

is. In 1996, U.S. agriculture exports totaled \$60 billion and the agriculture trade surplus exceeded \$26 billion. There is, nevertheless, ample opportunity for expansion of agriculture trade into the 21st century. It is incumbent on the administration, through the Office of the Trade Representative and the Department of Agriculture, to make sure that opportunities exist for trade expansion and that trade disputes are resolved in a timely manner.

I have had the opportunity to meet with Ambassador-Designate Barshefsky and she assures me of her knowledge of agriculture and her commitment to ensuring the proper emphasis on agriculture export issues. In our discussions we agreed that agriculture is the No. 1 high-tech export and the No. 1 priority with the USTR. Historically, agriculture has been a leader in biotechnology, a process through which researchers develop improved seeds and crops, such as those naturally protected from diseases and insects. This process has enabled farmers and ranchers to increase yields and thereby exports. It has also brought challenges from our trading partners. These challenges must be vigorously defended by the administration and Ambassador-Designate Barshefsky assures me that she will do so.

The Uruguay Round agreement included provisions on sanitary and phytosanitary disputes and provided that sound science be the basis for resolution of such disputes. Countries' use of nontariff trade barriers to restrict imports, especially those related to sanitary and phytosanitary issues, do great harm to American agriculture exports and thereby the income of our farmers and ranchers. This must be a high priority with the administration.

The Committee on Agriculture will hold a hearing on March 18, 1997, to discuss agriculture trade and the barriers that face exporters. The Secretary of Agriculture and the U.S. Trade Representative have been invited to testify. This will be an opportunity for the representatives of the administration to discuss implementation of trade agreements, the monitoring of the implementation of these agreements by other countries, and to delineate how they will secure fair treatment for American commodities in world trade.

In my discussions with Ambassador-Designate Barshefsky she assures me that agriculture will be a top priority under her watch. That is why I will support Senate Joint Resolution 5 and the waiver needed to allow her to assume the position of USTR.

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas [Mr. ARCHER] that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate joint resolution, Senate Joint Resolution 5.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof), the rules were suspended and the Senate Joint Resolution was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 852, PAPERWORK ELIMINATION ACT OF 1997

Mrs. MYRICK, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 105-15) on the resolution (H.Res. 88) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 852) to amend chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code, popularly known as the Paperwork Reduction Act, to minimize the burden of Federal paperwork demands upon small businesses, educational and nonprofit institutions, Federal contractors, State and local governments, and other persons through the sponsorship and use of alternative information technologies, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
STANDARDIZATION ACT OF 1997

Mr. DAN SCHAEFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 649) to amend sections of the Department of Energy Organization Act that are obsolete or inconsistent with other statutes and to repeal a related section of the Federal Energy Administration Act of 1974.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 649

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Department of Energy Standardization Act of 1997".

SEC. 2. STANDARDIZATION OF DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY REQUIREMENTS WITH GOVERNMENT-WIDE REQUIREMENTS.

(a) DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY REGULATIONS.—Section 501 of the Department of Energy Organization Act (42 U.S.C. 7191) is amended—

(1) by striking subsections (b) and (d),

(2) by redesignating subsection (c) as subsection (b) and by redesignating subsections (e), (f), and (g) as subsections (c), (d), and (e), respectively, and

(3) in subsection (c) (as so redesignated), by striking "subsections (b), (c), and (d)" and inserting "subsection (b)".

(b) SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS AFFECTING ADVISORY COMMITTEES.—

(1) SECTION 624.—Section 624 of the Department of Energy Organization Act (42 U.S.C. 7234) is amended by—

(A) striking "(a)"; and

(B) striking subsection (b).

(2) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 17 of the Federal Energy Administration Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 776) is repealed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Colorado, Mr. DAN SCHAEFER, and the gentleman from Texas, Mr. HALL each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado, Mr. DAN SCHAEFER.

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

Mr. DAN SCHAEFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 649 is a very straightforward measure and simply seeks to eliminate some of the unnecessary duplication that we have now within the DOE.

Currently, DOE is subject to two different standards for public notification and response to public comment. One set exists in the governmentwide Administrative Procedure Act and a separate set exists in the DOE organizational act. Likewise, DOE's advisory committees are subject to a separate and more restrictive public participation than required of other Federal agencies.

This measure would simply put DOE on the same par with other Federal agencies for public notice and response to comments. DOE would be fully subject to the provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act for advisory committees. This change simply allows DOE greater flexibility in closing off advisory committees to the public, fully consistent with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act.

During my time in Congress, I have been a very strong supporter of public participation in the political process. H.R. 649 will in no way diminish the ability of the public to participate in DOE's decisionmaking process, and will relieve some of DOE's administrative burden in complying with two different sets of standards.

I would especially like to thank the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Energy and Power, and fellow sponsor of this bill, the gentleman from Texas [Mr. HALL], for working with me in a very cooperative mood. We will have many more chances to work together in such a bipartisan effort and spirit as we move on.

H.R. 649 is supported by the Department of Energy. It is a bipartisan bill, and is a good, commonsense piece of legislation. I would recommend its adoption by the whole House.

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

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I will be brief, Mr. Speaker, because the gentleman from Colorado, Mr. DAN SCHAEFER has pretty well closed in on the issue before us. However, I just want to say that I rise today very much in support of H.R. 649, the Department of Energy Standardization Act, which I had the pleasure of helping to introduce with my good friend and chairman of the Subcommittee on Energy and Power, the gentleman from Colorado, Mr. DAN SCHAEFER.

Actually, the DOE Standardization Act simply addresses the duplicative regulation being placed on the Energy Department in its public involvement process. This is a critical process, and it is a very critical process in any Federal decisionmaking, and it is defined within the boundaries of the Administrative Procedure Act and Federal Advisory Committee Act.