The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. OGLES).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 8 OFFERED BY MR. OGLES

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 8 printed in House Report 118–7.

Mr. OGLES. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 6, line 9, strike ''$10,000'' and insert ''$50,000''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 199, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. OGLES) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

Mr. OGLES. Mr. Chairman, again, accountability matters. If you are paid from an appropriation for the White House office or appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, you need to be held to a standard of utmost impartiality.

These folks are paid generous salaries and have large platforms as Cabinet Secretaries or senior White House aides. The monetary penalty should reflect their increased responsibility compared to rank-and-file employees.

The American people have had enough of the swamp, and its efforts to infuse authoritarianism into the fabric of American society.

This amendment, which raises the penalty from $10,000 to $50,000 for senior officials who abuse their office to violate Americans' constitutional rights deserve a costly penalty.

I urge adoption of this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chair, the problem with these civil penalties is not that it is going to bankrupt any government officials, but it has a tremendous chilling effect on anyone trying to do their job, on any Federal law enforcement or intelligence community official trying to protect our country, trying to enforce our laws, trying to keep Americans safe, trying to keep our democracy safe because what these penalties will do is create an amorphous barrier to this amorphous law where no one has any idea whether what they are doing is lawful or unlawful because who is to define lawful speech?

Well, traditionally, it is a court, and it is government officials who have to make that initial call, that initial discretionary decision whether or not speech is lawful. In what world, if they are risking a $50,000 fine, are they ever going to take a risk to actually try to do something that might be on the line?

What these penalties will ultimately do is encourage good, upstanding, patriotic American Federal officials not to pursue their jobs, not to do their jobs in the way that we, the American people, need them to do their jobs, in a way that keeps us safe, in a way that enforces our criminal laws, in a way that protects us.

That will not happen because they are going to be fearful that they will lose a third to a quarter of their salary if they violate this H.R. 140.

Why on Earth would anyone take a chance if they are going to lose a third of their salary for an entire year on actually executing their job if they run the risk that someone somewhere is going to say that they stepped over the line and that in retrospect speech that they thought might be in furtherance of a crime wasn't actually in furtherance of a crime, and therefore, they lose their job and they lose a third of their salary?

□ 1715

It has an incredible trickle-down detrimental effect on any Federal official trying to do his or her job. Whether or not you realize that, that is how it is going to be perceived by every hard-working, patriotic American who has decided to go to work for their government.

You may think, my friends on the other side of the aisle, that the real problem here are Federal Government officials. You would be sorely mistaken, because I spent 10 years as a Federal career government official, working alongside every single law enforcement agent we had, and they are all trying to do their best.

What this law will do is it will prevent them from doing their best, and it will jeopardize every American in this country because of it.

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

Mr. OGLES. Mr. Chairman, the purpose of this amendment is to create greater accountability, responsibility, thoughtfulness in these Cabinet secretaries and senior officials so that it is not partisan politics that rules the day, but, rather, the American people—or the interests of the American people.

Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. COMER).

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the Ogles amendment.

The Protecting Speech from Government Interference Act introduces newly created civil fines for the most senior officials.

My colleague's amendment further strengthens this enforcement penalty for senior officials by increasing the civil monetary fines up to $50,000.

This $50,000 will serve as a deterrent to the administration's most senior officials—Senate-confirmed Presidential appointees and the White House staff—to prevent them from censoring the lawful speech of ordinary Americans.

It is especially important that our Nation's most senior leaders are held to a higher level of accountability given their higher level of influence.

I thank the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. OGLES) for proposing this amendment which preserves the carefully negotiated structure of the bill.

I ask my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on the amendment.

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. OGLES. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. OGLES).

The amendment was agreed to.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chair, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. ALFORD) having assumed the chair, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 140) to amend title 5, United States Code, to prohibit Federal employees from advocating for censorship of viewpoints in their official capacity, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess for a period of less than 15 minutes.

Accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 19 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1731

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MOOLENAAR) at 5 o'clock and 31 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

Adoption of H. Con. Res. 21; and

Motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 753.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the remaining electronic vote will be conducted as a 5-minute vote.

SYRIA WAR POWERS RESOLUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on adoption of the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 21) directing the President, pursuant to section 5(c) of the War Powers