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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

The Chaplain, Rev. James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

May our words, O God, speak from our hearts and cause understanding for all, may our songs praise Your blessings to us and our Nation, and may our deeds be done in service to those we are called to serve. Whether we speak or sing or act, we pray that we will do the words of justice and mercy, trusting in Your good grace. In the busy moments of the day when so many voices need to be heard, may we remember those words of peace and hope that enlighten our minds and give comfort to our very souls. In Your name we pray. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentlewoman from California [Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. McDevitt, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 410. An act to extend the effective date of the Investment Advisers Supervision Coordination Act.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 83–420, as amended by Public Law 99–371, the Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, appoints the Senator from Arizona [Mr. MCCAIN] to the Board of Trustees of Gallaudet University.

The message also announced that pursuant to section 2761 to title 22, United States Code, the Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, and upon the recommendation of the Democratic Leader, appoints the Senator from West Virginia [Mr. BYRD] as Vice Chairman of the Senate Delegation to the British-American Interparliamentary Group during the One Hundred Fifth Congress.

The message also announced that in accordance with Public Law 81–754, as amended by Public Law 93–536 and Public Law 100–365, the Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, appoints the Senator from Vermont [Mr. JEFFORDS] to the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FOLEY). The Chair will recognize ten 1-minutes on each side.

BIPARTISANSHIP

(Mr. GINGRICH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GINGRICH. Mr. Speaker, I simply wanted to rise to report to my colleagues and to our citizens that we had a very useful weekend retreat in Hershey on a bipartisan basis to talk about, I think, one of the most difficult and complex things that people do: How to engage in passionate and difficult differences, how to bring to this room 435 people who represent the entire country, and how to do so in a way in which disagreement does not become disagreeable and in which the fact that people may have different dreams and different visions and sometimes different ideologies does not become so separating us and so divisive that it becomes difficult or impossible for us to do the people's business.

This House has a long and a proud history of handling great conflicts in a very civil and orderly manner. Some of the greatest debates in this country's history have taken place in this building between people of great compassion who felt deeply what they were saying, but who recognized the legitimacy of the other person feeling equally deeply what they were saying.

In addition to just the sense of handling debate, the more bipartisan our spirit can be, the more we can work together without the division of faction, as George Washington described it, the more good ideas we will have because on many topics, I would argue on most topics, the ideas are individual. They are not Democrat or Republican, liberal or conservative. They are just better, smarter, more effective ways to get the job done.

So I hope that coming out of the experience we had in Hershey, that we begin to set this House back on a track of working together, of getting things done, or recognizing we may have deep differences at times but there are other times when we have many, many things that bring us together and many common interests, and that if we work at it, together we can do a better job for all the American people.

MORE ON BIPARTISANSHIP

(Mr. GEPHARDT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GEPHARDT. Mr. Speaker, I rise to second the thought that the Speaker just made on the floor about the bipartisan retreat that happened this weekend in Hershey. It was a historic event,

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the only time that I know that Members from both sides of the aisle and their families have had a chance to take a 2-day period to understand how we could better work together to solve the problems that we are all sworn to try to solve for the American people.

I think it succeeded, if for no other reason that human relationships were established that had not been established before. There has been tremendous turnover in the House. We have many, many new Members who do not know one another, and certainly older Members who do not know younger Members who have come in the last few years. I think those relationships were begun.

David McCullough, the noted historian, gave a speech on the first afternoon that we arrived in Hershey that I will never forget, and I urge all Members to get a copy of the speech and read it. He reminded us of how difficult it was in the early history of the Congress to work together, how many times altercations broke out between Members, how difficult it was to find consensus, and how negative people were about the future of the Congress and the country.

We have come a long way; we have a long way to go. Hershey is a beginning. From the Democratic side, I pledge our best efforts to carry the spirit of that meeting forward with tangible results in trying to work together better in a variety of ways. I thank all the Members who came, and I urge the House to entertain the idea of having a succeeding event for Members who could not come so that everyone can begin to show progress in this very important regard.

I think the Speaker for allowing me to speak, and I look forward to being able to work on the projects that were begun in Hershey.

THE MID-EAST SITUATION

(Mrs. KELLY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, I take the floor this morning with a heavy heart over reports that violence has again claimed innocent lives in Israel. In the shadow of this tragedy, it concerns me deeply that President Clinton has reportedly agreed to United States participation in Yasser Arafat's meeting in Gaza this weekend.

