Norwood
Nussle
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Orton
Owens
Oxley
Packard
Pallone
Parker
Pastor
Paxon
Payne (NJ)
Payne (VA)
Pelosi
Peterson (MN)
Petri
Pickett
Pombo
Pomeroy
Porter
Portman
Poshard
Pryce
Quillen
Quinn
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Reed
Regula
Richardson
Rivers
Roberts
Rogers
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Rose
Roth
Roukema
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Rush
Sabo
Salmon
Sanders
Sawyer
Saxton
Schaefer
Schiff
Schumer
Scott
Seastrand
Serrano
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Shuster
Sisisky
Skaggs
Skeen
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (MI)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Solomon
Souder
Spence
Spratt
Stark
Stenholm
Stokes
Studds
Stupak
Talent
Tanner
Tate
Tauzin
Taylor (MS)
Taylor (NC)
Tejeda
Thomas
Thompson
Thornberry
Thornton
Thurman
Tiahrt
Torkildsen
Torres
Torricelli
Traficant
Upton
Velazquez
Vento
Visclosky
Volkmer
Vucanovich
Walker
Walsh
Wamp
Ward
Watt (NC)
Watts (OK)
Waxman
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
White
Whitfield
Wicker
Williams
Wise
Wolf
Woolsey
Wynn
Yates
Zeliff
Zimmer

NAYS—22

Chenoweth
Coble
Coleman
Conyers
Cooley
Eshoo
Filner
Ganske
Green (TX)
Jacobs
Johnston
LoBiondo
Miller (CA)
Nadler
Roemer
Sanford
Scarborough
Schroeder
Sensenbrenner
Stearns
Stockman
Stump

NOT VOTING—14

Brownback
Chapman
Engel
Ford
Istook
McDade
Murtha
Peterson (FL)
Riggs
Towns
Waters
Wilson
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

□ 1102

Mrs. SCHROEDER, Ms. ESCHOO, and Messrs. SCARBOROUGH, GANSKE, and NADLER changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Ms. FURSE changed her vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the conference report was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. RIGGS. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 387, I was unable to be present due to personal business. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yea.''

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 3603, AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1997

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The pending business is the question of agreeing to the conference report on the bill, H.R. 3603.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the conference report.

Pursuant to the provisions of clause 7, rule XV, the yeas and nays are ordered.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 379, nays 42, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 387]

YEAS—379

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allard
Archer
Armey
Bachus
Baesler
Baker (CA)
Baker (LA)
Baldacci
Ballenger
Barcia
Barr
Barrett (NE)
Barrett (WI)
Bartlett
Barton
Bateman
Becerra
Beilenson
Bentsen
Bereuter
Berman
Bevill
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop
Bliley
Blumenauer
Blute
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bonior
Bono
Borski
Boucher
Brewster
Browder
Brown (CA)
Brown (FL)
Brown (OH)
Bryant (TN)
Bryant (TX)
Bunn
Bunning
Burr
Burton
Buyer
Callahan
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canady
Cardin
Castle
Chambliss
Chenoweth
Christensen
Chrysler
Clay
Clayton
Clement
Clinger
Clyburn
Coble
Coburn
Coleman
Collins (GA)
Collins (IL)
Collins (MI)
Combest
Condit
Cooley
Costello
Cox
Coyne
Cramer
Crane
Crapo
Cremeans
Cubin
Cummings
Cunningham
Danner
Davis
de la Garza
Deal
DeFazio
DeLauro
DeLay
Deutsch
Diaz-Balart
Dickey
Dicks
Dingell
Dixon
Dooley
Doolittle
Dornan
Doyle
Dreier
Duncan
Dunn
Durbin
Edwards
Ehlers
Ehrlich
English
Ensign
Evans
Everett
Ewing
Farr
Fawell
Fazio
Fields (LA)
Fields (TX)
Filner
Flake
Flanagan
Foley
Forbes
Fowler
Fox
Franks (CT)
Frisa
Frost
Funderburk
Furse
Gallegly
Ganske
Gejdenson
Gekas
Gephardt
Geren
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gilman
Gonzalez
Goodlatte
Goodling
Gordon
Goss
Graham
Green (TX)
Greene (UT)
Greenwood
Gunderson
Gutierrez
Gutknecht
Hall (OH)
Hall (TX)
Hamilton
Hancock
Hansen
Harman
Hastert
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Hefner
Heineman
Herger
Hilleary
Hilliard
Hinchey
Hobson
Hoekstra
Holden
Horn
Hostettler
Houghton
Hoyer
Hunter
Hutchinson
Hyde
Inglis
Istook
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Johnson (CT)
Johnson (SD)
Johnson, E.B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kasich
Kelly
Kennedy (MA)
Kennedy (RI)
Kennelly
Kildee
Kim
King
Kingston
Kleczka
Klink
Klug
Knollenberg
Kolbe
LaFalce
LaHood
Lantos
Largent
Latham
LaTourette
Laughlin
Lazio
Leach
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Lightfoot
Lincoln
Linder
Lipinski
Livingston
Longley
Lowey
Lucas
Luther
Maloney
Manton
Manzullo
Markey
Martinez
Martini
Mascara
Matsui
McCarthy
McCollum
McCrery
McDermott
McHale
McHugh
McInnis
McIntosh
McKeon
McKinney
McNulty
Meek
Metcalf
Meyers
Mica
Millender-McDonald
Minge
Mink
Moakley
Molinari
Mollohan
Montgomery
Moorhead
Moran
Morella
Myers
Myrick
Neal
Nethercutt
Neumann
Ney
Norwood
Nussle
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Orton
Oxley
Packard
Pallone
Parker
Pastor
Paxon
Payne (VA)
Pelosi
Peterson (MN)
Petri
Pickett
Pombo
Pomeroy
Porter
Portman
Poshard
Pryce
Quillen
Quinn
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Reed
Regula
Richardson
Rivers
Roberts
Roemer
Rogers
Ros-Lehtinen
Rose
Roth
Sabo
Sanders
Sawyer
Saxton
Schaefer
Schiff
Schroeder
Scott
Seastrand
Serrano
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Shuster
Sisisky
Skaggs
Skeen
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (MI)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Solomon
Souder
Spence
Spratt
Stenholm
Stokes
Studds
Stump
Stupak
Talent
Tanner
Tate
Tauzin
Taylor (MS)
Taylor (NC)
Tejeda
Thomas
Thompson
Thornberry
Thornton
Thurman
Tiahrt
Torres
Torricelli
Traficant
Upton
Velazquez
Vento
Visclosky
Vucanovich
Walker
Walsh
Wamp
Ward
Watt (NC)
Watts (OK)
Waxman
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
White
Whitfield
Wicker
Wise
Wolf
Woolsey
Wynn
Young (AK)
Zeliff

NAYS—42

Andrews
Bass
Chabot
Conyers
Dellums
Doggett
Eshoo
Fattah
Foglietta
Frank (MA)
Franks (NJ)
Frelinghuysen
Hoke
Jacobs
Johnston
LoBiondo
Lofgren
Meehan
Menendez
Miller (CA)
Miller (FL)
Nadler
Owens
Payne (NJ)
Rohrabacher
Roukema
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Rush
Salmon
Sanford
Scarborough
Schumer
Sensenbrenner
Stark
Stearns
Stockman
Torkildsen
Volkmer
Williams
Yates
Zimmer

NOT VOTING—12

Brownback
Chapman
Engel
Ford
McDade
Murtha
Peterson (FL)
Riggs
Towns
Waters
Wilson
Young (FL)

□ 1112

So the conference report was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

House Resolution 496 was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. RIGGS. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 386, I was unable to be present due to personal business. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yea.''

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 123, ENGLISH LANGUAGE EMPOWERMENT ACT OF 1996

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 499 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 499

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 1(b) of rule XXIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 123) to amend title 4, United States Code, to declare English as the official language of the Government of the United States. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. Points of order against consideration of the bill for failure to comply with clause 2(l)(6) of rule XI are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Economic and Educational Opportunities. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. In lieu of the amendment recommended by the Committee on Economic and Educational Opportunities now printed in the bill, it shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of H.R. 3898. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. Points of order against that amendment in the nature of a substitute for failure to comply with clause 7 of rule XVI are waived. No other amendment shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each amendment may be considered only in the order specified, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment except as specified in the report, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against amendments printed in the report are waived. The Chairman of the Committee of the Whole may: (1) postpone until a time during further consideration in the Committee of the Whole a request for a recorded vote on any amendment; and (2) reduce to five minutes the minimum time for electronic voting on any postponed question that follows another electronic vote without intervening business, provided that the minimum time for electronic voting on the first in any series of questions shall be fifteen minutes. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the amendment in the nature of a substitute made in order as original text. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

☐ 1115

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. NETHERCUTT). The gentleman from Georgia [Mr. LINDER] is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, for the purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from California [Mr. BEILENSON], pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purposes of debate only.

(Mr. LINDER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material.)

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 499 is a modified closed rule providing for consideration of H.R. 123, the English Language Empowerment Act of 1996. House Resolution 499 waives points of order against consideration of the bill for failure to comply with clause 2(l)(6) of rule XI, regarding 3 day availability of committee reports. The rule provides for 1 hour of debate equally divided between the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Economic and Educational Opportunities.

The rule further makes in order, for the purpose of amendment, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of H.R. 3898. The rule waives points of order against the amendment in the nature of a substitute for failure to comply with clause 7 of rule 16, relating to germaneness.

The rule also provides for the consideration of the amendments printed in the Rules Committee report on the rule only in the order specified; if offered by the Member designated in the report; debatable for the time specified in the report, equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent; and which shall not be subject to amendment or a division of the question in the House or the Committee of the Whole.

House Resolution 499 waives all points of order against the amendments printed in the report. The rule also authorizes the Chair to postpone and cluster votes on amendments.

Finally, the resolution provides for a motion to recommit with or without instructions as is the right of the minority.

The rule for this bill is a fair one. House Resolution 499 allows for an hour of debate on a minority substitute, and specified time for a number of amendments which give those in opposition the opportunity to refine the bill. I believe the Rules Committee has been extraordinarily fair and prudent in that minority amendments outnumber majority amendments by a count of 4 to 1.

Mr. Speaker, the English Language Empowerment Act of 1996 is designed to empower a new generation of immigrants. This bill declares that English is the official language of the Federal Government, mandates that the Federal Government conduct its business in English, eliminates the Federal bilingual ballot requirement, and requires officials to conduct naturalization ceremonies in English.

This bill assures that we have a uniform government policy that does not undercut incentives to learn English and is consistent with established immigration policy that new citizens demonstrate an ability to read, write, and speak English. It is a modest bill which does not restrict, in any way, the use of foreign languages in homes, neighborhoods, churches, or private businesses.

The argument will be made that this bill will result in cost savings to the American taxpayer as a result of the termination of documents and services currently provided in different languages. I agree that it is unrealistic that the Government should accommodate the printing of government materials in countless languages, and some cost savings will be achieved. This debate, however, is about more than simply the cost in dollars. For the past three decades we have come to realize that well-meaning programs intended to help have actually evolved into programs that hinder the advancement of our citizens. In this case, costly bilingual policies have acted as a disincentive to some immigrants who have been encouraged to use their native languages rather than learn English.

The problem again is not that the Government has done too little—it is that the Government is doing too much. In this case, the Government's actions are inhibiting the social and economic advancement of new immigrants.

Throughout this Nation's history, we have opened our ports to immigrants from countries across the globe, and each generation of immigrants has understood the importance of learning to communicate in English. New immigrants continue to understand that the knowledge of a common language will propel them along the road to prosperity and will unite all immigrants with a common bond as Americans.

Unfortunately, this Government is impeding their integration into American society. This legislation will facilitate the opportunities for non-English speaking persons in this country, and I disagree with the argument that this bill would isolate them from society.

