

You were right. You had a right to do that.

But you want to deny us that right, like you want to deny us following your rules that you say are unfair.

Madam Speaker, I don't get it. We have done our work. We will continue to do our work. We will continue to do our work on both sides of the ledger, doing our constitutional duty and doing our legislative duty, which may be one and the same.

Mr. SCALISE. Madam Speaker, hopefully, we can get that 302(b) number. Hopefully, Madam Speaker, if we want to talk about some of these bills, I would love if the majority leader would bring the package of bills that came out of committee unanimously, where every Republican and Democrat came together, not with poison pills, but to show that we can actually govern in a way that a bill can get signed into law, not party-line games.

We all know the issues with the Senate. We can both agree on the differences we have with how the Senate operates, where they require 60 votes, which means, in order to do anything, both sides—not one side, but both sides—have to come together.

NDAA, first time in over 40 years where an NDAA bill came out that sets the rules for our Department of Defense funding in a partisan way, it should have never been that way. It has never happened that way before.

Hopefully, we can find a way to come together and address some of these real problems and have real fairness.

Mr. HOYER. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SCALISE. I yield to the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, it is a two-House legislature. One is led by Republicans; one is led by Democrats.

The reason we don't have 302(b) is because the Senate couldn't agree with itself on 302(b)s.

I talked to MITCH MCCONNELL in January of this year. MITCH MCCONNELL comes out of the Appropriations Committee; I come out of the Appropriations Committee. Both of us said that we need to get 302(a)s, which is the big number. You then subdivide it into 12 different committees. He agreed that we ought to do that, but he said that we have to have the President agree.

Very frankly, the Acting Chief of Staff, who served in this body, did not want to do that. The leadership of the Republicans had as much trouble with him as we had with him. Just ask Mr. Boehner and Mr. Ryan. He didn't want to have a deal. He wanted a CR. Actually, he wanted less than a CR because he wanted to go back to the sequester numbers.

That is why we don't have a 302(b), because neither the White House, Madam Speaker, nor the Acting Chief of Staff would agree.

Mr. MCCONNELL said: I am not going to do anything the President of the United States won't do.

Unlike being the independent, Article I body that we ought to be, acting independently and then sending it down to the President, and he makes a decision as to whether he wants to sign it or not, we are simply saying, in the United States Senate: If he won't agree with it, we won't put it on the floor. He doesn't have to veto it.

The public has to be so extraordinarily confused and angry about our unwillingness and inability to get our work done.

Madam Speaker, we have done our work. The Senate hasn't sent us anything. It is not like they have sent us something that we have rejected in a partisan way. They haven't sent us anything. They are too busy appointing judges that they think will reflect their ideological point of view.

So I am frustrated, along with the citizens of this country.

Everybody here who wants to do a 1-minute or a 5-minute is really frustrated. I get that. I am hopeful we can end this because we are not going anywhere.

But we are going to continue to do our job. We are going to continue to pass legislation that we think is for the people, to make their lives better, to focus on them, not us. We are going to focus on the Constitution and the laws of this country, to make sure that they are faithfully executed and carried out.

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

Maybe we would both agree that it might be helpful if the four leaders—the Speaker, the minority leader, the Senate majority leader, and Senate minority leader—got in a room and agreed not to leave until they come up with an agreement so we can actually do our business and not wait that 60 days.

The Secretary of Defense has made clear how damaging it is to our defense if we don't have a DOD appropriations bill passed and signed into law by the time this funding expires, how it hurts our men and women in uniform.

Hopefully, they would all agree to go and have that conversation and, ultimately, get that resolved. Then, we can take care of more of the people's work.

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

ADJOURNMENT FROM FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2019, TO MONDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2019

Mr. HOYER. Madam 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. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

CALLING ON VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT TO RELEASE MICHAEL NGUYEN

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

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Madam Speaker, today, I am here again, once more, to speak about an American citizen, Michael Nguyen, who is currently in prison in Vietnam on vague allegations and charges.

I thank my colleague, Representative KATIE PORTER, for her tireless advocacy on this matter, and the men and women at the State Department, including Ambassador Dan Kritenbrink, for their work and continued support.

It has been over a year since Michael was arbitrarily detained, hastily tried, and harshly imprisoned on claims that he plotted to overthrow the Government of Vietnam, which no one—and I repeat, no one—has seen any evidence of.

Earlier this year, Michael was convicted, along with two Vietnamese men, after a half-day trial. Michael was sentenced to 12 years in prison, which is longer than the two Vietnamese men received for the same charges.

Michael's family has struggled emotionally and financially with his imprisonment. His wife and four daughters only want him to come home.

He is currently appealing the length of his sentence.

As a co-chair of the Congressional Caucus on Vietnam, I call upon the Vietnamese Government to do the right thing: quickly close this case and return Michael back to the United States and to his family.

□ 1230

RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAMS IN OUR NATION

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

Mr. COMER. Madam Speaker, this week is National School Lunch Week. I rise today to recognize the importance of school lunch programs in our Nation, which provide low-cost or free lunches to more than 29 million children in nearly 100,000 public and residential child care institutions across the country. I have great appreciation for all the hard work the school nutrition service industry provides to ensure our children are fed nutritious meals.

As the former commissioner of agriculture in Kentucky, I understand the importance of child nutrition programs. Quality food service at school should be the least of a child's worries as they are navigating the school environment and engaging in new learning opportunities. The health and well-being of our Nation's children is something all congressional Members can