Although Israeli representatives will be excluded from this meeting, Chairman Arafat has invited other diplomats worldwide to criticize recent developments in Israeli-Palestinian relations. This meeting will obviously provide a platform for one-sided presentation of very complicated issues that are the subject of ongoing negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians.

Rather than encouraging counterproductive rhetoric, Mr. President, you should be protecting the traditional United States role of Mideast peace broker. The United States participation in the Gaza meeting will jeopardize that role.

Mr. President, now is the time to stand firm on principle. I urge you not to send a United States representative to the Gaza meeting this weekend.

CHILD AND TEEN SUICIDE

(Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, child and teen suicide is a national tragedy in our country. The national suicide rate among 10 to 14-year-olds has increased by 120 percent since 1980. One in 12 high school students attempted suicide in 1995, and each year more than 270,000 teenagers attempt to end their lives. More than a desire to die, these children say their attempt was a cry for help.

This tragedy impacts all Americans. In affluent Palos Verdes a 15-year-old girl took her life by jumping off a cliff because she felt hopeless and anguished. In east Los Angeles a 15-year-old boy, devastated over his parents' separation, hung himself.

Child and teen suicide is a painful and critical tragedy which cannot be ignored. Members of Congress and indeed all Americans must work together to save our children. It is literally a matter of life and death.

ADMINISTRATION PROPOSES TOLLS ON INTERSTATES

(Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, if we needed proof that the President is really a tax-and-spend liberal just look at this headline in the Washington Times: Clinton Proposes Tolls on Interstates.

The Clinton administration has proposed that the Federal Government do away with a 40-year restriction on States charging tolls on Federal highways. The White House claims this is a modest proposal, but it appears that the bridge to the 21st century has a toll booth on it.

Mr. Speaker, the American people do not need another tax. Over half of the family income goes to taxes at all levels, and to suggest that American families need to pay more taxes for the highways that they have already paid for is too much. The President says he wants to balance the budget, but he has submitted a budget that does not balance. He says he wants tax relief, but he just announced a new tax increase.

Mr. Speaker, the President should go back to the drawing board and start with a real balanced budget, one without a tax increase on hardworking Americans.

FREEDOM FOR VIOLENT CRIMINALS IN FLORIDA

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, against the wishes of Florida officials, the Supreme Court has allowed 500 violent criminals in Florida to go free. When they restored time off to relieve overcrowding, the court said promises were made.

Now, check this out:

Mitchell Sexton stabbed his father to death and he was released. Norm Eastman beat a 2-year-old to death. He was released. John Yearby beat a homeless man to death with a baseball bat. He was released.

Now, if that is not enough to overturn your convictions and add insult to injury, ladies and gentlemen, listen to the news: All victims will be notified of these violent offender releases.

Beam me up, Mr. Speaker. In my opinion, America has murder, rape and violence in record numbers because some of our judges are so dumb they could throw themselves at the ground and miss. Maybe, just maybe, if judges start supporting the rights of innocent victims, we would not have so much murder.

ISRAEL AND THE UNITED NATIONS

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, as we discuss our relationship with the United Nations this session, I believe one of our priorities should be to seek an end to the isolation within the United Nations of our Democratic ally Israel. Participation in the Security Council as well as all committees of the United Nations is predicated on a country's participation in a regional group. Due to the objections raised by a number of rejectionist States, Israel has been denied membership in its natural geographic group. Israel is therefore shut out of the entire committee system where the real day-to-day work of the United Nations is conducted.

One solution is to move beyond mere geography and look to the shared values of the democratic nations of western Europe. This group already spans 3 continents. Together with Congressman STEVE ROTHMAN and other colleagues, we have sent a letter to the ambassadors of the western European nations asking them to end Israel's unjust isolation by providing a legal home for their fellow democracy, the State of Israel.

REPUBLICAN BUDGET MERRY-GO-ROUND

(Mr. HILLIARD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HILLIARD. Mr. Speaker, the Republicans in this House are continuing to delay our Nation's budget. Their leader now says it will not be ready until May, over 3 months past the legal deadline.

It is the radical Republicans in Congress who are always saying that Congress must adhere to the rules which govern everyone, until the rules pertain to them. Then, like spoiled little kids, they make their own rules to suit themselves or they will not play the game. I hope that they realize that this Republican merry-go-round must soon end. The American people do not want Republicans to play games with their lives like Republicans did when they closed down this government.