It is the failure to promote English as our common and unifying language that has hindered some Americans from building a solid future for their families and gaining access to the American dream.

During a meeting with a group of businessmen I asked a gentleman who had immigrated to the United States why his community has achieved such great educational and professional accomplishments in this country, and he proudly responded that there were two reasons for this success in the United States—intact families and the adoption of the English language.

It is becoming painfully clear that those who have not adopted the English language have had a much more difficult time achieving success in our schools, in our businesses, and in our society. For those who use English, we have seen a great rise in achievement.

Mr. Speaker, this is an equitable rule that permits opponents of the bill the opportunity to alter extensively the

original bill. I urge my colleagues to support the rule so that we may proceed with consideration of a bill that I believe will help to open the door to the American dream to more of our follow Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I include the following material from the Committee on Rules for the RECORD:

THE AMENDMENT PROCESS UNDER SPECIAL RULES REPORTED BY THE RULES COMMITTEE,[1] 103D CONGRESS V. 104TH CONGRESS

[As of July 31, 1996]

Rule type	103d Congress		104th Congress	
	Number of rules	Percent of total	Number of rules	Percent of total
Open/Modified-Open [2]	46	44	81	59
Structured/Modified Closed [3]	49	47	39	28
Closed [4]	9	9	17	13
Total	104	100	137	100

[1] This table applies only to rules which provide for the original consideration of bills, joint resolutions or budget resolutions and which provide for an amendment process. It does not apply to special rules which only waive points of order against appropriations bills which are already privileged and are considered under an open amendment process under House rules.

[2] An open rule is one under which any Member may offer a germane amendment under the five-minute rule. A modified open rule is one under which any Member may offer a germane amendment under the five-minute rule subject only to an overall time limit on the amendment process and/or a requirement that the amendment be preprinted in the Congressional Record.

[3] A structured or modified closed rule is one under which the Rules Committee limits the amendments that may be offered only to those amendments designated in the special rule or the Rules Committee report to accompany it, or which preclude amendments to a particular portion of a bill, even though the rest of the bill may be completely open to amendment.

[4] A closed rule is one under which no amendments may be offered (other than amendments recommended by the committee in reporting the bill).

SPECIAL RULES REPORTED BY THE RULES COMMITTEE, 104TH CONGRESS

[As of July 31, 1996]

H. Res. No. (Date rept.)	Rule type	Bill No.	Subject	Disposition of rule
H. Res. 38 (1/18/95)	O	H.R. 5	Unfunded Mandate Reform	A: 350–71 (1/19/95).
H. Res. 44 (1/24/95)	MC	H. Con. Res. 17	Social Security	A: 255–172 (1/25/95).
		H.J. Res. 1	Balanced Budget Amdt	
H. Res. 51 (1/31/95)	O	H.R. 101	Land Transfer, Taos Pueblo Indians	A: voice vote (2/1/95).
H. Res. 52 (1/31/95)	O	H.R. 400	Land Exchange, Arctic Nat'l. Park and Preserve	A: voice vote (2/1/95).
H. Res. 53 (1/31/95)	O	H.R. 440	Land Conveyance, Butte County, Calif	A: voice vote (2/1/95).
H. Res. 55 (2/1/95)	O	H.R. 2	Line Item Veto	A: voice vote (2/2/95).
H. Res. 60 (2/6/95)	O	H.R. 665	Victim Restitution	A: voice vote (2/7/95).
H. Res. 61 (2/6/95)	O	H.R. 666	Exclusionary Rule Reform	A: voice vote (2/7/95).
H. Res. 63 (2/8/95)	MO	H.R. 667	Violent Criminal Incarceration	A: voice vote (2/9/95).
H. Res. 69 (2/9/95)	O	H.R. 668	Criminal Alien Deportation	A: voice vote (2/10/95).
H. Res. 79 (2/10/95)	MO	H.R. 728	Law Enforcement Block Grants	A: voice vote (2/13/95).
H. Res. 83 (2/13/95)	MO	H.R. 7	National Security Revitalization	PQ: 229–199; A: 227–197 (2/15/95).
H. Res. 88 (2/16/95)	MC	H.R. 831	Health Insurance Deductibility	PQ: 230–191; A: 229–188 (2/21/95).
H. Res. 91 (2/21/95)	O	H.R. 830	Paperwork Reduction Act	A: voice vote (2/22/95).
H. Res. 92 (2/21/95)	MC	H.R. 889	Defense Supplemental	A: 282–144 (2/22/95).
H. Res. 93 (2/22/95)	MO	H.R. 450	Regulatory Transition Act	A: 252–175 (2/23/95).
H. Res. 96 (2/24/95)	MO	H.R. 1022	Risk Assessment	A: 253–165 (2/27/95).
H. Res. 100 (2/27/95)	O	H.R. 926	Regulatory Reform and Relief Act	A: voice vote (2/28/95).
H. Res. 101 (2/28/95)	MO	H.R. 925	Private Property Protection Act	A: 271–151 (3/2/95).
H. Res. 103 (3/3/95)	MO	H.R. 1058	Securities Litigation Reform	
H. Res. 104 (3/3/95)	MO	H.R. 988	Attorney Accountability Act	A: voice vote (3/6/95).
H. Res. 105 (3/6/95)	MO			A: 257–155 (3/7/95).
H. Res. 108 (3/7/95)	Debate	H.R. 956	Product Liability Reform	A: voice vote (3/8/95).
H. Res. 109 (3/8/95)	MC			PQ: 234–191 A: 247–181 (3/9/95).
H. Res. 115 (3/14/95)	MO	H.R. 1159	Making Emergency Supp. Approps	A: 242–190 (3/15/95).
H. Res. 116 (3/15/95)	MC	H.J. Res. 73	Term Limits Const. Amdt	A: voice vote (3/28/95).
H. Res. 117 (3/16/95)	Debate	H.R. 4	Personal Responsibility Act of 1995	A: voice vote (3/21/95).
H. Res. 119 (3/21/95)	MC			A: 217–211 (3/22/95).
H. Res. 125 (4/3/95)	O	H.R. 1271	Family Privacy Protection Act	A: 423–1 (4/4/95).
H. Res. 126 (4/3/95)	O	H.R. 660	Older Persons Housing Act	A: voice vote (4/6/95).
H. Res. 128 (4/4/95)	MC	H.R. 1215	Contract With America Tax Relief Act of 1995	A: 228–204 (4/5/95).
H. Res. 130 (4/5/95)	MC	H.R. 483	Medicare Select Expansion	A: 253–172 (4/6/95).
H. Res. 136 (5/1/95)	O	H.R. 655	Hydrogen Future Act of 1995	A: voice vote (5/2/95).
H. Res. 139 (5/3/95)	O	H.R. 1361	Coast Guard Auth. FY 1996	A: voice vote (5/9/95).
H. Res. 140 (5/9/95)	O	H.R. 961	Clean Water Amendments	A: 414–4 (5/10/95).
H. Res. 144 (5/11/95)	O	H.R. 535	Fish Hatchery—Arkansas	A: voice vote (5/15/95).
H. Res. 145 (5/11/95)	O	H.R. 584	Fish Hatchery—Iowa	A: voice vote (5/15/95).
H. Res. 146 (5/11/95)	O	H.R. 614	Fish Hatchery—Minnesota	A: voice vote (5/15/95).
H. Res. 149 (5/16/95)	MC	H. Con. Res. 67	Budget Resolution FY 1996	PQ: 252–170 A: 255–168 (5/17/95).
H. Res. 155 (5/22/95)	MO	H.R. 1561	American Overseas Interests Act	A: 233–176 (5/23/95).
H. Res. 164 (6/8/95)	MC	H.R. 1530	Nat. Defense Auth. FY 1996	PQ: 225–191 A: 233–183 (6/13/95).
H. Res. 167 (6/15/95)	O	H.R. 1817	MilCon Appropriations FY 1996	PQ: 223–180 A: 245–155 (6/16/95).
H. Res. 169 (6/19/95)	MC	H.R. 1854	Leg. Branch Approps. FY 1996	PQ: 232–196 A: 236–191 (6/20/95).
H. Res. 170 (6/20/95)	O	H.R. 1868	For. Ops. Approps. FY 1996	PQ: 221–178 A: 217–175 (6/22/95).
H. Res. 171 (6/22/95)	O	H.R. 1905	Energy & Water Approps. FY 1996	A: voice vote (7/12/95).
H. Res. 173 (6/27/95)	C	H.J. Res. 79	Flag Constitutional Amendment	PQ: 258–170 A: 271–152 (6/28/95).
H. Res. 176 (6/28/95)	MC	H.R. 1944	Emer. Supp. Approps	PQ: 236–194 A: 234–192 (6/29/95).
H. Res. 185 (7/11/95)	O	H.R. 1977	Interior Approps. FY 1996	PQ: 235–193 D: 192–238 (7/12/95).
H. Res. 187 (7/12/95)	O	H.R. 1977	Interior Approps. FY 1996 #2	PQ: 230–194 A: 229–195 (7/13/95).
H. Res. 188 (7/12/95)	O	H.R. 1976	Agriculture Approps. FY 1996	PQ: 242–185 A: voice vote (7/18/95).
H. Res. 190 (7/17/95)	O	H.R. 2020	Treasury/Postal Approps. FY 1996	PQ: 232–192 A: voice vote (7/18/95).
H. Res. 193 (7/19/95)	C	H.J. Res. 96	Disapproval of MFN to China	A: voice vote (7/20/95).
H. Res. 194 (7/19/95)	O	H.R. 2002	Transportation Approps. FY 1996	PQ: 217–202 (7/21/95).
H. Res. 197 (7/21/95)	O	H.R. 70	Exports of Alaskan Crude Oil	A: voice vote (7/24/95).
H. Res. 198 (7/21/95)	O	H.R. 2076	Commerce, State Approps. FY 1996	A: voice vote (7/25/95).
H. Res. 201 (7/25/95)	O	H.R. 2099	VA/HUD Approps. FY 1996	A: 230–189 (7/25/95).
H. Res. 204 (7/28/95)	MC	S. 21	Terminating U.S. Arms Embargo on Bosnia	A: voice vote (8/1/95).
H. Res. 205 (7/28/95)	O	H.R. 2126	Defense Approps. FY 1996	A: 409–1 (7/31/95).
H. Res. 207 (8/1/95)	MC	H.R. 1555	Communications Act of 1995	A: 255–156 (8/2/95).
H. Res. 208 (8/1/95)	O	H.R. 2127	Labor, HHS Approps. FY 1996	A: 323–104 (8/2/95).
H. Res. 215 (9/7/95)	O	H.R. 1594	Economically Targeted Investments	A: voice vote (9/12/95).
H. Res. 216 (9/7/95)	MO	H.R. 1655	Intelligence Authorization FY 1996	A: voice vote (9/12/95).
H. Res. 218 (9/12/95)	O	H.R. 1162	Deficit Reduction Lockbox	A: voice vote (9/13/95).
H. Res. 219 (9/12/95)	O	H.R. 1670	Federal Acquisition Reform Act	A: 414–0 (9/13/95).
H. Res. 222 (9/18/95)	O	H.R. 1617	CAREERS Act	A: 388–2 (9/19/95).
H. Res. 224 (9/19/95)	O	H.R. 2274	Natl. Highway System	PQ: 241–173 A: 375–39–1 (9/20/95).
H. Res. 225 (9/19/95)	MC	H.R. 927	Cuban Liberty & Dem. Solidarity	A: 304–118 (9/20/95).
H. Res. 226 (9/21/95)	O	H.R. 743	Team Act	A: 344–66–1 (9/27/95).
H. Res. 227 (9/21/95)	O	H.R. 1170	3-Judge Court	A: voice vote (9/28/95).
H. Res. 228 (9/21/95)	O	H.R. 1601	Internatl. Space Station	A: voice vote (9/27/95).
H. Res. 230 (9/27/95)	C	H.J. Res. 108	Continuing Resolution FY 1996	A: voice vote (9/28/95).
H. Res. 234 (9/29/95)	O	H.R. 2405	Omnibus Science Auth	A: voice vote (10/11/95).
H. Res. 237 (10/17/95)	MC	H.R. 2259	Disapprove Sentencing Guidelines	A: voice vote (10/18/95).
H. Res. 238 (10/18/95)	MC	H.R. 2425	Medicare Preservation Act	PQ: 231–194 A: 227–192 (10/19/95).
H. Res. 239 (10/19/95)	C	H.R. 2492	Leg. Branch Approps	PQ: 235–184 A: voice vote (10/31/95).
H. Res. 245 (10/25/95)	MC	H. Con. Res. 109	Social Security Earnings Reform	PQ: 228–191 A: 235–185 (10/26/95).
		H.R. 2491	Seven-Year Balanced Budget	
H. Res. 251 (10/31/95)	C	H.R. 1833	Partial Birth Abortion Ban	A: 237–190 (11/1/95).
H. Res. 252 (10/31/95)	MO	H.R. 2546	D.C. Approps.	A: 241–181 (11/1/95).
H. Res. 257 (11/7/95)	C	H.J. Res. 115	Cont. Res. FY 1996	A: 216–210 (11/8/95).
H. Res. 258 (11/8/95)	MC	H.R. 2586	Debt Limit	A: 220–200 (11/10/95).

