

Madam Speaker, very briefly, the last three speakers, including my good friend from Oklahoma, have mentioned the ongoing impeachment inquiry here in the House of Representatives, and they speak of it as being a lack of transparency. It is almost as if the Republicans are not in the hearings that are going on in this inquiry.

In my understanding, although I am not a member of either of the committees of jurisdiction, I have spoken with and have heard publicly the person who is the responsible person for ongoing matters at this time say that the other side is there. Their lawyers are asking questions. Members, if they choose, are asking questions.

So I don't understand what they are talking about about a lack of transparency, particularly when the previous impeachments that were done were done by special prosecutors. This is a solemn process.

And while I agree with my colleagues about the National Defense Authorization measure, the simple fact of the matter is that we also have a constitutional responsibility to ensure that the executive branch of this government functions in an appropriate manner and does not do as they are doing: failing to respond to the oversight responsibilities of the Article I House of Representatives.

I rather suspect that that is just talk when they say that there is no transparency. I suggest to them to stick around. They are going to see some transparency real soon.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I want to begin by thanking my very good friend from Florida for what we always get, which is always a thoughtful debate, always professional, always civil. And even when we disagree, I always enjoy the exchange, so I thank my friend for that.

I will disagree vehemently, though, that the process in terms of impeachment that we are going through right now is remotely transparent. The American people can't get in there. And, frankly, I can tell you, Members, under the rules of the Intelligence Committee, all of us, as long as it is not classified, are supposed to be able to get transcripts. We haven't been able to get those things. So we will watch as this unfolds.

But my friends would have been far better to do what has been done in previous impeachments; that is, to hold a formal vote, to set up a process.

I do remind my friend, when we went through this during the Clinton years, the President, President Clinton, had the right to have counsel there, the right to cross-examine witnesses, the right to subpoena witnesses. Our friends who were then in the minority had the right to subpoena witnesses.

None of that exists now. There is no process. It is very one-sided, very opaque, very obscure, and extremely partisan.

But back to the legislation at hand.

The tragedy here is that we could work together on a variety of things that we both agree would make good law. My good friend, the ranking—excuse me—the chairwoman on the House Administration Committee, Ms. LOFGREN, mentioned that last night.

There are actually elements in this bill which, I agree with my friend, are things we could work on together. There are other things that, whether we are right or wrong, my friend knows we will disagree with and we will not accept and, frankly, the United States Senate will not accept and the President will not accept.

So it is a classic legislative dilemma: What do you want to do? Do you want to make a point or do you want to make law?

If you want to make law, you get to the things that you agree on and that can pass the other Chamber and be signed by the President. So far in this area of election security, I think my friends have been more interested in making a point than actually in making law.

So I urge opposition to the rule on H.R. 4617 because it is deeply flawed and a partisan bill that will not solve the underlying problems. It will not prevent foreign interference in our elections. It will only make it harder for Americans to participate in their own democracy.

It applies inappropriate regulatory schemes to online advertisement. It applies overly inclusive definitions that could make almost any advertisement a political advertisement and expands the power of the Attorney General at the expense of the States.

My friends seemed, over and over, to want to federalize State elections. We don't want to do that. That is a big mistake. One of the best securities we have is that we have multiple jurisdictions, and the people close to the people make the laws under which our elections occur.

We can work together in a bipartisan manner and find real solutions to real problems, and I hope and I believe some day we will, Madam Speaker. But in the interim, I urge the House to reject both this rule and this bill so that we can actually advance, together, on something that can pass and become law.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on the previous question, "no" on the rule, and "no" on the underlying legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I do agree with my good friend from Oklahoma that our exchanges are civil; and although we have respectable disagreement, the simple fact of the matter is that each of us discharges our responsibilities in a responsible way.

Madam Speaker, after exiting the Constitutional Convention in 1787, Ben-

jamin Franklin, when approached, was asked what form of government had been agreed upon; his response: "A Republic, if you can keep it."

We come here today to keep it, to not only keep it, but make more perfect that Union which we have all taken an oath to protect, not just for us and our children, but for generations unborn, so that they may know and benefit from the greatest experiment ever known to humankind, the democratic Republic we call the United States of America.

To do this, to protect our democracy from enemies foreign and domestic, we must put country over party. Indeed, there have been more than a few times in our history when it was imperative that the partisan give way to the patriotic. This is undoubtedly one of those times and one of those paramount issues.

Madam Speaker, I urge a "yes" vote on the rule and a "yes" vote on the previous question.

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

#### AMENDMENT TO HOUSE RESOLUTION 650

At the end of the resolution, add the following:

SEC. 2. Upon adoption of this resolution, the Committees on the Judiciary, Ways and Means, Financial Services, Oversight and Reform, and Foreign Affairs and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence shall suspend pursuing matters referred to by the Speaker in her announcement of September 24, 2019, until such time as the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020 and the Department of Defense Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2020 are signed into law.

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. SCHRIER). 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.

#### DEBBIE SMITH REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2019

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the