Mr. Speaker, it is high time that your party act like grownups and follow the rules. The budget submitted by the President is a balanced budget. Where is the Republican budget?

BIPARTISANSHIP AND THE BUDGET

(Mr. ROGAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROGAN. Mr. Speaker, last year I had the privilege of campaigning for the U.S. Congress as a Republican from California, and in my district I made no bones in going to groups where I spoke to both Democrats and Republicans and telling them that I intended to come to Congress and work in a bipartisan fashion with the President to balance the budget.

A month ago I had the honor of sitting in this Chamber for the first time and seeing a President of the United States deliver in person a State of the Union message. In that message he told us and he told the country that he would submit and we would balance the budget. I believed the President then and I still believe that he intends to work toward that goal. But, Mr. Speaker, as we know, the budget that the President submitted to this Congress does not balance, and that fact has been made clear by the Congressional Budget Office, which is bipartisan.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday we passed a resolution calling on the President to again submit a budget to this Congress that is balanced and, Mr. Speaker, as a Republican I pledge to this House and to the country that when the President does take that action, I will work with him and work with my colleagues across the aisle to ensure that we fulfill that obligation to the American people.

□ 1015

ANNOUNCEMENT OF FORMATION OF CONGRESSIONAL CHILDREN'S CAUCUS

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to say to the American people that we do care, and I am very proud to announce the formation of the Congressional Children's Caucus, comprised of Democrats and Republicans who are concerned about children, and I think one of our early charges is to ensure that our children all over America have health care.

Mr. Speaker, 1 in 7 children are uninsured. We find that 9 out of 10 children without insurance have working parents every single day.

As a local elected official, I offered to our local community the importance of preventive health care to work with our families to ensure that our children were immunized and that our children saw the kind of health care that will give them a better quality of life.

Now, according to the report issued by the Census Bureau, one-third of American children do not have private health insurance, and yesterday the Children's Defense Fund said unless action is taken now 12.6 million children will be uninsured by the year 2000.

We must have a child health care insurance, and we must ensure that we care. Let America know that we care.

BECAUSE WE ARE BEING FLOODED BY COCAINE FROM MEXICO WE MUST TAKE STRONG STEPS

(Mr. SOUDER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, we have an important vote coming up today on decertification of Mexico, and this is not a battle over whether we are friends or not friends. Like it or not in Mexico and like it or not in America, we are going to have to work together like close friends have to work together, and part of working together is trying to address joint problems.

There is a feeling sometimes that we are trying, as Big Brother, to force our will on Mexico without reducing our own demand. We are working aggressively to reduce our demand. In America we have drug dogs in our schools, we are building more prisons then we ever dreamed we needed to, we have upped our treatment and our prevention budgets by 50 percent. But the reason we are doing this is an example front-page headline in Ft. Wayne last week: ''I–69 Crash Linked To Cocaine And Pot.''

A youngster on cocaine and marijuana flipped his car, landed on a pickup driven by another young person, which then landed on a car driven by another person, which forced it into another vehicle and veered into the median, which then hit a pile up into a sixth vehicle.

Because we are being flooded with cocaine coming in from Mexico we have to take strong steps.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH CARE SHOULD TOP OUR LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Children's Defense Fund released its annual state of America's children. The news is heartbreaking; 1 out of every 7 American children are living today without health insurance; 1 out of every 7 kids. It is a national disgrace. The vast majority of these kids live in families where one or both of their parents work. Their folks work hard and they play by the rules, but they are caught in the middle, not poor enough to qualify for Medicaid, but unable to afford private health insurance for their families.

It is time for the Republican leadership to focus on this problem. There are 10 million reasons why we must do this: For the 10 million children in this country who are living without health insurance. But we only need one, the fact that the American people are counting on us to make this world a better place for their families.

We cannot have healthy families without healthy kids. We need to address this crisis, we need to move this issue on to the top of the legislative agenda.

REPUBLICAN AGENDA DOES NOT ADDRESS THE NATION'S UNINSURED CHILDREN

(Mr. PALLONE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, following up on my colleague from Connecticut [Ms. DELAURO], I want to reiterate again this report that came out from the Children's Defense Fund that was in today's Washington Post. Once again there is another article in another major newspaper on the number of children in this country who do not have health insurance.