SPECIAL RULES REPORTED BY THE RULES COMMITTEE, 104TH CONGRESS—Continued

[As of July 31, 1996]

H. Res. No. (Date rept.)	Rule type	Bill No.	Subject	Disposition of rule
H. Res. 259 (11/9/95)	O	H.R. 2539	ICC Termination Act	A: voice vote (11/14/95).
H. Res. 262 (11/9/95)	C	H.R. 2586	Increase Debt Limit	A: 220–185 (11/10/95).
H. Res. 269 (11/15/95)	O	H.R. 2564	Lobbying Reform	A: voice vote (11/16/95).
H. Res. 270 (11/15/95)	C	H.J. Res. 122	Further Cont. Resolution	A: 249–176 (11/15/95).
H. Res. 273 (11/16/95)	MC	H.R. 2606	Prohibition on Funds for Bosnia	A: 239–181 (11/17/95).
H. Res. 284 (11/29/95)	O	H.R. 1788	Amtrak Reform	A: voice vote (11/30/95).
H. Res. 287 (11/30/95)	O	H.R. 1350	Maritime Security Act	A: voice vote (12/6/95).
H. Res. 293 (12/7/95)	C	H.R. 2621	Protect Federal Trust Funds	PQ: 223–183 A: 228–184 (12/14/95).
H. Res. 303 (12/13/95)	O	H.R. 1745	Utah Public Lands	PQ: 221–197 A: voice vote (5/15/96).
H. Res. 309 (12/18/95)	C	H. Con. Res. 122	Budget Res. W/President	PQ: 230–188 A: 229–189 (12/19/95).
H. Res. 313 (12/19/95)	O	H.R. 558	Texas Low-Level Radioactive	A: voice vote (12/20/95).
H. Res. 323 (12/21/95)	C	H.R. 2677	Natl. Parks & Wildlife Refuge	Tabled (2/28/96).
H. Res. 366 (2/27/96)	MC	H.R. 2854	Farm Bill	PQ: 228–182 A: 244–168 (2/28/96).
H. Res. 368 (2/28/96)	O	H.R. 994	Small Business Growth	Tabled (4/17/96).
H. Res. 371 (3/6/96)	C	H.R. 3021	Debt Limit Increase	A: voice vote (3/7/96).
H. Res. 372 (3/6/96)	MC	H.R. 3019	Cont. Approps. FY 1996	PQ: voice vote A: 235–175 (3/7/96).
H. Res. 380 (3/12/96)	C	H.R. 2703	Effective Death Penalty	A: 251–157 (3/13/96).
H. Res. 384 (3/14/96)	MC	H.R. 2202	Immigration	PQ: 233–152 A: voice vote (3/19/96).
H. Res. 386 (3/20/96)	C	H.J. Res. 165	Further Cont. Approps	PQ: 234–187 A: 237–183 (3/21/96).
H. Res. 388 (3/21/96)	C	H.R. 125	Gun Crime Enforcement	A: 244–166 (3/22/96).
H. Res. 391 (3/27/96)	C	H.R. 3136	Contract w/America Advancement	PQ: 232–180 A: 232–177, (3/28/96).
H. Res. 392 (3/27/96)	MC	H.R. 3103	Health Coverage Affordability	PQ: 229–186 A: Voice Vote (3/29/96).
H. Res. 395 (3/29/96)	MC	H.J. Res. 159	Tax Limitation Const. Amdmt.	PQ: 232–168 A: 234–162 (4/15/96).
H. Res. 396 (3/29/96)	O	H.R. 842	Truth in Budgeting Act	A: voice vote (4/17/96).
H. Res. 409 (4/23/96)	O	H.R. 2715	Paperwork Elimination Act	A: voice vote (4/24/96).
H. Res. 410 (4/23/96)	O	H.R. 1675	Natl. Wildlife Refuge	A: voice vote (4/24/96).
H. Res. 411 (4/23/96)	C	H.J. Res. 175	Further Cont. Approps. FY 1996	A: voice vote (4/24/96).
H. Res. 418 (4/30/96)	O	H.R. 2641	U.S. Marshals Service	PQ: 219–203 A: voice vote (5/1/96).
H. Res. 419 (4/30/96)	O	H.R. 2149	Ocean Shipping Reform	A: 422–0 (5/1/96).
H. Res. 421 (5/2/96)	O	H.R. 2974	Crimes Against Children & Elderly	A: voice vote (5/7/96).
H. Res. 422 (5/2/96)	O	H.R. 3120	Witness & Jury Tampering	A: voice vote (5/7/96).
H. Res. 426 (5/7/96)	O	H.R. 2406	U.S. Housing Act of 1996	PQ: 218–208 A: voice vote (5/8/96).
H. Res. 427 (5/7/96)	O	H.R. 3322	Omnibus Civilian Science Auth	A: voice vote (5/9/96).
H. Res. 428 (5/7/96)	MC	H.R. 3286	Adoption Promotion & Stability	A: voice vote (5/9/96).
H. Res. 430 (5/9/96)	S	H.R. 3230	DoD Auth. FY 1997	A: 235–149 (5/10/96).
H. Res. 435 (5/15/96)	MC	H. Con. Res. 178	Con. Res. on the Budget, 1997	PQ: 227–196 A: voice vote (5/16/96).
H. Res. 436 (5/16/96)	C	H.R. 3415	Repeal 4.3 cent fuel tax	PQ: 221–181 A: voice vote (5/21/96).
H. Res. 437 (5/16/96)	MO	H.R. 3259	Intell. Auth. FY 1997	A: voice vote (5/21/96).
H. Res. 438 (5/16/96)	MC	H.R. 3144	Defend America Act	
H. Res. 440 (5/21/96)	MC	H.R. 3448	Small Bus. Job Protection	A: 219–211 (5/22/96).
	MC	H.R. 1227	Employee Commuting Flexibility	
H. Res. 442 (5/29/96)	O	H.R. 3517	Mil. Const. Approps. FY 1997	A: voice vote (5/30/96).
H. Res. 445 (5/30/96)	O	H.R. 3540	For. Ops. Approps. FY 1997	A: voice vote (6/5/96).
H. Res. 446 (6/5/96)	MC	H.R. 3562	WI Works Waiver Approval	A: 363–59 (6/6/96).
H. Res. 448 (6/6/96)	MC	H.R. 2754	Shipbuilding Trade Agreement	A: voice vote (6/12/96).
H. Res. 451 (6/10/96)	O	H.R. 3603	Agriculture Appropriations, FY 1997	A: voice vote (6/11/96).
H. Res. 453 (6/12/96)	O	H.R. 3610	Defense Appropriations, FY 1997	A: voice vote (6/13/96).
H. Res. 455 (6/18/96)	O	H.R. 3662	Interior Approps, FY 1997	A: voice vote (6/19/96).
H. Res. 456 (6/19/96)	O	H.R. 3666	VA/HUD Approps	A: 246–166 (6/25/96).
H. Res. 460 (6/25/96)	O	H.R. 3675	Transportation Approps	A: voice vote (6/26/96).
H. Res. 472 (7/9/96)	O	H.R. 3755	Labor/HHS Approps	PQ: 218–202 A: voice vote (7/10/96).
H. Res. 473 (7/9/96)	MC	H.R. 3754	Leg. Branch Approps	A: voice vote (7/10/96).
H. Res. 474 (7/10/96)	MC	H.R. 3396	Defense of Marriage Act	A: 290–133 (7/11/96).
H. Res. 475 (7/11/96)	O	H.R. 3756	Treasury/Postal Approps	A: voice vote (7/16/96).
H. Res. 479 (7/16/96)	O	H.R. 3814	Commerce, State Approps	A: voice vote (7/17/96).
H. Res. 481 (7/17/96)	MC	H.R. 3820	Campaign Finance Reform	PQ: 221–193 A: 270–140 (7/25/96).
H. Res. 482 (7/17/96)	MC	H.R. 3734	Personal Responsibility Act	A: 358–54 (7/18/96).
H. Res. 483 (7/18/96)	O	H.R. 3816	Energy/Water Approps	A: voice vote (7/24/96).
H. Res. 488 (7/24/96)	MO	H.R. 2391	Working Families	A: 228–175 (7/26/96).
H. Res. 489 (7/25/96)	MC	H.R. 2823	Dolphin Conservation Program	A: voice vote (7/31/96).
H. Res. 499 (7/31/96)	MC	H.R. 123	English Language Empowerment	

Codes: O-open rule; MO-modified open rule; MC-modified closed rule; S/C-structured/closed rule; A-adoption vote; D-defeated; PQ-previous question vote. Source: Notices of Action Taken, Committee on Rules, 104th Congress.

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

Mr. BEILENSON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. LINDER] for yielding me the customary half-hour of debate time, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, we strongly oppose this modified closed rule for the bill designating English as the official language of the Government of the United States and requiring that most official business be conducted only in English. We believe this is a bad rule for an equally bad piece of legislation.

We oppose this legislation in such strong terms for many reasons: It is unnecessary; it is without doubt unconstitutional; it will increase litigation by creating a new private right of legal action in Federal court; it is offensive, insulting and denigrating to millions of Americans; and it is divisive at a time that we need to unite our country and its citizens.

Mr. Speaker, we fail to understand the need for this legislation of such dubious value. According to the Census Bureau figures, English is spoken by over 97 percent of the American people. A recent General Accounting Office report tells us that less than .1 percent of all Federal documents are printed in foreign languages; thus, more than 99.9 percent are already printed in English.

The fact that English language classes across the country have long waiting lists attests to the fact that laws are not needed to encourage people to learn English.

What those who do not speak English will need is access to more educational programs that teach English, but this bill does nothing whatsoever to help meet that need. Mr. Speaker, the way to further the primacy of English is to put more resources into efforts to expand English proficiency and literacy, not to pass legislation of such questionable value as this.

We already know that English-only laws such as H.R. 123 are subject to serious constitutional challenge, an important point that the proponents appear to have overlooked.

In a 1923 case, the Supreme Court wrote that:

> The protection of the Constitution extends to all, to those who speak other languages as well as those born with English on the tongue. Perhaps it would be advantageous if all had ready understanding of our ordinary speech, but this cannot be coerced by methods which conflict with the Constitution.

