and "students travel nearly 2 miles down Georgia Avenue to the city's Emery Recreation Center" for gym class.

Another school "follows a learning model known as 'Suggestopedia,' a philosophy of learning developed by a Bulgarian psychotherapist Georgi Lozanov that stresses learning through music, stretching, and meditation."

A third is described as "an accredited K-8 school supported by the Nation of Islam," which "occupies the second floor of a former residence east of the Anacostia River." The classrooms are described as being former bedrooms, and the only bathroom in the school was described as having "a floor blackened with dirt and a sink coated in grime. The bathtub was filled with paint cans and cleaning supplies concealed by a curtain."

With descriptions like this of schools just a few miles away from this Chamber, I would like to think we would want more evaluations on these schools, not less.

Moving on to H.R. 629, a very bogus bill that plans for the unprecedented

default on the full faith and credit of the United States, this measure is a debt prioritization bill and one that elevates the payments of debts to bondholders, including Switzerland, the Cayman Islands, and China, and they would be paid over the obligations to America's troops, veterans, seniors, and students, as well as Medicare recipients.

As Democratic members of the House Ways and Means Committee astutely put it: "Under this legislation, the effect would be to pay China"—and Japan and others—"first, and some Americans not at all."

We have been down this road before. Indeed, the debt limit standoff and government shutdown of 2013 cost an estimated 120,000 jobs and disrupted public and private credit markets so profoundly that the total estimated borrowing costs for the Federal Government, businesses, and homeowners during that crisis totaled approximately \$70 million. Defaulting on our debt is simply not an option, and H.R. 629 is, as Treasury Secretary Jack Lew put it, "default by another name."

We cannot play this game. We need to be about the business of honoring our obligations. The last time we went down this road our debt rating was lowered, and I suggest it may happen again.

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. STEWART).

Mr. STEWART. I would like to thank the gentlewoman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I come from a family of educators. My father taught me in fifth grade. My brother and sister are both teachers. My wife is a teacher. One of my sons recently spent 2 years doing Teach for America in an inner-city school before he started graduate school.

Every weekend, it seemed, while he was teaching, we would hear stories and personal experiences of children who desperately needed help to get the education that they needed so they had any chance, any hope, of being successful in life.

And, finally, I am also the father of six children. I understand in a deeply personal way how important it is that we teach our children and educate our children.

This idea goes back to Jamestown, 1609, where literally for the first time in the history of the world we made a commitment that we would educate all of our children, that every village, every town, every community would educate all of our children. That is what the SOAR program is about: giving all of our children the opportunity to succeed.

So let's look at the program and see what it has accomplished. Since 2004, more than 6,000 children have had the opportunity to attend a private school of their choice. This has changed the trajectory of their lives. More than 90

percent of them now graduate from high school, compared with 58 percent throughout the rest of Washington, D.C. Eighty-eight percent of them go on to a 2- or a 4-year university. Eighty-five percent of their parents express satisfaction with this program.

Why in the world would you want to take that away? How could you not support this program? How could you not want to give these children the opportunity to succeed? Why in the world would you put the interests of unions and teachers above the interests of these children who desperately need our help?

I would ask my colleagues to support this rule and to support the underlying legislation. Give these kids an opportunity to succeed. That is all we are asking for.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, would the Chair be kind enough to tell me how much time remains for both sides.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida has 20 minutes remaining. The gentlewoman from North Carolina has 25 minutes remaining.

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

Let me respond to the gentleman from Utah who spoke of his family's background and education.

Firstly, my former wife, who is now deceased, taught school for 35 years, first and second grade. My son, who has his Ph.D., as my friend's son is about the business of getting his graduate degree, worked in education, taught sixth grade for a number of years, and then recruited schoolteachers for Palm Beach County and Broward County in Florida.

