

Mr. FERGUSON. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

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

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from New York (Mr. BRINDISI) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. BRINDISI led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

DEMOCRACY REFORM

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I started in this business as a college student. Inspired by what was happening with the civil rights movement, I worked on the campaign to lower the voting age to 18 in my home State of Oregon and on the national campaign.

After that, I had the privilege to work on a series of nonpartisan efforts to expand the franchise, to improve voting rights, to streamline access—bipartisan, not particularly controversial.

It has been one of the biggest disappointments of my life to find that the issues that I worked on as a college student continue to vex us. But I am pleased today that we are in the process of advancing H.R. 1, the most significant democratic reform package in a generation.

H.R. 1 will make it easier to vote, regardless of income, ability, geography, or race. It fights to end the dominance of big money in our politics and enacts tougher ethics standards to ensure public officials actually work for the public.

I am particularly proud of three provisions that I helped incorporate into the bill from our Oregon experience.

Oregon is a pioneer of vote by mail, and bringing that model nationwide paves the way for all States to be able to offer vote by mail and early voting that is secure and verifiable. It even saves money for State and local governments.

We have a provision that has automatic voter registration for individuals interacting with State agencies. They are automatically registered to vote.

And it mandates that paper ballots ensure election integrity and the ability to audit.

I look forward to our moving forward, Mr. Speaker, to be able to deal

with this significant conversation to make sure that we meet our responsibility for the democratic process to function.

HERITAGE MISSION FOR SOUTHEASTERN KANSAS

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

Mr. WATKINS. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to encourage the President to sign into law S. 47, the bipartisan lands package, which includes my legislation protecting the Fort Scott National Historic Site in Kansas.

My first piece of legislation, the Fort Scott National Historic Site Boundary Modification Act preserves the legacy of the fort's role in the American frontier. This legislation solidifies the community's contribution to supporting the Union during the Civil War.

Known locally as Lunette Blair, this antique structure is the sole remaining blockhouse that helped repel the Confederate invasion into eastern Kansas. It is only through the stewardship of the Fort Scott community that this blockhouse still stands.

I thank my colleagues in the Kansas delegation for joining me in this heritage mission for southeast Kansas.

BETTER OVERSIGHT OF CABLE AND INTERNET PROVIDERS

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

Mr. BRINDISI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to the need for better oversight of cable and internet providers.

Between price increases, slow internet speeds, and baffling fees, customers in all regions of the country, and in my district in New York State, are overcharged by their cable company and don't always get what they have paid for.

For customers on fixed incomes, a sudden jump in the cable bill can put a painful squeeze on other parts of the family budget. Customers in rural areas often find their broadband speeds are not nearly as fast as advertised, if they are lucky enough to have broadband at all. That is why I am introducing the Transparency for Cable Consumers Act.

Under this bill, if a cable or internet company is fined by the State public service commission, the company would be required to report to the FCC what they are charging customers and what they are delivering in return.

By bringing more transparency into the market, we can help increase competition and improve services for consumers across the country.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following commu-

nication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 5, 2019.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM 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 March 5, 2019, at 9:31 a.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 252.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

CHERYL L. JOHNSON.

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO VENEZUELA—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 116-19)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days before the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13692 of March 8, 2015, with respect to the situation in Venezuela, is to continue in effect beyond March 8, 2019.

The situation in Venezuela continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13692 with respect to the situation in Venezuela.

DONALD J. TRUMP.
THE WHITE HOUSE, March 5, 2019.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 4 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 9 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1600

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. RICHMOND) at 4 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or votes objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

STREAMLINING ENERGY EFFICIENCY FOR SCHOOLS ACT OF 2019

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 762) to amend the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to provide for the dissemination of information regarding available Federal programs relating to energy efficiency projects for schools, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 762

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Streamlining Energy Efficiency for Schools Act of 2019”.

SEC. 2. COORDINATION OF ENERGY RETROFITTING ASSISTANCE FOR SCHOOLS.

Section 392 of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6371a) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(e) COORDINATION OF ENERGY RETROFITTING ASSISTANCE FOR SCHOOLS.—

“(1) DEFINITION OF SCHOOL.—Notwithstanding section 391(6), for the purposes of this subsection, the term ‘school’ means—

“(A) an elementary school or secondary school (as defined in section 9101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801));

“(B) an institution of higher education (as defined in section 102(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002(a)));

“(C) a school of the defense dependents’ education system under the Defense Dependents’ Education Act of 1978 (20 U.S.C. 921 et seq.) or established under section 2164 of title 10, United States Code;

“(D) a school operated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs;

“(E) a tribally controlled school (as defined in section 5212 of the Tribally Controlled Schools Act of 1988 (25 U.S.C. 2511)); and

“(F) a Tribal College or University (as defined in section 316(b) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1059c(b))).