The presumptive unconstitutionality of H.R. 123 was fortified more recently by a U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruling that Arizona's English-only mandate violates the first amendment and in ''unconstitutional in its entirety.'' No doubt that reasoning would apply as well to this Federal English-only legislation, which we believe clearly violates the first amendment guarantee of free speech.

As if all this were not bad enough, Mr. Speaker, the rule making this bill in order is unfair and limited beyond good reason. At the very least, if we must consider a bill as repugnant as this one, then we should have had, if not a completely open rule, at least one that is more open and much less restrictive than the rule we are now considering.

In recognition of the announcement by our chairman that only certain amendments would be made in order, the minority members of the Rules Committee chose 5 of the more than 20 amendments submitted by Democrats as our priorities. But only one of those

five was accepted and is made in order by this rule.

Inrerestingly the majority did see fit to allow three other amendments submitted by Democrats, none of which was on our priority list. We are somewhat puzzled by that decision, and suspect that they address issues the majority itself wanted to be taken up.

The Serrano amendment that is permitted under the rule was our first priority. It is a very thoughtful attempt to establish a language policy for the United States that does not infringe on indigenous languages and does not place undue burdens on one's ability to obtain services from the Federal Government because of limited English proficiency. Instead of imposing the divisive and restrictive policies in H.R. 123 that infringe on constitutional rights, the Serrano amendment encourage diversity and opportunity. We encourage our colleagues to support that amendment.

It is a key amendment. We are pleased that it is made in order. Unfortunately, four others that are just as essential to making the debate on the bill complete were not approved by the majority.

We feel strongly that we should have been allowed a vote on the amendment striking repeal of the bilingual election requirements of the Voting Rights Act. The bilingual provision that the rule incorporates into H.R. 123 is a major change in existing law and policy. Members deserve the opportunity to vote separately on such radical action. The rule is in essence protecting the repeal of a fundamental part of our voting rights law; it should not be allowed to go unchallenged.

If we truly want to encourage people to speak English, then English training for all who seek it should be available. However, the majority denied our request that an amendment for that purpose be made in order.

We were also denied the right to vote on striking another major provision in the bill, the section permitting any individual to sue in Federal court if they believe this legislation has been violated.

We do not believe there is a need for this new right to sue, especially when so much of our effort in this Congress have been to discourage the wave of litigation that seems to be sweeping over the country. This is a serious issue that Members will not have the opportunity to vote on under this restrictive rule.

We also asked earlier that the amendment of the gentleman from Puerto Rico [Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ] be made in order to provide that any agency can communicate orally or in writing in a language other than English if doing so will assist the agency in doing its work. This is clearly essential to protect the rights of so many of our citizens, yet our request to make the amendment in order was denied.

Mr. Speaker, we do not believe that allowing votes on only 4 of the over 20 Democratic amendments submitted is far or reasonable. We feel strongly that the four amendments I have just described, as well as several others offered by the gentleman from California [Mr. MARTINEZ] to exempt from the bill's provisions actions or documents from the IRS and the Social Security Administration should be part of this debate.

Clearly, if the majority is willing to make an amendment in order to allow Members of Congress to communicate orally and in writing in a language other that English, then the Martinez amendments giving the same rights to agencies that serve so many of our senior citizens should have been permitted as well.

The bill denies many of those citizens the right to understand clearly and completely some of the most basic functions of their Government, and the functions that affect them most personally and directly. We are especially disappointed that the majority was unwilling to give Members the opportunity to correct that serious failure in the bill.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, we repeat that we find it difficult to understand the reason for this legislation. The use of languages other than English to meet the needs of language minorities in this country does not pose a threat to English because it is already in fact, of course, recognized as the primary language of this country.

But language alone in not the basis for nationhood. Americans are united by principles enumerated by our Constitution and the Bill of Rights: freedom of speech, representative democracy, respect for due process, and equality of protection under the laws. The legislation this rule would make in order is contrary, we believe, to each of those principles.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, we strongly oppose this rule and the bill that it makes in order. We urge our colleagues to defeat the rule so at least some more amendments might be made in order. It is the only proper and fair action we can take.

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

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Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GOSS], my colleague on the Committee on Rules.

(Mr. GOSS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Georgia for yielding and I rise in support of this rule. This is a subject that generates much emotion from all sides—and I applaud this rule for allowing those with opposing views a fair opportunity to be heard.

In my opinion, the uniqueness of America stems from the fact that, although we are a Nation of immigrants hailing from all parts of the world, we have guiding principles enshrined in our Constitution that focus on what we have in common, not what divides us. Throughout the history of this great melting pot, we have demonstrated to the world that it is possible to preserve individual liberties, to uphold the traditions of a vast array of cultural heritages and to still weave a fabric of society that is uniquely American.

But Mr. Speaker, things have changed in recent years. Our society seems less committed to the idea of a melting pot, less able to focus on the common threads within the fabric of our American society. And that is why we are considering this legislation—because we want to reinforce the English language as one of those threads.

English is, and has always been, the official voice of America. H.R. 123 reaffirms this principle by setting out that the Federal Government will conduct its official business in English—with reasonable exceptions to protect the public health and safety, promote trade and commerce, uphold national security, conduct language education and preserve the integrity of our criminal justice system. I would like to emphasize that this legislation does not preempt any State or local laws. This legislation eliminates the burdensome unfunded mandate of required bilingual ballots, which was originally established by the Voting Rights Act, and which I have long opposed. While the premise of increasing access to the electoral system was well-intentioned, the implementation has become an expensive burden. It has also created unanticipated consequences, including discrimination against English-deficient voters who do not happen to live in heavily concentrated minority areas. I have always believed that the Federal Government should neither require nor prohibit the use, by local communities, of local funds to communicate with their citizens in languages other than English. Repealing the bilingual ballot requirement is an important step in that regard.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 123 underscores that English is our national language without unduly interfering with the ability of States and localities to deal with their own unique language needs. Reaffirmation of our common language is something a substantial majority of Americans have asked us to do—and I urge my colleagues to support this rule and this bill.

Mr. BEILENSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Puerto Rico [Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ].

(Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

ROMERO-BARCELÓ. Mr. Speaker, language is an intensely personal form of self-expression. We use it to articulate the full range of human thought and emotion. We use it to convey our thoughts on philosophy. We use it to convey our thoughts on theology and political ideals. We use it to convey sorrow, anger and forgiveness, and we use it to express love for one another.

I think that this bill does precisely the opposite. Instead of being an expression of love for all of the citizens in the Nation, it is the setting aside of those citizens that may not have the proficiency in a language that is a common language of our Nation that others have. It curtails their access and availability of services in the government and to exercise their rights and the fulfillment of their duties and obligations.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know if Members are aware of how many documents can be published, if necessary, in other languages, to inform the public. For instance, Social Security for elderly citizens. We have information about what Social Security is all about. Survivors' benefits. Social Security, what an individual needs to know when they get retirement survivors. Social Security benefits for children with disabilities. Social Security, if an individual is blind, how can we help.

All of these and many, many, many more reports and information are published in other languages when the recipient, when the citizen does not know English well enough. And we do have citizens that do not know English or speak it very little.

In Puerto Rico, we were made citizens in 1917 by law, and we were not asked for the language we spoke, nor have we been asked what language we speak when we are drafted to go in the armed services and service the Nation.

In the Korean war, for instance, we were No. 4 in deaths, even though we were number 25 in population. And how many of those soldiers that were defending the Nation died because maybe they did not understand the orders.

They say that this is done to promote efficiency in English. We do not promote by obligating; we promote by stimulating. We promote by providing opportunities for people to educate themselves, to learn the English. Nothing is being proposed here to stimulate or further encourage or even fund the teaching of English.

I oppose the approval of this rule.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. ROTH], who has worked on this issue for many, many years.

Mr. ROTH. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Georgia for yielding me this time, and I appreciate the fine and the fair rule that the Committee on Rules has brought to the floor.

I wish we had more time to debate the issue, but I know at this time that we have a good deal of pressing legislation issues before us.

This is an historic day. I frankly have told many people who have doubted this day would ever come to have faith, that the day would come when the American people's wishes were going to be heard. In every single survey that has been taken on whether English should be our official language, 90 to 97 percent of the people say, yes, English should be our official language, which basically means when we vote, when an individual works with the Federal Government, that we do it in the English language.

The people have spoken and the Congress has listened, and now we can say that Congress has as much common sense as the American people.

We are people from every corner of the globe. We represent every religion, every ethnic group, every Nation under the Sun, but we are one nation, we are one people. Why? Because we have a wonderful commonality, a common glue, called the English language.

Now, in some 80 nations around the world they have official languages; 63 nations have English as the official language, and other nations have various other languages, of course.

The gentleman who just spoke before me is from Puerto Rico. Some of the finest people in the world live in Puerto Rico. But in Puerto Rico they have Spanish as their official language, and rightly so. They should have that right. In Mexico, they have Spanish as their official language. And again, rightly so.

Now, in this country we are told by the National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education that by the turn of the century, one out of seven Americans will look at English as a foreign language.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as has been said before, in America, we have always had the idea that we are the melting pot, that we are all the same. We do not believe in hyphenated Americans. We are all equal American.

America must continue to be the melting pot. A Nation like America cannot be made up of groups. American is made up of individuals. As Woodrow Wilson said, as long as you consider yourself a part of a group, you are still not assimilated into American society, because America, like other nations, is made up of individuals and not made up of groups.

So today, in this debate, we are discussing this issue from the perspective of over 200 years of American history, of our culture and the things we hold dear. We should look around us in this Chamber today. All of us can take part in this debate. Why? Because we have all adopted English as our language, and this bill will allow us to do that 25, 50, and 100 years from now. Without this bill, we could not do that.

Mr. BEILENSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. EDWARDS].

Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. EDWARDS. I yield to the gentleman from Puerto Rico.

Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to say the previous speaker, who stated that Puerto Rico has Spanish as the official language; in Puerto Rico, both languages are official, Spanish and English. And there are no requirements that we cannot publish in any other languages any official documents. There is no prohibition.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I appreciate the gentleman's comments.

Mr. Speaker, I find it ironic that some of the very people that will speak out in behalf of this English-only bill today are the very people who just a few weeks ago voted to cut education programs that helped young American schoolchildren learn English, voted against Head Start programs, voted against adult education funding programs that helped adults even speak English, voted to cut funding for title I that help our low-income Spanish speaking children in Texas learn how to speak English.

To me, in any language, that rhetoric versus that action does not make sense.

It seems to me that the question today is not whether American citizens should be encouraged to learn English, because we all agree that is the language of our country. The question today is what is the best way to encourage and help our citizens become English proficient.

I would suggest English plus is a much better approach than English only. I would suggest that debating education funding would be a better way to spend our time today than debating English only.

The English-only bill before this House today is unnecessary, it is insulting, it is divisive, and it is discriminatory. It is unnecessary because I hardly believe the future of the American republic is at jeopardy because 3 percent of our population speak another language.

It is insulting to millions of Americans, whether intended or not, Americans whose cultures are a part of the fabric of our Nation. To Hispanic-Americans in my home State, this kind of bill brings back the terrible, painful memories when years ago little Hispanic schoolchildren were segregated on the playgrounds and ostracized because they spoke the language, Spanish, of their parents, their families, and their grandparents.

This bill is divisive because in a country of many cultures where we come together, it pits one group against another. Hispanic-Americans and others see this bill as an attack on their culture, upon their values, and, yes, even upon their families.

At a time when we need to bring Americans together by building bridges rather than building barriers between different peoples, this bill separates us and tears us apart.

This bill is discriminatory because it says to many of the elderly in America who have worked hard, supported their families, never been on welfare, and have paid taxes for 20 or 30 or 40 years that we want to make it more difficult for them to vote and to exercise their right as a citizen to participate in this democracy.