The question was why would we not want to educate every child, and the gentleman referenced a period in 1609 when we certainly were not educating every child. I went to school for the first time in 1941 to a school that was built by Julius Rosenwald, and I recommend a documentary that is in the movies throughout the country now. Mr. Rosenwald, at the insistence of Booker T. Washington, built schools for Black children, 642 of them, in the South, where there were none.

My mother didn't have an opportunity to go to that school. Other people in my town never had an opportunity to get an education, and you come here and you talk about why would we not want this education.

If it is so good, then why isn't it everywhere? And why are you picking on the District of Columbia? Perhaps someone who knows that very well will be able to tell us more than myself with my passion.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON), my very good friend, a member of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

Ms. NORTON. I thank my good friend from Florida for yielding and for his passion for our children.

Mr. Speaker, the short answer to the gentleman who wants to know why

would we want to take away vouchers from these children is that we don't want to take vouchers away from these children. We want those who are currently in the program to maintain their voucher until they graduate.

But I should caution Members on both sides about voting for \$100 million for a private school voucher program for a District that didn't ask for it while the Republican majority has pending a \$2 billion cut for K-12 education for kids in their own districts.

The irony is that, when Newt Gingrich was Speaker, he first proposed private school vouchers, but as conservative as he was, he worked with me on a home rule public charter school alternative. The D.C. Council had voted for charter schools, but there were only two or three fledgling schools and charters weren't going anywhere.

Today, Mr. Speaker, there are 115 public charter schools in the District, and the reason is that, with my support, Speaker Gingrich placed H.R. 3019 in the 1995-1996 omnibus legislation establishing the D.C. public charter school board.

Today almost half of D.C. students go to publicly accountable charter schools, and most of these schools have long waiting lists. That, my friend, is what choice looks like.

Another speaker has now stepped forward with a private school voucher program to be authorized for the third time today, although the evaluation that Congress mandated definitively shows that the program failed to meet its stated goal to help children improve.

□ 1300

Vouchers did not improve math or reading scores for the children from low-income neighborhoods in this program, and that was the reason for the bill in the first place.

In light of that failure, I offered a compromise, and the President supports it. All of the students in the current voucher program would remain until graduation, but no new students would be funded. That would mean years of private school vouchers, but only in the District of Columbia, because this Congress has just voted down similar private school vouchers for the Nation.

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

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentlewoman an additional 1 minute.

Ms. NORTON. That, my friends, is what compromise looks like: first, phenomenal growth of public charter schools, which are supported by both Congressional Republicans and Democrats; second, allowing all current students to remain in private voucher schools until graduation. If more compromises like this were on the floor, the majority would not be divided into multiple factions that have nothing to show for years of leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, it is a big surprise to see a member of the minority opposing the provision of additional education funding to low-income students.

My colleague earlier mentioned that some members of the D.C. Council oppose H.R. 10. I would like to bring it to the attention of the House that D.C. Councilwoman Anita Bonds has asked that her name be removed from that letter, saying: "I am hopeful that many more of our neediest families have the opportunity to take advantage of the program." She knows that students in public, charter, and private schools all benefit equally from this legislation, and I welcome her support.

Mr. Speaker, I now yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK).

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding. I want to thank the Rules Committee for reporting H.R. 692 to the floor.

This Nation now staggers under more than \$18 trillion of debt, nearly a \$7.5 trillion run up by this administration alone. The interest on that debt is one of the fastest growing components of the Federal budget. If there is ever any doubt over the security and reliability of the debt owed by this government, the interest rates that lenders charge us would quickly rise and overwhelm us.

Now, the Democrats say, well, just raise the debt limit, and, of course, we realize in this era of chronic deficit spending—establishing new records under this administration—that we have to do so. Congress alone has the power to incur debt, and the debt limit is the method by which we discharge our responsibility; but when we do so, it is also Congress' responsibility to review and revise the policies that are driving that debt.