According to the General Accounting Office, this is an all time high. Not only one out of seven children, as was mentioned, do not have health insurance, but if we do not make this a top priority, we are going to have even more serious problems. The Children's Defense Fund report says that unless action is taken now 12.6 million children will be uninsured by the year 2000.

This news is only for the Republicans. Since last spring Democrats have been developing legislative plans to provide health insurance to the Nation's 10 million uninsured children, but to date there is not a single Republican plan to address this situation. Nor does it look like the GOP has any intention of giving this issue the attention it deserves. The House Republican agenda announced last week made no mention of a plan to insure the Nation's uninsured children.

ONE OUT OF SEVEN CHILDREN IN UNITED STATES DO NOT HAVE HEALTH INSURANCE

(Mr. MCDERMOTT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, 2 years ago the President of the United States said he wanted to give all Americans health care that could never be taken away, affordable health care that could never be taken away.

Now Members of the then minority and now majority take great pride in saying they stopped the President from advancing that particular change in our public policy. The result has been that more and more people are without health insurance in this country.

Now the article in today's Washington Post, page 3, says that one out of seven children in this country do not have insurance. Even more damming than that figure is that 9 out of 10 of those children live in a family where one adult works. These are people who are doing what the American system says we should do: We should work, we should get a job, we should try and take care of our families, but they do not have jobs where they get health care benefits.

Now we have waited for 2 years for the Republicans to offer any proposal, and there is none, and there is no budget that deals with it now.

WE MUST DO MORE TO PROTECT CHILDREN IN OUR SOCIETY

(Mr. GEJDENSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GEJDENSON. Mr. Speaker, never in the history of the world have we had a country with resources abandon its own children. I say to my colleagues, ''It is one thing to say that you are poor, that you don't have the money, that you don't have the resources to get the job done. Well, we have the resources, and in this Congress we're making the choice not to put them where they are needed.''

Frankly, the cost is far more. Many of these children, once crippled by their illnesses, end up in emergency rooms where the cost far exceeds anything that coverage would cost.

This Congress embarrasses itself to talk about bipartisanship and family values and not have the audacity to sit back and take the action. We sit back, we take no action when it comes to the most helpless in our society.

These children are without care. We are a country with the resources. There is no other country today in the world with the resources we have that does not protect its own children.

APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR CONCERNING COMMENTS ABOUT FEDERAL EXPRESS

(Mr. FORD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning deeply concerned and deeply disturbed about the comments of a well-known Republican leader who approached the largest employer in my district, Federal Express, and informed them that it would be duly noted ''if the Federal Express PAC continues to give to the Democrats at the Republican takeover of Congress.''

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, this Republican leader said that business PACs such as Federal Express would ''squirm considerably'' if they continue to give to Democrats.

Mr. Speaker, the employees of Federal Express contributed to their PAC with the expectations that they will not be pressured to promote the interests of one particular party.

Mr. Speaker, this type of actions and conduct is what leads to the grave cynicism and distrust that pervades the American public.

On behalf of the 30,000 employees of Federal Express, the hundreds of thousands of constituents in my district who benefit from the presence of Federal Express, I am asking the appropriate committees in both bodies, as well as the Justice Department, to answer the question: Is this appropriate behavior of one of our well-known Republican leaders?

DISAPPROVAL OF DETERMINATION OF PRESIDENT REGARDING MEXICO

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 95 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 95

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 58) disapproving the certification of the President under section 490(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 regarding foreign assistance for Mexico during fiscal year 1997. The joint resolution shall be considered as read for amendment. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the joint resolution and on any amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion or demand for division of the question except: (1) two hours of debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on International Relations; (2) the amendment recommended by the Committee on International Relations now printed in the joint resolution, which shall be considered as read, shall be in order without intervention of any point of order, and shall not be separately debatable; (3) the further amendment specified in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution, if offered by a Member designated in the report, which shall be considered as read, shall be in order without intervention of any point of order, and shall separately debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent; and (4) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida [Mr. GOSS] is recognized for 1 hour.

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

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

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that, in the consideration of House Joint Resolution 58 pursuant to House Resolution 95, the amendment printed in House Report 105–20 be considered as modified by (1) striking ''the impact of such process on financial markets'' from the text designated as section 6(C); and (2) striking ''on currency markets, international financial markets and merchandise trade flow'' from the text designated as section 6(g)(1)(B) and inserting in lieu thereof ''in enhancing international counter narcotics cooperation''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore [Mr. FOLEY]. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. GINGRICH], the distinguished Speaker of the House.