Mr. Speaker, for all of those reasons, this bill should not be passed into the law of this land.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Glens Falls, NY [Mr. SOLOMON], the chairman of the Committee on Rules.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I rise in strong support of this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, today is a historic day, a day in which Congress focuses on those things which unite us as a country, and those which expand the horizons of opportunity for all of our citizens. The English Language Empowerment Act has nothing to do with fear, nothing to do with linguistic cleansing and nothing to do with targeting minority populations for political gain. My support of declaring the English language to be the official language of the Federal Government is based on two simple principles: unity and opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, from the very beginning our Nation has recognized that

> The prosperity of the people of America depended on their continuing firmly united, and the wishes, prayers, and efforts of our best and wisest citizens have been constantly directed to that object.

Now this observation was not made by me, these are the words of wisdom in the Federalist Papers by John Jay, our country's first Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

John Jay went on to say:

> I have * * * often taken notice that Providence has been pleased to give this one connected country to one united people—a people descended from the same ancestors, speaking the same language * * * attached to the same principles of government, very similar in their manners and customs, and who by their joint counsels, arms, and efforts, fighting side by side throughout a long and bloody war, have nobly established their general liberty and independence.

Based on this premise for the past two centuries, we have forged a nation out of our different peoples by emphasizing our common beliefs, our common ideals, and perhaps most importantly, our common language. Our English language has permitted this country to live up to our national motto, ''e pluribus unum''—out of many, one. For most of our Nation's history, the English language has been the key to integrating new Americans as well as the glue that has held our people together. It is in this spirit that this bill has been devised to secure English's central place in our society by making it America's official language.

Now, this devotion to unity and to the English language is not founded upon any bedrock of racism, mean spiritedness or division. Rather it is premised on the belief that our strength in unit can best be preserved through the prevention of divisions along linguistic or cultural lines such as encountered by Canada with Quebec.

Now what do I mean by divisions along linguistic lines? These divisions are not between people, but between opportunities. Americans who do not know English, are segregated from those who do, separated from everything the United States and its precious Constitution stands for. A declaration of English as the official language is necessary to demonstrate that the Federal Government's goal is to desegregate these Americans.

Yesterday in the Rules Committee we heard hours of testimony from members with deeply held concerns with this bill.

Some were puzzled over what problem this bill was trying to solve; others claimed proponents of the bill were afraid that the English language was facing extinction in the United States. Well, let's be clear. This bill is intended to ensure that no American citizen, no matter what their cultural background, no matter whether they live in Puerto Rico, or Iowa, has to be trapped in a linguistic box, kept away from the tools of opportunity. This is the land of opportunity and the language of the land of opportunity is English. There should be no ambiguity about this fact. Current projections show that by the year 2050 more than 20 million people in this country will not be able to speak English well or at all.

That's 20 million people unable to even try to attain the American dream.

The usage and understanding of English is the key to economic and educational opportunity in America. Therefore we as the Federal Government must promote and enhance the ability of all Americans, no matter what their heritage, to read, speak, and understand this language of opportunity. According to a study done by Dr. Richard Vedder and Dr. Lowell Galloway of Ohio University it was found that if immigrant knowledge of English were raised to that of native-born Americans, their income levels would increase by $63 billion a year. It was also concluded that the current situation has trapped 1.5 million immigrants in poverty. The simple truth is that those who cannot function in our country's predominant language are less able to find jobs.

As a result, they are cheated of the opportunity for improvement and happiness that America promises to millions. This bill places the Federal Government in the affirmative position of saying this tragedy is not going to continue.

Furthermore, this bill has nothing to do with what languages we speak in our home, church or organization, or what foreign languages we may wish to learn. This establishes English as the official language of the government, not the private sector. Many of my good friends have expressed the hardships with which their families have sought to learn English while retaining their native tongue.

I applaud them for their efforts and I do not want them to stop doing this. In fact, Americans should strive to learn other languages as a way of expanding their understanding of the entire world. However, this should not be at the expense of our common tongue.

Winston Churchill once said ''the gift of a common language is a priceless inheritance.'' According to a USA Today poll taken in 1993, 97 percent of the American population agreed with Winston Churchill and supported making English the official language of Government. A more recent study found that 86 percent of Americans and 81 percent of immigrants want to make English the official language.

Now some of my colleagues have claimed that this bill preys upon linguistic minorities in this country, reminding us that Alexis de Tocqueville warned that the danger of democracy was that a majority could exercise tyranny over a minority. While I acknowledge that this is a serious concern, I would also remind my colleagues that before de Toqueville gave this warning he also stated that ''the tie of language is, perhaps the strongest and the most durable that can unite mankind.'' Promoting this tie of language is not an attack on minorities, nor is it an act of self-preservation but it is a ramp to expanded opportunity and freedom for all Americans.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, it must be understood why this bill goes farther than just declaring English to be the official language of government. Yes, it does repeal the bilingual ballot requirement, yes it does require the Federal Government to conduct its written business in English and yes it does require the INS to hold its naturalization ceremonies in English. Do you know why? It is because America is composed of people who have for centuries pulled themselves up by their bootstraps with courage and a vision to pursue the opportunity that America has to offer. All of us at one time or another were immigrants. Our forefathers came here for the same reasons immigrants now come ashore.

America is the land of opportunity and if the Government does not remove the impediments to assuring that these immigrants receive the keys to opportunity here, then I am afraid they will remain in what the New York Times called a bilingual prison. Bilingual ballots, and INS ceremonies and Government documents in other languages continue to uphold the untruth that you can live in America, you can have access to opportunity and you can achieve the American dream without being able to speak English. The Government can no longer mislead the citizenry.

Mr. Speaker, I will close with the observation that 23 States have established English as their official language, 80 countries only print government documents in one language, 323 different languages are currently spoken in the United States, a knowledge of English has been a requirement of U.S. citizenship since 1811, and the bill before us today is supported by the American Legion, the VFW, the Catholic War Veterans, the National Grange, the General Federation of Women's Clubs and many others.

This is a document of opportunity, a vision of unity and a compassionate measure. It deserves America's strongest support.

□ 1145

Mr. BEILENSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from Florida [Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN].

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, as a public servant and educator, and a mother, I think it would be a great disservice to our children to make English the official language of the land, not only because of the domestic and international ramifications that it would have, but more so for the future of our children. It is time that as Americans we understand what educators throughout the world already seem to know, that proficiency in many languages ultimately results in increased understanding of others, awareness of other cultures and traditions, and ultimately improvements in our Nation's prosperity and welfare. Today, as a nation, we stand together joined by English as our primary language, and we hold hands as a nation, where our acceptance of diversity has given us greatness.

Chief Supreme Court Justice Earl Warren once said, ''We are now at the point where we must decide whether we are to honor the concept of a plural society which gains strength through diversity, or whether we are to have bitter fragmentation that will result in perpetual tension and strife.''

As a Cuban-American who immigrated to this country in 1960, I was granted the honor of living here in the United States, a nation where differences, not similarities are the norm and, most of all, a nation where for over 200 years this plural society has been the standard and where speakers of different tongues and persons of diverse cultures, ethnic backgrounds and walks of life have come with one goal: To live, persevere, and succeed in the United States of America, the land of the free and the melting pot of the world.

With the onset of the 104th Congress, there have been proposals made by various of my colleagues that seek to make English the official language of the United States of America and to eliminate bilingual written and oral assistance for language minority voters. Persons who have immigrated in the past, who do so in the present, and who will continue to do so in the future, already understand that in order for them to be able to do well in this great Nation of liberty and freedom, where equality is the law of the land, they must learn English and no law is needed to stress this. Moreover not only do over 97 percent of Americans speak English, but newcomers to our great Nation are learning English faster than ever, thereby making English as the official language a moot point.

There are many benefits to having no official language in a country renowned for our diversity and home to communities where many different languages are heard. Among some of the benefits are those to public health and safety, a better and improved educational system for our children, the continuation of Government access to millions of taxpaying citizens and residents and the creation of a more cohesive American society.

Some would say that we are indeed a diverse nation, that we must provide for a common heritage through the use of the English language. Our heritage, however, is not so much English itself, but instead that regardless of race, color, creed, and our language preference, we have been given the honor of all being Americans.

The fact that we are all members of this great Nation and benefit from its Democratic ideals and liberties is a far more cohesive bond than any language could ever be.

From a more global perspective, it is obvious to all that America today is undoubtedly one of the world's top economic powers. In an everyday more globally interdependent world, where an astonishing four out of five jobs are created through exports, it is necessary that knowledge of other languages be encouraged in order to facilitate our business with the rest of the world and not force others to deal with us strictly in English. Establishing English as our official language would serve to undermine our competitiveness on a global scale.

As a Florida certified teacher and a former owner of a bilingual private school in south Florida, I know this bill will not facilitate the transition for children who have already come to the United States and do not have enough of a grasp of the language to understand challenging subject matters. ''English only'' legislation would only prove to be a disservice to these children instead of facilitating their learning abilities.

CONGRESSMAN MCDADE ACQUITTED

(By unanimous consent, Mr. SHUSTER was allowed to speak out of order for 1 minute.)

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, it is with a very happy tear in my eye that I announce the wire services are reporting that our colleague, the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. MCDADE] has been acquitted of all charges.

Mr. MURTHA. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would yield, let me just add to what the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. SHUSTER] said. JOE MCDADE has been under investigation for 6 years; under indictment for 2 years; he has been hurt emotionally, physically, and they were challenging the rights of the House during all this period of time.

Mr. Speaker, it really is a win for the House. The House sided with him in every appeal, and I think this is a strong message that goes out that the House of Representatives is a separate body. The jury understood that. We represent people.

Mr. Speaker, JOE MCDADE is one of the finest individuals that I have ever served with, and I have served with him for 23 years on two separate committees, and day by day we sat together. And so I am just delighted to see this, and as the dean of the Pennsylvania delegation, I join with the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. SHUSTER, in our commendation and congratulations to JOE MCDADE, who is such a wonderful individual, and to his family who suffered so much during this period of time.

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would yield, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. SHUSTER] and the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. MURTHA] for the words that they spoke today. The two of these gentlemen, as the deans of our delegations respectively, Republican and Democrat, have been there for JOE as friends over the past several very difficult years.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to rise and say it is a tribute to this institution that so many Members of the House on a day-to-day basis asked about JOE MCDADE, asked about his health, about his well-being, about his family. And through a very difficult ordeal it was the Members of this institution, people like the gentleman from New York, Mr. RANGEL, who I understand went up and testified as a character witness for JOE MCDADE, that is a real testimony to the character of this institution.

So, Mr. Speaker, I applaud not just his verdict but the fact that all of us did not cut and run when JOE MCDADE had a charge levied against him. All of us who know JOE personally stood by his side through thick and thin, and all of us can share in that joy today, both Republicans and Democrats.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York [Mr. KING].

Mr. KING. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for yielding and before I begin my remarks, let me also join the House in congratulating the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. MCDADE]. I am so delighted his long nightmare is over.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the rule and in support of the underlying bill. For the first 180 years of our Nation, immigrants came to our shores knowing that they had to learn the English language to become part of the American mainstream. They maintained their own cultures, their own traditions, their own religion, their own beliefs, their own parades, their own festivals, but they were bound together by the English language.

Growing up in New York City in the 1940's and 1950's, I witnessed this firsthand. I saw the beautiful American mosaic of all the different cultures and belief, bound together with the glue of a common language. Unfortunately, in the past 45 years we have gotten away from that. We have bilingual education, bilingual voting, bilingual programs one on top of the other, which

results in dividing us as a Nation, dividing us by language.

Mr. Speaker, if we are to come together as a nation, if we are going to build bridges and reassert and reestablish that beautiful American mosaic, it is essential that this bill be adopted.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the gentleman from California [Mr. CUNNINGHAM] and the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. ROTH] for the work they have done over the years. I urge all Members to vote for the bill and vote for the rule.