The fundamental problem under both Democratic and Republican Congresses is that this process is fraught with controversy. The bigger the debt, the bigger the controversy; and the bigger the controversy, the more likely that credit markets are to demand higher interest payments to meet their greater risk. Given the size of our debt, that could produce an interest tidal wave that could sink our budget and our Nation along with it.

The Default Prevention Act simply provides that, if the debt limit is reached, the Treasury Secretary may continue to borrow above that limit for the sole purpose of paying principal and interest that is due. It is an absolute guarantee that the debt of the United States will be honored.

Most States have various laws to guarantee payment of their debts. In fact, a few years ago, Ben Bernanke praised these State provisions for maintaining confidence in their bonds. It amazes me that we can't all agree on this simple principle: that we should guarantee the loans made to the Federal Government. That is all this bill does.

Yet we have heard opposition from the other side, and they basically make two charges. One is that this pays foreign governments first while shorting our troops. We just heard that from the gentleman from Florida. Well, what xenophobic nonsense. The fact is most of our debt is held by Americans—often, in pension funds—so it protects Americans far more than foreign governments.

But they miss the main point. It is the Nation's credit that makes it possible to meet all of our other obligations. When you are living off your credit card, as our Nation is at the moment, you had better make your minimum payment first or you won't be able to pay all of your other bills.

In the veto threat, the President leveled the other charges we heard from the gentleman from Florida, that it is just an excuse for not paying our other bills. Well, do they actually believe that these other States that have guaranteed their sovereign debts for generations have ever used these guarantees as an excuse not to pay their other bills? On the contrary, by providing clear and unambiguous mandates to protect their credit first, they actually support and maintain their ability to pay for all of their other obligations.

So let me be crystal clear: delaying payment on any of our obligations would be unprecedented and dangerous. There is one thing, though, that could do even more damage than delaying payment on our other bills, and that is the mere threat of a default on our sovereign debt. This measure takes that threat off the table, and it ensures credit markets that their investments in the United States are as certain as anything can be in life.

A few years ago, Senator Barack Obama vigorously and forcefully opposed a debt limit sought by the Bush administration. He said it was a failure of leadership. Well, I have never equated Senator Obama's opposition to the debt limit increase as anything other than a principled and well-placed concern over the proper management of our finances. It is sad that he cannot give the opposition the same courtesy.

Mr. Speaker, we may disagree over the appropriate role of Congress in adjusting the debt limit, but at least can't we all agree that during these disputes the sovereign debt of the United States is never in doubt? That is all that this bill says; that is all that this bill does. Mr. Speaker, let's pass this rule and proceed with consideration of the bill.

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

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from California referred to my comments as "xenophobic nonsense." I firmly disagree. It kind of gives xenophobia a new meaning. I merely pointed out that a large portion of our debt is held by other countries and that the legislation that he supports proposes to pay them before 80 million obligations that the Treasury Department has.

Mr. Speaker, Congress has only 8 legislative days left to protect the full faith and credit of the United States. If we defeat the previous question, I am going to offer an amendment to the rule and bring up legislation that would allow—and I would ask the gentleman from California if he would support this—a clean extension of the debt ceiling.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of the 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. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH) to discuss our proposal. My friend from Vermont is a distinguished gentleman and a former Member of the Rules Committee.

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, let's be clear. Raising the debt ceiling has absolutely nothing to do at all with increasing government spending. It only has to do with whether America will pay its bills for obligations already incurred.

Many of those obligations, by the way, are for expenditures that I vigorously opposed: trillions of dollars on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, unpaid for, and trillions of dollars in tax cuts for the very wealthy that are unpaid for.

But the United States of America, in good times and bad, through Republican Presidents and Democratic Presidents, in Republican-led and Democratic-led Congresses, has always paid its bills—always. We have done it for two reasons.

First, it is the right thing to do. A promise made is a promise kept. An obligation incurred is an obligation honored. Mr. Speaker, a confident nation keeps its word. A confident nation pays its bills, not some of them. It pays all of them.