“(2) ESTABLISHMENT OF CLEARINGHOUSE.—The Secretary, acting through the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, shall establish a clearinghouse to disseminate information regarding available Federal programs and financing mechanisms that may be used to help initiate, develop, and finance energy efficiency, distributed generation, and energy retrofitting projects for schools.

“(3) REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out paragraph (2), the Secretary shall—

“(A) consult with appropriate Federal agencies to develop a list of Federal programs and financing mechanisms that are, or may be, used for the purposes described in paragraph (2); and

“(B) coordinate with appropriate Federal agencies to develop a collaborative edu-

cation and outreach effort to streamline communications and promote available Federal programs and financing mechanisms described in subparagraph (A), which may include the development and maintenance of a single online resource that includes contact information for relevant technical assistance in the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy that States, local education agencies, and schools may use to effectively access and use such Federal programs and financing mechanisms.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 762.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to voice my strong support for H.R. 762 introduced by my good friend and colleague from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARTWRIGHT).

This legislation will provide a coordinating structure for our Nation’s schools to help them better navigate available Federal programs and financing options.

Across our great country, K–12 school districts spend literally billions of dollars on their energy bills each year, while an estimated 14 million American children attend deteriorating public schools. By upgrading these systems, we can increase efficiency and focus school funding to achieve better educational outcomes.

We have a huge opportunity this Congress to make major investments in our Nation’s infrastructure—including our most essential institutions, such as schools.

I believe efficiency has to be our fuel of first choice. We can save local taxpayers money while upgrading and modernizing these facilities.

This legislation has passed the House in each of the last two Congresses with broad bipartisan support, and I am proud to be an original cosponsor of this year’s iteration.

I commend Representative CARTWRIGHT and the bill’s bipartisan cosponsors for their efforts, and I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for the bill.

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

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I want to consume.

Mr. Speaker, this bill, H.R. 762, was introduced by Representative CARTWRIGHT on January 24. I would note that it is identical to bills that passed the House in prior Congresses by a voice vote, unanimous and bipartisan.

This legislation would require that the Secretary of Energy establish a clearinghouse to share information regarding available Federal programs to help schools initiate, develop, and finance energy efficiency, distributed generation, and energy retrofitting projects. These types of energy upgrades will help schools stretch their budgets and reduce their impact on the environment at the same time.

This is a good, bipartisan bill. It is going to help schools take advantage of existing programs to cut down on their energy use. As I have said before, we should continue to encourage these innovations in energy efficiencies to help address climate change, and this bill is a good step in the right direction.

Mr. Speaker, when I was a student, I never had a legislator come visit my class. As part of my district operation, I visit a school literally every week.

So we all have districts that look pretty much the same. I have probably 100-some school districts, close to 500, 600 school buildings for sure, and as I have visited these classrooms in the years that I have served, every school is different. Many of these schools are 40, 50, 60 years old.

This legislation is needed. We want to make sure that the money for education not only goes to help our students move forward, but, in fact, that they are in a safe environment. Energy conservation is something that is needed at almost every one of our schools.

This is a good piece of legislation. I hope that we can pass it again today by a strong, bipartisan—perhaps, unanimous—vote, and I urge that the Senate take it up as quickly as they can.

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

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARTWRIGHT). Representative CARTWRIGHT is from Pennsylvania’s Eighth Congressional District.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the leadership for bringing this bill up under suspension today, and to Representative TONKO for yielding time, also, to Republican Leader UPTON for his kind words.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to thank the entire Energy and Commerce Committee for their long-term support for this bill. And I say “long-term” because this bill has passed the House under suspension under each of the past three Congresses.

Unfortunately, our friends in the Senate—and I use that word loosely—have yet to bring it to the floor. I am glad the House is considering this bill early in the session with plenty of time for the Senate to act.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Congressman WELCH of Vermont, particularly, for his leadership on this bill. It is no secret that he is one of the great energy efficiency gurus in the House, and it has been a pleasure for me to work with him.

Mr. Speaker, across the country, school districts spend billions of dollars on their energy every year. These