Mr. BEILENSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from California [Mr. TORRES].

(Mr. TORRES asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the rule here today and its misguided effort to legislate the very obvious: That this Nation already speaks English.

For anyone living in this country, engaging in commerce, seeking an education, or simply just traveling, English is the common language. On the WorldWide Web, English is the official de facto language. The majority of international commerce is conducted in English. Students from around the world vie for a U.S. education and a chance to learn English, and in places with high immigrant populations like my district in Los Angeles, the demand for learning English is so high that people must wait months and, yes, years to attend oversubscribed English classes.

In an age of increased global competition, we should be nurturing our Nation's most valued treasures, the wealth of cultural knowledge and foreign language skills. And today, some of my colleagues would prevent us from capitalizing on the wealth this Nation has accumulated.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot be afraid of language. Language is knowledge. Yes, my friends, we should encourage and I stress ''encourage,'' not legislate, that Americans learn and speak English. But a mandate of this sort that we are considering today could only be described as a veiled intolerance toward non-English-speaking Americans. It is unconstitutional. It is un-American.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to take a look at the lawmakers outside of the beltway that have looked at the practical effects of this legislation. Both Governor Bush of Texas and Governor Whitman of New Jersey have spoken out against ''English only'' mandates. They realize that Americans are an asset and should not be shunned for their language deficiencies.

We are a nation blessed with many differences, and I ask all of my colleagues to look up at the ceiling and read the inscription up there, ''E pluribus unum,'' which means ''Out of many, one.'' We are one because our Constitution and its lasting democratic principles has done this for us.

Our Nation should look to the world with pride for our Nation's differences and we should capitalize on that, and so I urge my colleagues to heed my call for tolerance and work toward the goal of enhancing English as the common language. We should not be mandating it. It is divisive. It is dividing us. It is not the glue that brings us together. The glue that holds America together is the democracy that we practice. It is the tolerance, it is the diversity that we enjoy.

□ 1200

This kind of legislation is unnecessary and is divisive. I urge a ''no'' vote on the rule.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida [Mr. STEARNS].

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I say to the gentleman from California, out of many, one. On this side we believe that one means language, too, which is English.

I would like to quote for him and others the late Senator Hayakawa, who said, ''America is an open society, more open than any other in the world. People of every race, of every color, of every culture are welcomed here to create a new life for themselves and their families. And what do these people who enter into the American mainstream have in common? English, our shared common language.''

For that reason, I rise in strong support of the rule. This Nation of course is a melting pot, finding its strength in our citizens' unique diversity. However, we all share a common unifying bond, our English language. Mastering a nation's original native language is critical to succeeding in a society because it provides one with the opportunity to excel. This is not to say that the study of foreign languages should be discouraged. Quite the contrary, being fluent in a second or third language opens, more often than not, doors to new opportunities and experiences. But if the English language is not the top priority, the doors in our own Nation will remain closed to some, and they will be left behind. When one discourages another from learning English, they ensure that the non-English-speaking individual is denied their chance at attaining the great American dream.

In a time when college graduates still have difficulty finding employment, what is left for those individuals who cannot communicate proficiently in English? While we continue to cherish the very cultures and heritage of the people that comprise this Nation, we need to have one language that unites and defines us as Americans if we are to ensure our continued success.

Mr. Speaker, we need to communicate in one official language and that is English. That is why I urge support of the rule.

Mr. BEILENSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California [Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD].

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the rule and the bill. Historically Americans have struggled to build a democratic society in which all citizens have equal access and opportunity. To ensure that every citizen was informed, our forefathers printed Government documents in German, French, and other languages. In 1975, the Nixon-Ford administration recognized the importance of an informed electorate and successfully led the fight for bilingual ballots to help eliminate discrimination in the electoral process.

Given our country's great history, it is a disgrace that we have this divisive and unnecessary bill before us, divisive in that it denies American citizens who are not yet proficient in English the right to access Government information in their native language, unnecessary in that 95 percent of U.S. residents already speak English.

The bill's premise is also flawed. The common thread binding Americans is not only a common language but the quest for democracy, freedom, and justice for all.

This bill breaks all strands of that common thread by dividing American citizens and unraveling civil rights in the name of national unity.

Let us uphold the tradition of respect for the fabric of diversity that makes this country great. Let us defeat the rule and this bill.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana [Mr. LIVINGSTON], chairman of the Committee on Appropriations.

(Mr. LIVINGSTON asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 123, the English Language Empowerment Act of 1996.

This bill declares English to be the official language of the Government of the United States. It will require the Federal Government to conduct its official business in English including all citizenship naturalization ceremonies. The American people, including new citizens, have long championed the notion of making English our official language. To date, 22 States—including my home State of Louisiana—have already declared English their official language. It is time to make English the Nation's official language.

The bill also amends the Voting Rights Act to end Federal mandates for bilingual ballots. This will put an end to the unfunded mandate of requiring States to print ballots in different languages. Since 1975, States with certain populations of language minorities are required to print ballots in the native language of the minority. Currently, 375 voting districts in 21 States are now required by Federal law to provide voting ballots and election material in foreign languages—6 languages alone were on the ballot in the last mayoral election in Los Angeles. While there are some who believe this is worthy and necessary, the measure is dividing our Nation along ethnic lines. In addition, it is also unduly burdening the States and opening the system to potential fraud.

The issue of voter fraud disturbs me greatly. I fear bilingual ballots only help those who resolve to steal elections. According to the 1990

Census, California has 4.4 million non-citizens, Florida has 949 thousand non-citizens. Texas has over a million non-citizens, and New York has 1.5 million non-citizens. In 1982, a Chicago grand jury reported that ''* * * many aliens register to vote so they can obtain documents identifying them as U.S. citizens * * * These aliens used their voter's card to obtain myriad benefits, from Social Security to jobs with the Defense Department.'' Unfortunately, many of these same individuals also vote. With the ballots printed in their native languages, its easy for crooks to convince these individuals—many of whom are unaccustomed to U.S. election laws—that it is okay for them to vote.

We are an English speaking Nation. Most citizens understand this and, in fact, support this reality. Since 1906, all U.S. citizens are required by law to be able to comprehend English. And, since 1950, all U.S. citizens must demonstrate an understanding of English, including an ability to read, write and speak words in ordinary English usage. However, there are currently 323 languages spoken in the United States—115 languages alone spoken in the New York City Schools. Forty million Americans will be nonEnglish language proficient by the year 2000. To keep America one Nation, one people we must have one common language.

Opponents of making English our official language claim that certain ethnic groups do not understand English and therefore must be accommodated. Well, since the 1960's, the Federal Government has been spending millions of taxpayer dollars on programs that teach English to nonEnglish speaking individuals. In addition, the Federal Government mandates that States and local governments also spend taxpayer money to teach English to nonEnglish speaking individuals. In 1995 alone, the Federal Government spent over $200 million on such programs. And, when you include State and local mandated spending for such programs, the amount skyrockets to $8 billion.

Well, Mr. Speaker, something is obviously not working. It is becoming more and more evident that teaching children in their native, foreign language hinders their ability to learn English. Printing ballots in foreign languages does the same. Let's not perpetuate an already bad problem by officially recognizing languages other than English.

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in favor of the rule and in support of the bill and would point to some of the change in my pockets, which the saying is on some of our currency, e pluribus unum, out of many comes one.

The fact of the matter is that America is built on many cultural societies who have come together in unity and in an attempt to build one great Nation. Whether it ultimately ended up as English speaking or Spanish speaking is a matter of history. We are an English speaking Nation. It does not mean that people of Spanish heritage cannot treasure their heritage or speak Spanish at home. Likewise, Haitians or Iranians or Iraqis or people of any culture in this great country of ours can respect their cultures at home and in their communities and can speak in bilingual fashion. But to say that we will become a Nation of many official languages is to run a risk that no longer will we be unified as a Nation.

In fact, Canada in recent years has experienced exactly that problem. they started recognizing French as an official language, as part of one major segment of the country. Now we see that Canada is on the verge of breakup, of disruption, within a matter of 5 to 10 years may not be a single nation, may be a segment of several different nations.

I would not want to see that happen to the United States. We went through one great Civil War. We do not need to go through any more. This country has fought, has spilled blood to provide for a single Nation. We will remain that way if we speak one official language. I urge adoption of the rule and passage of the bill.

Mr. BEILENSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewomen from Hawaii [Mrs. MINK].

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the rule and to the bill. There is pending before the U.S. Supreme Court a contest on a constitutional provision added by referendum to the State of Arizona Constitution which falls along similar lines. The lower Federal court in the State of Arizona, as well as the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in looking at the provision that had been put into the Constitution, both unanimously held that the provision which called for English only, requiring all public employees to communicate with constituents only in English constituted a violation of the first amendment and that it was a denial of free speech.

It is on this basis that I rise in opposition to the rule and to the bill. This legislation, though it is called an enhancement policy, in essence translates a feeling in this country about the importance of English, into a prohibition against the Government and its employees in the exercise of their duties to communicate in other than in English.

When we took office we took an oath to uphold the Constitution.

This, I believe, Mr. Speaker, to be the fundamental obligation of this body. Through the Committee on Rules and through our deliberations in our committees, the Constitution should be our guide and we should not enact, support, legislate in any way that deprives fundamental liberties in this country. Sure, every parent wants their child to succeed, to be prosperous. And the only proven way in this country to do that is to be proficient in English. So, the obligation of this Congress and of this Nation is to encourage it.

Yes, I think we all believe that English is the common language of this country and in order to succeed here in trade and commerce, in all of our professions, we ought to be proficient in English. But this bill goes for beyond that. It does not enhance our democracy. It restricts it. It confines the duties of this Government to only those people who speak English.

In fact, there is a section in this bill that says every other law that has been passed by the Congress from the beginning of this Nation to the present time which may require communication in languages other than in English only is hereby repealed.

This Nation has been for open Government, for equal access, to take everybody who is here legally in this country and to accord them equal protection of the laws. This legislation does not do this. I hope that the Congress will not pass a law which is so divisive. The goal of this country is to unite behind the principles of democracy and not to go contrary to the Constitution.

MODIFICATION OF AMENDMENT NO. 1 IN HOUSE REPORT 104–734 TO H.R. 123, ENGLISH LANGUAGE EMPOWERMENT ACT OF 1996

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that amendment No. 1 printed in the report on the rule may be offered in the following modified form:

At the beginning of the amendment, insert:

Page 1, line 4, insert before ''English'' the words ''Bill Emerson''.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida [Mr. WELDON].

(Mr. WELDON of Florida asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 123. Our country has a historic tradition of receiving immigrants from all around the world. H.R. 123 builds on that tradition and binds us together through the use of English as a common language.

Over the past 20 years the Federal Government has increased the number of languages in which it publishes documents and conducts official duties.

This has led to a de facto multilanguage policy which is very expensive for the taxpayer.

H.R. 123 declares English to be the official language of the United States Government and serves to unit us even more as a Nation.

All of us would agree that knowing English is a key to success in the United States.

A 1994 study of Southeast Asian refugees in Texas showed that those who knew English earned more than 20 times the annual income of those who did not speak English.

Knowing English will open a broad range of opportunities that would otherwise be unattainable.

This bill fosters and encourages everyone to learn English.

Encouraging immigrants to learn English is the compassionate thing to do and this bill does that.

Mr. Speaker, one of the biggest reasons why I am rising in support of this bill is because it is what my mother would want me to do. She passed away in 1991, but she was born to Italian

American immigrants and spoke Italian as her first language.

She always taught me that this move towards multilingualism in the United States was bad and divisive. On my way over here I was speaking to another Member who told me his high school now conducts official proceedings in two different languages. I think that is wrong. I think the language that binds us together is English, and my mother was right. I encourage everyone to support the rule and to support the bill.