Second, running from our creditors, stiffing them, picking and choosing whom to pay among them is as fiscally reckless as it is dishonorable. This new theory that America can actually consider it feasible as an option to default is extremely dangerous and very costly.

Mr. Speaker, in 2011, when this tactic was first seriously considered and we came on the brink of default, it cost U.S. taxpayers \$19 billion in unnecessary interest charges. That is \$19 billion that could have been used to fix our highways or invest in scientific research, or it is \$19 billion that your side might have preferred for tax cuts, or we could have split it. But that would have been half for tax cuts and half for investment. Yet we squandered that at the expense of the American taxpayer.

The use of the debt ceiling as a tactic to get your way on another issue is

playing financial Russian roulette with America's credibility, with the well-being of the American taxpayer and the full faith and credit of the United States of America to meet all its obligations. We have maintained that bond with ourselves and our creditors for over 200 years, and this bill asks us to abandon it now.

How can it be that the party of Ronald Reagan can propose this legislation? It was Ronald Reagan who said that denigration of the full faith and credit of the United States would have substantial effects on the domestic financial markets and the value of the dollar. He is right.

How can it be the party of PAUL RYAN? The chair of our Ways and Means Committee said that just refusing to vote for the debt ceiling, I don't think that is a strategy.

Will the debt ceiling be raised? Does it have to be raised? Yes. Reagan was right then, and PAUL RYAN is right now.

Mr. Speaker, I want to point out something that the proponents of this legislation would prefer to keep in the dark. The entire reason the debt ceiling must be raised now is to accommodate the budget that they passed over my strong objection on March 25, 2015. The Price budget, supported by 228 Republicans and opposed by 182 Democrats, projected an increase of our debt limit of nearly \$2 trillion. Today that bill has become due, and the folks who supported that budget are running for the hills on acting on the debt ceiling that is required to accommodate the budget that they passed.

Mr. Speaker, this House now, as a result of the will of the American people, is led by a Republican majority. It is a majority that we in the minority have an obligation to do our best to work with. However, it is a majority that is raising questions that have never been raised before.

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

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, they are using debt default and government shutdown as a tactic to get their way on an issue of concern to some of them. I admire Speaker BOEHNER that he put the country first and he put the House first in not letting this government be shut down over a real dispute on Planned Parenthood funding. But we have got to get past this, and the Republican majority has to make a decision whether it is going to govern or it is going to empower those who believe that default and shutdown are legitimate tactics to resolve legitimate debates that we have among us.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot now—we cannot ever—default on our obligations and our commitment to the American taxpayer to be fiscally responsible by paying our bills.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS).

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 10, but I wanted to clarify some of the debate that has been going on with my friend opposite, the gentleman from Florida.

Many of the concerns that he has raised have been addressed in our Oversight and Government Reform Committee. Specifically, I put forth an amendment that required strong evaluations that would evaluate the scholarship program. Additionally, the committee passed an amendment to ensure not only strong accreditation standards as well, but equally important is the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia. I have made a personal commitment to her to work on making sure that we have proper accountability with regard to this scholarship program. None of us wants to be loose with the American taxpayer dollars.

I want to also stress that this program does not decrease funding for D.C. public schools or charter schools. Indeed it is an addition to that appropriation. But it really comes down this, Mr. Speaker: it is the students that have benefited from this particular program.

I was part of a hearing that was held at Archbishop Carroll High School. When you look into the faces of those students that were given an opportunity with a scholarship to not have to go to the school because of where they live but they got a scholarship to be able to go to a private school, you look into their faces and you hear the stories of just how it has affected their families and given them hope, Mr. Speaker, it is one of those things that I think that we have to find a bipartisan solution to identify the problem areas, perhaps, that need to be addressed, but to also come alongside those parents, both fathers and mothers, who were there in the hearing who were applauding the successes of their children.

□ 1315

It is with great pride that I strongly support H.R. 10. I encourage my colleagues opposite to do the same. I am committed to working through some of those issues that they have addressed.

