

regard to who must pay for them. If H.R. 5 truly represents a progressive step toward the Federal Government setting priorities in a fiscally prudent manner, then the bill itself should not end up being an unfunded mandate on the American taxpayer.

As the Chairman is well aware, title III of this bill authorizes \$4.5 million for the Congressional Budget Office [CBO] to perform critical economic analysis of the impact that legislative proposals will have on State and local governments and the business community. Although a very worthwhile and necessary function, authorizing funding without offering specific offsets merely shifts responsibility to the appropriators, and with our budget already stretched to limits, questions of funding should no longer be left to chance. Once again, entrenched institutional ideals will postpone the hard decisions for a later date. It is this type of logic that has resulted in our national debt ballooning to \$4.5 trillion.

House rules preclude me from offering an offsetting amendment at this time. Therefore, I plan on proposing an amendment to the House legislative branch appropriations bill which will direct a reduction in the official mail or "franking" account of \$9 million. Under this amendment, Members of Congress would experience a further reduction in their free mail account to more than offset the costs authorized by this bill so that local and State governments and the private sector have all the pertinent economic information about the impact of proposed regulations and laws. If the 104th Congress really has the vision to deliver needed reforms in the way our Government does business, then actually providing relief from unfunded mandates as well as the Federal deficit is the very least we owe the American people.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Chairman, our States, counties, cities, and towns have all experienced the frustration of unfunded Federal mandates in one form or another. As the first mayor of Sanibel, FL, and later as chairman of the Lee County Commission, I became much too familiar with the pressures that such one-size-fits-all mandates put on local budgets. It has become a very bad habit for the Federal Government to tell their State and local counterparts what to do, often spelling out how to do it, and usually doing so without consideration of the costs involved or the unique characteristics that make our localities differ from one another. I am gratified that today we are moving to reverse that trend and establish safeguards against such irresponsible Federal dictates in the future.

The Committee on Rules has original jurisdiction over the changes and additions to the House Rules contained in H.R. 5. We considered title III, after a very thorough and informative briefing by CRS and CBO, and after listening to a broad array of views during an extended committee hearing.

The nuts and bolts of the rules changes in this bill have been pretty well explained—it will be out of order for the House to consider legislation that creates a new unfunded mandate, above a certain, national trigger cost level, on States and local governments. This point of order can be waived by a majority vote if enough Members of this House feel that the need for the mandate is urgent. While this will not automatically stop all new mandates in their tracks, it will force the House to take the issue of the unfunded mandate specifically

into consideration, casting an up or down vote, in full public view on the issue of whether to proceed with such a mandate or not. Accountability in short.

As a strong supporter of this bill, I nonetheless did have some concern over the possible unintended consequences it could have on existing environmental and public health laws. As initially drafted, it was unclear whether the cost of existing programs, such as the Clean Water Act, would be counted toward the \$50 million trigger in this bill when such programs came up for reauthorization. While it's clear that the intention of this bill's authors was never to gut the provisions of every piece of environmental legislation, I am pleased that we were able to further clarify this point in the Rules Committee through an amendment to title III. That amendment makes it clear that only the incremental costs of new mandates will count toward the \$50 million trigger. This keeps within the spirit of H.R. 5, in looking ahead to future mandates while a commission reviews all existing mandates.

Mr. Chairman, this is a good bill, complicated by the nature of the subject, but well thought out. A host of talented Members, State officials, and staff worked long hours to bring us to this point. Congressional action to reverse the trend on unfunded mandates is long overdue and vital to the financial stability of our State and local governments. For more accountability, for thriftier spending, for better Government—I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 5.

The CHAIRMAN. All time for general debate has expired.

Mr. CLINGER. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore [Mr. GOODLATTE] having assumed the chair, Mr. EMERSON, Chairman 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. 5) to curb the practice of imposing unfunded Federal mandates on States and local governments, to ensure that the Federal Government pays the costs incurred by those governments in complying with certain requirements under Federal statutes and regulations, and to provide information on the costs of Federal mandates on the private sector, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

APPOINTMENT AS MEMBERS OF THE JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the provisions of 15 U.S.C. 1024(a), the Chair, without objection, appoints as members of the Joint Economic Committee the following members on the part of the House:

Mr. SAXTON of New Jersey;
Mr. EWING of Illinois;
Mr. QUINN of New York;
Mr. MANZULLO of Illinois;
Mr. SANFORD of South Carolina;
Mr. THORBERRY of Texas;
Mr. STARK of California;
Mr. OBEY of Wisconsin;
Mr. HAMILTON of Indiana; and

Mr. MFUME of Maryland.
There was no objection.

APPOINTMENT AS MEMBER OF THE HOUSE PAGE BOARD FOR THE 104TH CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable RICHARD A. GEPHARDT, Democratic Leader:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
OFFICE OF THE DEMOCRATIC LEADER,
Washington, DC, January 19, 1995.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to section 127 of Public Law 97-377, I hereby appoint the following Member of Congress to serve on the House of Representatives Page Board for the 104th Congress: Representative DALE KILDEE.

Sincerely,

RICHARD A. GEPHARDT.

EXTENSION OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND ESTONIA CONCERNING FISHERIES OFF THE COASTS OF THE UNITED STATES—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 104-21)

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, without objection, referred to the Committee on Resources and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976 (16 U.S.C. 1801 et seq.), I transmit herewith the Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Estonia Extending the Agreement of June 1, 1992, Concerning Fisheries Off the Coasts of the United States. The Agreement, which was effected by an exchange of notes at Tallinn on March 11 and May 12, 1994, extends the 1992 Agreement to June 30, 1996.

In light of the importance of our fisheries relationship with the Republic of Estonia, I urge that the Congress give favorable consideration to this Agreement at an early date.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON.

THE WHITE HOUSE, January 19, 1995.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will now entertain requests for 1-minute statements.

CONGRATULATIONS ALBION

(Mr. SMITH of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous matter.)