Mr. Speaker. As a cosponsor of H.R. 123, The English Language Empowerment Act, I rise in strong support of this bill. We are proud of our Nation's ability to assimilate people from around the world into one cohesive society. The purpose of H.R. 123 is to build upon our Nation's historic tradition as a melting pot of diverse cultures from around the world, and to bind us together through the use of English as a common language. This bill establishes a much needed uniform Government language policy, promotes assimilation, saves taxpayers money, and empowers immigrants to realize the American Dream for themselves.

This bill is needed because currently the Federal Government does not have a uniform national language policy on publishing documents or conducting its business. Whether documents are published in a foreign language depends in large part upon which particular Federal statute is involved. In addition, over the past 20 years the Federal Government has increased the official duties it performs in other languages resulting in a very costly de facto multi-language policy. This bill corrects this piecemeal approach by establishing English as the official language of the United States Government and requires the Government to conduct all its official business in English.

H.R. 123 will not only establish a uniform national language policy for the Government, but it will promote assimilation of immigrants, rather than isolation and separation. The current policy fails to encourage recent immigrants to learn English. The failure to encourage immigrants to earn English may be the easy thing to do, but it is not the compassionate thing to do. The compassionate thing to do is to encourage immigrants to learn English. A firm grasp of the English language is a key to succeeding in America.

Learning English not only helps immigrants assimilate, it is the key to having the opportunity to realize the American Dream. Studies show that people who learn English earn more for their families, and confirm that the ability to speak English can make the difference between a low-wage job and a high-wage managerial, professional, or technical job. In 1994, the Texas Office of Immigration and Refugee Affairs publicized a study of Southeast Asian refugees in Texas. The study showed that individuals proficient in English earned more than 20 times the annual income of those who did not speak English. H.R. 123 empowers each new generation of immigrants the opportunity to realize the American dream.

Nothing in this bill would in any way limit the ability to individuals to speak their native tongue. This bill simply limits official Government business to the English language.

Not only does this bill benefit the immigrant, it also benefits the taxpayer. There are hundreds of languages spoken in the United States. According to the GAO, The Federal Government already prints many documents in foreign languages including Spanish, Portuguese, French, Chinese, German, Italian, Russian, and others. For American taxpayers the question is where does the printing of these documents in foreign languages stop? This bill ensures that all Americans can count on one language for Government action, polices, documents and proceedings.

In conclusion, I support H.R. 123 because it helps recent immigrants by opening up to them a land of opportunity. It will stop the trend towards the separation and isolation. It will encourage assimilation. In supporting this bill I stand with 86 percent of Americans and 81 percent of immigrants who want to make English the official language of the United States.

Mr. BEILENSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Texas [Mr. DE LA GARZA].

Mr. DE LA GARZA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the rule and to the legislation for a multiplicity of reasons.

One is that I saw a friend of mine recently, and this bill is making us the laughing stock of the world. He said, you Americans are going to speak English? I said, We do. But you are going to make it the official language? It is. This just puts it a line on a piece of paper.

My district begins with Hispanics, what we call Anglos, Czech, Slovak, German, Polish, little Hungarian. That is the makeup of my district in south Texas.

All of them speak English. All of us speak English in one form or another. But this is mean spirited, I do not care how we camouflage it. It is aiming at someone. It is aiming at a group in California or some other place. We do not want this. We do not want any more immigrants. We are going to shut it out.

What are we going to do to the Statue of Liberty? I guess erase what it says on there.

This is a problem that we have. This is mean spirited. It is camouflage. It is trying to stop people from doing something.

English is the language of this country. That is what we speak. That is what we do. Everyone does that. My congressional district, we are teaching the kids. But do you want to stop something? Why do the big companies spend millions of dollars in Spanish on the billboards? To sell their product, to sell their product.

□ 1215

Mr. Speaker, saying that the Government of the United States has to function solely in English is ridiculous, it is absurd.

Now let me tell my colleagues something. President Reagan stood in front of the wall in Berlin and says, ''Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall.'' Had bailing wire and bricks and mortar; it was torn down.

We are going to rebuild the Berlin Wall around the United States of America. Not going to be bricks and mortar; it is going to be something called ''English only.'' We are going to build a wall around us, and my colleagues will live to regret the day.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to our colleague, the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. TRAFICANT].

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, America is a nation of immigrants. Some came with knapsacks on their shoulders, some came in chains and leg irons.

But one thing America is not. America is not a nation of separation. All our citizens are Americans. The common denominator is our language. Our language is English. The glue that binds generation after generation is both our Constitution and our English language.

Supporting programs that teach English, in my opinion, is not enough. Congress must insure that America does not become a nation of separate communities, separate tongues.

So, Mr. Speaker, I say it is time to stop the politics of fear, politics of hate, politics of division. It is one America, one people, one community, one Nation under God I might add, and to best achieve those goals, ideals, and rights I believe is one official language.

If someone else can make a better case for another language, I will listen.

Mr. Speaker, I support this rule, and I support this bill and urge the Congress to do so as well for the sake of unity.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to my colleague, the gentleman from California [Mr. MCKEON].

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 123, the English Language Empowerment Act. H.R. 123 provides encouragement for immigrants to learn English.

Today, when many immigrants reach our shores, they settle in neighborhoods largely inhabited by people who speak their native language. This is understandable, as it is much easier and more comfortable to associate with people of the same culture speaking a familiar language. However, to gain the full benefits of coming to this great land, it is imperative to learn the English language. Learning English is necessary in order for immigrants to build a better future for themselves and their families.

Many of the bill's opponents claim that H.R. 123 will isolate our recent immigrants from the rest of society. When in fact, it accomplishes the exact opposite—it brings us together as a nation united under one common language.

Again, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 123.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to our colleague, the gentlewoman from California [Mrs. SEASTRAND].

Mrs. SEASTRAND. Mr. Speaker, I rise in very strong support of this legislation.

Few Members here today on both sides of this debate would argue the fact that the United States is a country of immigrants, each of whom, through both their differences and similarities, have contributed a great deal to the fabric of our society. As the granddaughter of Polish immigrants, I can attest to this fact.

But the debate we are having today is not about our differences, it is about our similarities. I am proud of my heritage—as are the many ethnic groups that make up the enormous cultural diversity of this Nation. My grandparents and parents spoke Polish at home when I was growing up and I do not believe anyone here today will argue against the practice of communicating in a language other than English. But they understood that mastering the English language was the key to opportunity, success, and prosperity in the United States.

It simply makes sense to make English the official language of the United States, and vast amounts of Americans agree. In 1986, 73 percent of California voters overwhelmingly supported an amendment to the Constitution to establish English as the official language of California. So because of that, I would ask that we strongly support this legislation.

Mr. BEILENSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Arizona [Mr. PASTOR].

(Mr. PASTOR asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PASTOR. Mr. Speaker, all morning we have been told that the reason we are having this bill is because people are divided and English being official would bring us together.

But this bill only does one thing. It prohibits a Federal public official from corresponding in a written form to his or her constituents. That is all it does.

And, Mr. Speaker, the basic problem with this bill is that it is unconstitutional. The Ninth Circuit of the United States has found that such a bill is unconstitutional for two reasons: In many cases sometimes a public official has to correspond in a language other than English because it is essential for communication; and to have an effective government, Mr. Speaker, sometimes we have to communicate in a language other than English.

This is all that the bill does. It is unconstitutional and I would ask Members to vote ''no.''

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California [Mr. CUNNINGHAM].

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, that is not all this bill does. Only one-tenth of 1 percent of all Federal documents go out under current law. But law is more than just law, it is symbology.

How many of my colleagues watched Kerri Strug in the Olympics win a gold medal? When seeing that American flag come down, I bet many of my colleagues had tears in their eyes. That was powerful. That was power. That empowered not only Kerri Strug and the gold winners, but the American people.

How many of my colleagues have ever witnessed or participated in a swearing-in ceremony? I have, many of them; and I want to tell my colleagues when they stand up and they hold up their hand, that is powerful and it is strong and it empowers those immigrants and the rest of the American citizens. That is important. It is not just law, it is empowerment of our children.

Mr. Speaker, I look at over and over, there are 320 languages, over a thousand dialects, and the reason for the bill, this is the Bill Emerson bill, that there is an increasing number of American citizens that do not understand, write, or communicate orally with the English language, and we are saying that in the thirties and the forties and the fifties there was a different attitude, that when one came they learned English, and over a period of time that number is reduced, and we want to empower our children.

We are not building a wall, we are tearing down a wall, because if I was mean-spirited, I would say: Stay where you are. Don't learn the English language. Stay wherever you want in your little communities and not have a portion of the American dream.

But no, Mr. Speaker, we are not doing that.

Governor Clinton in Arkansas signed a bill just like this one. Eighty nations in the world have signed their own language is a common language.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to my colleague, the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. KINGSTON].

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, can my colleagues see the absurdity of this Congress and this Nation having a debate such as this:

(Here, Member spoke in French.)

That is French in my own attempt. In Italian we could say:

(Here, Member spoke in Italian.)

And I will try it in Japanese, Mr. Speaker:

(Here, Member spoke in Japanese.)

The interpretation is one language is important for our country.

Now we can sit here and say and tell our children that it is not important to have one, but it is absolutely absurd. Nations need a common language.

My uncle was a Hungarian immigrant. He spoke eight different languages. He was run out of Hungary by Nazi Germany. But he did not come to America to say, ''You need to start speaking Hungarian.'' He said, ''I'm going to start speaking English.'' He kept his Hungarian. And my cousin Clare, who was born in Spain, knew some Hungarian, today she knows Spanish. My sister Jean knows Italian. I minored in French. My colleagues would not believe it by the way my pronunciation was just then.

But the point is we have to have a common language in our country. This is not mean-spirited, this is not malicious. It is absurd for people who cannot come up with an intellectual argument to come back to that same old line: mean-spiritedness. This is common sense. So, Mr. Speaker, as we would say in Japan:

(Here, Member spoke in Japanese.)

In French:

(Here, Member spoke in French.)

In Italian:

(Here, Member spoke in Italian.)

Down home we say, ''We'll see you all later.''

Mr. BEILENSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Texas [Ms. JACKSON-LEE].

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks).

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I oppose the rule because it makes Americans not Americans. It is a bad rule and a bad bill.

Mr. BEILENSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of our time to the gentleman from Texas, Mr. GENE GREEN.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. NETHERCUTT). The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 2¾ minutes.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the bill and the rule. I consider the bill a dangerous bill, and unlike my colleague from Georgia, English is our common language. I admit, in Texas we speak a little different English from maybe in Georgia and New England, but we still speak English, and some Members in the House on both sides say that we do not.

The reason for the opposition to this bill is that my colleagues talk about the bill, saying it is a common language. That is not what the bill says. If my colleagues brought a bill to the floor today that said English is a common language, they would not have any opposition to it because we would all agree with that.

What this bill does, though, is separate it, prohibit the use of other languages, and even this rule that we have today is limiting our freedom to debate on this bill. A lot of amendments Members submitted to try and make this bill better and not so onerous were not allowed in the Committee on Rules because of the modified closed rules we are having, and once again we have a rule that we do not get to debate the full bill itself.

English is our official language. My opposition said 99 percent of the documents that are printed are printed in English. This is a solution in search of a problem, Mr. Speaker. Our language classes for English in my district and everywhere in the country are overflowing. There is a waiting list now. They cannot advertise English language classes in Houston because they cannot fill them, and yet these are the same folks that cut education funding

for adult education. So do not come up and shed crocodile tears about how people ought to learn English when they cut adult education to people who want to learn English.

This bill should be amended to recognize that English is our common language because that is what their debate is about, but it is not. This rule divides us and this bill divides us as Americans, because we share more than our language. We share our love of freedom and our willingness to fight for that freedom, no matter what our language is. And I thought that was aptly mentioned earlier by my colleague from Puerto Rico.