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP).

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

I am pleased to support this rule because of the underlying bill that is there.

Normally, the 10th Amendment says that education is delegated to the States. So I would be opposing anything this body does on education, except the Constitution also grants Congress the jurisdiction over the District of Columbia.

When there is a program that is a success—and this has been a success—a study by the Department of Education concluded that this D.C. Opportunity

Scholarship significantly improves students' chances of graduating from high school.

I spent 28 years as a high school teacher. In that time, I saw all sorts of wonder programs being mandated from the Federal level and the State level. The most common expression of all teachers is "This too shall pass."

But the one thing that was never mandated to us was the concept of freedom, allowing teachers to teach their specialties, allowing parents the ability of having a choice on where they sent their kids. Choice is a powerful tool.

When I was in the State legislature, I had a bill that dealt with compulsory attendance. I had a PTA mother that came up to me once and said, "I hate you and I hate your bill because, when my 17-year-old doesn't want to go to school in the morning, I want to be able to look at him and say, 'You have to go to school. It is the law.'" And I thought: Thanks a lot. That is the exact attitude I want to have from a high school junior in my class when he shows up.

You see, when kids are forced to be where they choose not to be, they are unsatisfied jerks. But kids, knowing they had a choice, they would now attend in a positive attitude, even if it was the same school.

That is what this bill tries to do. We trust choice in all sorts of behaviors. We give people choices in food, in our homes, in our energy, and all the necessities of life. So why do we limit freedom and choice in something as important as education?

Ronald Reagan once said: "Our leaders must remember that education doesn't begin with some isolated bureaucrat in Washington. It doesn't even begin with State or local officials. Education begins in the home, where it's a parental right and responsibility. Both our public and our private schools exist to aid our families in the instruction of our children, and it's time some people back in Washington stopped acting as if family wishes were only getting in the way."

I applaud Speaker BOEHNER for this bill. Speaker BOEHNER, when it comes to kids, clearly gets it, and he has been an advocate on their behalf. Kids belong to the parents, not to an educator, not to a legislator, not to a special interest group.

It is time we start trusting parents and individuals, which is why I urge support of this rule that will bring this bill, a good bill, to the floor for us to support as well.

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN).

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

I rise in support of the rule and urge specific passage of H.R. 10, the Scholar-

ships for Opportunity and Results Reauthorization Act.

Over 10 years ago Congress took action to give the children of the District a hand-up through access to a quality education by creating the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship program. I was heavily involved at that time, as a Member of the House Appropriations Committee that oversaw the District's budget, and our committee provided the initial funds.

The program was the first and only initiative in America where the Federal Government provides low-income families with funds to send their children where they will have a chance to thrive—private or parochial schools—because, in some cases, some D.C. schools were not providing that opportunity. That is not all schools, but some schools.

We all know the story of some District of Columbia public schools—low graduation rates, high dropout rates, low math and reading scores—that need to do better. We can all agree that all children in the District deserve a first-class education and the lifelong benefits that come from that education, whether it be public, private, parochial, or charter.

The bill before us today will reauthorize the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship program for 5 years. By the way, the program is a huge success. Last year over 3,600 students submitted applications and the program enrolled nearly 1,500 students.

Through these scholarships, District children have flourished. In 2014, 88 percent of high school graduates who were enrolled in the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship program enrolled in 2- or 4-year colleges, a very high mark.

Mr. Speaker, Congress should listen to the voices of parents, as we did 10 years ago, who want their children to succeed, and we should continue to work to ensure that the program not only survives, but that it grows.

I commend Speaker BOEHNER for all his years of leadership on behalf of the children of Washington not only in terms of his support for this legislation, but many things he does as a private citizen.

I urge my colleagues to join in support of the rule and this legislation.

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

We should be working together to ensure that all children have the opportunity to receive a quality education and taking action to guarantee that the United States pays all of its bills on time and in full. Neither of these bills accomplish those vitally necessary goals for this great country.

I urge my colleagues to vote "no" and defeat the previous question and vote "no" on the rule.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

These are crucial bills. They make significant progress on two important issues: addressing our fiscal crisis in a

responsible manner and the education of our next generation.

We cannot squander the incredible wealth this country has built over decades of hard work by the American people. The full faith and credit of the United States is not ours here, as Members of Congress. It is theirs, the American people. We are the reserve currency because individuals across the world look to us for prudent fiscal choices and rock-steady resolve in our principles and integrity.

There are few debates more contentious in this body than those over spending levels or the leverage points that our system provides to exert control over those levels.

The Default Prevention Act would enable us to continue to fight tooth and nail over the right direction for our country's finances while giving Americans and financial markets certainty that they can remain confident in the Federal Government meeting its obligations.

We can and should stay up late at night and have passionate debates in this Chamber over how to address mandatory spending, but we shouldn't allow retired and disabled Americans to stay up late at night because they fear their Social Security checks won't arrive.

The Default Prevention Act is commonsense legislation to remove catastrophe as a possibility by enabling the Secretary of the Treasury to issue debt necessary to make principal and interest payments on the national debt and pay Social Security benefits in full. It is the right first step in beginning a conversation about how to constructively address our immense fiscal challenges.

If we don't address those challenges, we will be unable to provide for other important programs, such as the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Reauthorization Act, or SOAR Reauthorization Act, which this resolution provides for consideration of as well.

As any parent knows, the education of our children is one of our highest priorities. For far too long children in Washington, D.C., have not received the education they deserve, but have suffered from unacceptable achievement levels in graduation rates.

The SOAR Reauthorization Act continues a successful three-sector approach to improving the lives and educational outcomes of low-income students in the District. It provides \$60 million in funding for students, split equally among D.C. public schools, charter schools, and scholarships for students to attend private schools that would otherwise be out of reach.

Students receiving private school education have demonstrated higher test scores and significantly higher graduation rates, showcasing the importance of continuing students access to these institutions.

These programs are an important example of the need for innovation and experimentation in how to best reform

our educational system to benefit students, not entrenched interests.

It has been an honor for me to personally witness some of the students who have benefited from the programs included in the SOAR Reauthorization Act. After seeing the hope for the future these students have in their eyes, I cannot fathom preventing other students from receiving their own second chances.

Mr. Speaker, I believe both of these underlying bills are positive steps forward on issues of great import to our Nation, and I commend them and this rule providing for their consideration to all of my colleagues for their support.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in opposition to the Rule and the underlying bill H.R. 10, the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Reauthorization Act.

H.R. 10 would reauthorize the District of Columbia private school voucher program, the Opportunity Scholarship Program (OSP), for five years through 2021.

In 2004, Congress established OSP, the first and only federally created or funded elementary and secondary private school voucher program in the United States.

In 2011, Congress reauthorized OSP through fiscal year 2016 in the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Act (SOAR Act).

Under the SOAR Act, DC households with incomes that do not exceed 185 percent of the poverty line may receive an annual maximum voucher payment per student of \$8,000 for grades K–8 and \$12,000 for grades 9–12.

In addition, H.R. 10 makes a significant change to the evaluation of OSP's effectiveness.

The bill prohibits a control study group in making evaluations of the OSP and requires a less rigorous "quasi-experimental research design" than under the SOAR Act.

Since 2004, almost \$190 million has been spent on DC voucher schools. That is money that could have been spent on District public schools, which serve all students.

Instead of working on longer term solutions, such as reauthorizing ESEA, or working on job creation, the Majority is pushing its own education priorities on a local jurisdiction through this misguided legislation.

This bill pursues the wrong course by doing the following:

The voucher program is the latest Republican attack on the District of Columbia's right to self-government.

The local District government did not request this reauthorization nor did its only member of Congress, Del. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON.

If the District wants to establish a voucher program, it has the authority to do so.