□ 1230

This bill divides our country, because we are united in more ways than language. Again, I will share with my colleague from California, he says ''Nothing typifies this more than the Olympic spirit,'' the unity we see, not just from around the world, but from the United States team in Georgia.

We are going into the 20th century, and here this is a bill that I can imagine would have been debated last century. We are going into the 20th century, to try to make sure we can compete in the world and compete everywhere, and yet we are going to punish someone in my office who writes a letter back to someone in German?

I know there is an amendment to correct the bill, but it came out of committee, to punish Members of Congress for contacting, in response to people who write our office, whether it be in Spanish, Czech, German, or Vietnamese. They are going to clean it up, but this bill should have been worked on even more, because it is a bad bill and it is a bad rule.

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

Mr. Speaker, in closing let me just say this is a modest attempt to do what the people of this country have wanted for some time in overwhelming numbers, to establish English as the first and official language of this country.

For over 200 years, the glue that held the fabric of this society together was a common language. Thirty years ago, we began to change that. We began to deal with people in different languages. That isolated them. This bill is going to bring them back together. The isolation that was created by putting people in pockets of communities that spoke a different language kept them apart and out of the American dream. This is a modest effort to change that. I urge support for the rule.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to proceed in order under the rule to accommodate the gentleman.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. NETHERCUTT). Could the gentleman clarify his request?

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, this is for the purpose of unanimous consent, to change the language on one of the amendments, like we did with Mr. Emerson.

Mr. BECERRA. Reserving the right to object, Mr. Speaker, I am not sure which amendment the gentleman is talking about.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, it is their side's amendment. I am trying to accommodate the gentleman, not us.

Mr. BECERRA. Again, Mr. Speaker, if we could find out what the change would be before we decide.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. It is right there before the gentleman.

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, under my reservation of objection, if I may ask the gentleman a question, if the gentleman is just providing some definition to ''Native American,'' is that the purpose of the gentleman's amendment?

Mr. LINDER. Reserving the right to object, Mr. Speaker, I think it is appropriate that we see what is precisely being tried before we decide whether or not to object.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my unanimous-consent request.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California [Mr. CUNNINGHAM] withdraws his unanimous-consent request.

Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the resolution.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. BEILENSON. 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. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 236, nays 178, not voting 19, as follows:

[Roll No. 388]

YEAS—236

Allard
Archer
Armey
Bachus
Baker (CA)
Baker (LA)
Ballenger
Barr
Barrett (NE)
Bartlett
Barton
Bass
Bateman
Bereuter
Bevill
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bliley
Blute
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bono
Brewster
Browder
Bryant (TN)
Bunning
Burr
Burton
Buyer
Callahan
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canady
Castle
Chabot
Chambliss
Chenoweth
Christensen
Chrysler
Clement
Clinger
Coble
Coburn
Collins (GA)
Combest
Cooley
Cramer
Crane
Crapo
Cremeans
Cubin
Cunningham
Danner
Davis
Deal
DeLay
Dickey
Doolittle
Dornan
Dreier
Duncan
Dunn
Ehlers
Ehrlich
English
Everett
Ewing
Fawell
Fields (TX)
Flanagan
Foley
Forbes
Fowler
Fox
Franks (CT)
Franks (NJ)
Frelinghuysen
Frisa
Funderburk
Gallegly
Ganske
Gekas
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gilman
Goodlatte
Goodling
Graham
Greene (UT)
Greenwood
Gunderson
Gutknecht
Hamilton
Hancock
Hansen
Hastert
Hastings (WA)
Hayworth
Hefley
Hefner
Heineman
Herger
Hilleary
Hobson
Hoekstra
Holden
Horn
Hostettler
Houghton
Hunter
Hutchinson
Hyde
Inglis
Istook
Johnson (CT)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Kelly
Kim
King
Kingston
Klug
Knollenberg
Kolbe
LaHood
Largent
Latham
LaTourette
Laughlin
Leach
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Lightfoot
Linder
Lipinski
Livingston
LoBiondo
Longley
Lucas
Manton
Manzullo
Martini
McCrery
McHugh
McInnis
McIntosh
McKeon
McNulty
Metcalf
Meyers
Mica
Miller (FL)
Molinari
Montgomery
Moorhead
Morella
Myers
Myrick
Nethercutt
Neumann
Ney
Norwood
Nussle
Oxley
Packard
Parker
Paxon
Payne (VA)
Peterson (MN)
Petri
Pickett
Pombo
Porter
Portman
Pryce
Quillen
Quinn
Radanovich
Ramstad
Regula
Riggs
Roberts
Rohrabacher
Roth
Roukema
Royce
Salmon
Sanford
Saxton
Scarborough
Schaefer
Seastrand
Sensenbrenner
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Shuster
Sisisky
Smith (MI)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Solomon
Souder
Spence
Stearns
Stockman
Stump
Talent
Tate
Tauzin
Taylor (MS)
Taylor (NC)
Thomas
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Torkildsen
Traficant
Upton
Vucanovich
Walker
Walsh
Wamp
Watts (OK)
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
White
Whitfield
Wicker
Wolf
Young (AK)
Zeliff
Zimmer

NAYS—178

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Andrews
Baesler
Baldacci
Barcia
Barrett (WI)
Becerra
Beilenson
Bentsen
Berman
Bishop
Blumenauer
Bonior
Borski
Boucher
Brown (CA)
Brown (FL)
Brown (OH)
Bryant (TX)
Bunn
Cardin
Clay
Clayton
Clyburn
Coleman
Collins (IL)
Collins (MI)
Condit
Costello
Coyne
Cummings
de la Garza
DeFazio
DeLauro
Dellums
Deutsch
Diaz-Balart
Dicks
Dingell
Dixon
Doggett
Dooley
Doyle
Durbin
Edwards
Engel
Ensign
Eshoo
Evans
Farr
Fattah
Fazio
Fields (LA)
Filner
Flake
Foglietta
Frank (MA)
Frost
Furse
Gejdenson
Gephardt
Geren
Gibbons
Gonzalez
Gordon
Green (TX)
Gutierrez
Hall (OH)
Hall (TX)
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Hilliard
Hinchey
Hoyer
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jacobs
Jefferson
Johnson (SD)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnston
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy (MA)
Kennedy (RI)
Kennelly
Kildee
Kleczka
Klink
LaFalce
Lantos
Lazio
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lincoln
Lofgren
Lowey
Luther
Maloney
Markey
Martinez
Mascara
Matsui
McCarthy
McDermott
McHale
McKinney
Meehan
Meek
Menendez
Millender-McDonald
Miller (CA)
Minge
Mink
Moakley
Mollohan
Moran
Murtha
Nadler
Neal
Obey
Olver
Ortiz

Orton	Sabo	Thornton
Owens	Sanders	Thurman
Pallone	Sawyer	Torres
Pastor	Schiff	Torricelli
Payne (NJ)	Schroeder	Velazquez
Pelosi	Scott	Vento
Pomeroy	Serrano	Visclosky
Poshard	Skaggs	Volkmer
Rahall	Skeen	Ward
Rangel	Slaughter	Waters
Reed	Spratt	Watt (NC)
Richardson	Stenholm	Waxman
Rivers	Stokes	Williams
Roemer	Studds	Wilson
Ros-Lehtinen	Stupak	Wise
Rose	Tanner	Woolsey
Roybal-Allard	Tejeda	Wynn
Rush	Thompson	Yates

NOT VOTING—19

Brownback	Hoke	Schumer
Chapman	Kasich	Skelton
Conyers	McCollum	Stark
Cox	McDade	Towns
Ford	Oberstar	Young (FL)
Goss	Peterson (FL)	
Hayes	Rogers	

□ 1252

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas changed her vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 388, I was detained by other official business elsewhere in the Capitol. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yes.''

REPORT ON RESOLUTION WAIVING POINTS OF ORDER AGAINST CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 3103, HEALTH INSURANCE PORTABILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 1996

Mr. LINDER, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 104–738) on the resolution (H. Res. 502) waiving points of order against the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 3103) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to improve portability and continuity of health insurance coverage in the group and individual markets, to combat waste, fraud, and abuse in health insurance and health care delivery, to promote the use of medical savings accounts, to improve access to long-term care services and coverage, to simplify the administration of health insurance, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION WAIVING POINTS OF ORDER AGAINST CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 3448, SMALL BUSINESS JOB PROTECTION ACT OF 1996

Mr. LINDER, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 104–739) on the resolution (H. Res. 503) waiving points of order against the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 3448) to provide tax relief for small businesses, to protect jobs, to create opportunities, to increase the take home pay of workers, to amend the Portal-to-Portal Act of 1947 relating to the payment of wages to employees who use employer owned vehicles, and to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to increase the minimum wage rate and to prevent job loss by providing flexibility to employers complying with minimum wage and overtime requirements under that act, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE EMPOWERMENT ACT OF 1996

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. NETHERCUTT). Pursuant to House Resolution 499 and rule XXIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 123.

□ 1257

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 123) to amend title 4, United States Code, to declare English as the official language of the Government of the United States, with Mr. HANSEN in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered as having been read the first time.

Under the rule, the gentleman from California [Mr. CUNNINGHAM] and the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. CLAY] each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California [Mr. CUNNINGHAM].

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Chairman, I yield 15 minutes to the gentleman from Florida [Mr. CANADY], and I ask unanimous consent that he be permitted to control that time.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. GOODLING], chairman of the Committee on Economic and Educational Opportunities.

(Mr. GOODLING asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Chairman, during the discussion on the rule, I am afraid the American people may have gotten confused as to what legislation is before us, because much of what was said has nothing to do with the bill that came from our committee. Today we are voting on H.R. 123, which is a bill introduced by the late Bill Emerson, former distinguished Member of the body and a friend of many.

Mr. Chairman, there are many things in the bill that some people think went too far. There are others that people think did not go far enough. I think it is probably striking about the right balance. I say that because this bill declares English the official language of the Government, not of the private businesses, not of churches, not of homes, not of neighborhoods; just the Government. Furthermore, it then makes exceptions to the English requirement for the protection of public health and safety, national security, international relations, the teaching of language, the rights of victims of crime, certain instances of civil litigation and others.

We have also included rules of construction to help clarify the intent of the bill. So we have made a number of changes to the original version of H.R. 123 which addresses the concerns for many Members. After all, it is the English language that unites us, a Nation of many different immigrants as one Nation.

Over and over again we see that it is the English language which empowers each new generation of immigrants to access the American dream. Declaring English the official language of Government is the commonsense thing to do. We now have according to the Census Bureau, over 320 different languages. The Federal Government already prints materials in Spanish, Portuguese, French, Chinese, German, Italian, Russian, Korean, Ukrainian, Cambodian, and others; and the taxpayers says, where does it stop?

President Clinton himself, as Governor of Arkansas, signed legislation making English the official language of the State of Arkansas, and about half of the States have enacted the same kind of legislation. Again I remind all, this legislation is English as the official language of Government, not homes, not churches, not neighborhoods, not the private sector.

Mr. Chairman, I include for the RECORD the following letter from the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. SAWYER] concerning his not appearing at the committee markup on the final vote:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, July 25, 1996.

Chairman WILLIAM GOODLING,
Committee on Economic and Educational Opportunities, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GOODLING: Due to a speaking engagement with constituents, I was unable to be present for the final vote on reporting the Cunningham Substitute to H.R. 123 out of the Committee on Economic and Educational Opportunities.

I would like to note for the record that if I had been present, I would have voted, ''nay.''

Sincerely,

THOMAS C. SAWYER,
Member of Congress.

□ 1300

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 3 minutes.

Mr. Chairman, I agree that learning English should be a priority goal for all persons residing in the United States. In fact, there is extremely high demand for English language classes. Immigrants themselves recognize that in