Republicans have already tried to overturn DC's gun, marijuana, abortion, needle exchange, and non-discrimination laws.

They have also threatened DC's mayor with jail time over the city's marijuana law. Now they want to write education law in DC.

The bill would authorize the use of federal funds to pay for private school tuition in the District of Columbia, despite overwhelming evidence that the program, first authorized in 2004, has failed to improve student academic achievement, as measured by math and reading scores—including among the students the

program was designed to most benefit, those from low-performing public schools.

Despite having numerous states vote down efforts to implement private school voucher programs; Republicans continue to use the District of Columbia as a testing ground for their own agenda.

The bill does not recognize that 44 percent of DC public school students attend charter schools, and 75 percent of DC public school students attend out-of-boundary public schools.

Unlike private schools, traditional public and charter schools are publicly accountable and subject to all civil rights laws.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in voting against this rule and the underlying bill.

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

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 480 OFFERED BY
MR. HASTINGS OF FLORIDA

At the end of the resolution, add the following new sections:

SEC. 3. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3737) to responsibly pay our Nation's bills on time by temporarily extending the public debt limit, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 4. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 3737.

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 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.

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

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1937, NATIONAL STRATEGIC AND CRITICAL MINERALS PRODUCTION ACT OF 2015

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 481 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 481

Resolved, That at any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1937) to require the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to more efficiently develop domestic sources of the minerals and mineral materials of strategic and critical importance to United States economic and national security and manufacturing competitiveness. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. No amendment to the bill shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

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

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the good gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS), 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. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, 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 Washington?

There was no objection.

□ 1330

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, just yesterday, the Rules Committee met and reported a rule for House Resolution 481, providing for the consideration of an important piece of legislation—H.R. 1937, the National Strategic and Critical Minerals Production Act of 2015.

This rule provides for the consideration of H.R. 1937 under a structured rule, with five amendments made in

order, four of which, I might point out, were offered by Democratic Members of this body. Therefore, this rule provides for a balanced, deliberative, and open debate if we focus our remarks on the merits of the National Strategic and Critical Minerals Production Act and don't go off on unnecessary tangents.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support both House Resolution 481 and the underlying bill, H.R. 1937. I would like to congratulate the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. AMODEI) for sponsoring this legislation, and I would also like to thank the gentleman from Utah, Chairman ROB BISHOP, for his leadership on this important issue.

Mr. Speaker, this rule will allow us to consider the National Strategic and Critical Minerals Production Act, an important bill that will streamline our country's mine permitting processes to remove unnecessary and burdensome bureaucratic hurdles, which can delay some mining activities and projects by up to a decade—10 years—which is an outrageous amount of time that is indicative of the problem we seek to address here today.

The permitting system the Federal Government currently uses to provide for the extraction of rare earth minerals in the U.S. is outdated, unproductive, and, more often than not, hinders our ability to extract these critical resources. This red tape has a devastating impact on communities across the country and in the West, particularly, that rely on the ability to obtain and develop these minerals for economic growth and our Nation's security.

Our country is blessed with a myriad of rare earth minerals that are increasingly used to manufacture high-tech equipment as well as many other everyday applications and products. Many countries around the world are already working to improve their infrastructure, providing the United States with an exceptional opportunity to play a major role in the growing minerals marketplace by supplying foreign countries and businesses, as well as domestic companies, with the resources necessary to remain competitive in the international economy. However, a lack of communication between local, State, and Federal permitting agencies exists, and it creates a bureaucratic backlog of applications that delays mining activity by approximately, like I said, 7 to 10 years, which, if not addressed, will impede the ability of U.S. mineral companies to increase their share of the global marketplace.

Mr. Speaker, due to onerous government red tape, the frivolous lawsuits that result, and a burdensome permitting process, good-paying jobs in the United States mining industry have moved overseas and have put domestic manufacturing jobs at the mercy of our foreign competitors. H.R. 1937 would fix