Mr. GINGRICH. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to take the floor to begin this debate today on the drug war and the specific question of certifying Mexico's role in the drug war to make several points to all of my colleagues which I hope will be noted throughout the debate, and I hope on our side of the aisle that the managers both of the debate on the rule and the debate on the actual bill will help communicate. This is an effort on our part to help the people of Mexico to help the people of Colombia and to help the American people.

All of us are faced with a terrible challenge of international drug lords who are ruthless and who use the profits of American money from sales to Americans in order to sustain a level of violence that is tragic. No American can look at the thousands of Colombians who have died, no American can look at the Mexican prosecutors, the Mexican police who have died risking their lives to try to free their countries from the scourge of drug dealers and then talk in a self-righteous manner about these countries.

We have a challenge in America of ending the drug trade protecting our children and cutting off the flow of money to drug lords wherever they are. We have a challenge as good neighbors to recognize that we need to reach out to help the people of Mexico and to

help the people of Colombia, and yes, there are concerns about decertification, and yes, if you read the law and you answer honestly the questions written in the law, we find ourselves at the point, as the attorney generals of California and Arizona reported, that they felt decertification was appropriate. But we will be offering an amendment later to give the Clinton administration an additional 90 days to find ways to work with the Mexican Government to avoid any such decertification because we believe the key as good neighbors is to work together and to work to honor the memory of those in Colombia and Mexico who have lost their life fighting the drug dealers and to recognize that only by a true team effort in which the American Government and the American people also take on an all-out challenge of defeating the drug dealers here and stopping the drug purchases here and eliminating the flow of American money to other countries.

So I hope all of our colleagues will approach this debate in a positive effort to create a spirit across the Americas of defeating the drug dealers as allies together for civilization.

□ 1030

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

This is a straightforward rule that allows us to bring a resolution with strong bipartisan backing to the floor for timely consideration, as the Speaker has just indicated. The rule allows 2 hours of debate, equally divided between the chairman and ranking member of the Committee on International Relations. It makes in order as the base text House Joint Resolution 58 as amended by the Committee on International Relations and reported by a strong 27 to 5 bipartisan vote.

In addition, it provides for the consideration of an amendment by the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. HASTERT] debatable for 20 minutes, equally divided between the proponent and an opponent. All points of order against the committee amendment and the Hastert amendment are waived. Finally, the rule allows for one motion to recommit, with or without instructions.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is with a certain degree of reluctance that the House takes up this resolution. I believe collectively this body has been a strong supporter of the democratization and stabilization process in Mexico, but it is simply impossible to overlook the evidence we are confronting today on the matter of full cooperation in the war on drugs. That is the test under the certification process.

Mexico has been identified as the source or transfer point for a full 70 percent or thereabouts of the elicit drugs that flow into the United States every year. That is an extraordinary amount. As we seek closer cooperation with Mexico on trade and other areas, we do our closest Latin American neighbors and ourselves no favor if we close our eyes to the endemic corruption that is confounding our efforts in Mexico.

Frankly, many of us were perplexed to see Mexico receive full certification by President Clinton, when countries like Colombia, where the National Police have fought a courageous battle against its drug cartels, were fully decertified. There seems to be a bit of a double standard there.

I think it is true, as we have seen in the certification process this year, that the process is imperfect, some might even say counterproductive. But for today it is the law we have to work with. And if we don't like the certification process, I would refer your attention to provisions in the Hastert amendment to reconsider that process and provide for a high-level counternarcotics commission.

But what are we looking for in Mexico? We are looking for reliable drug enforcement officials to work with us, willingly, effectively and cooperatively.

Many applauded when Mexico mobilized its military in the war on drugs, including myself, making the recent revelations unfortunately about General Gutierrez all the more troubling to us. It seems we were sharing sensitive information about drug cartels with a military man who was involved in fact with those cartels.

We also need evidence that once captured, notorious criminals like Humberto Garcia will be charged, tried and sentenced, not simply allowed to walk out of custody.

Our goal is not to take a step back from the many positive aspects of our relationship with Mexico, and they are many, and we are proud of them. I think the Committee on International Relations resolution does strike the right tone. It is tough, but it is fair, and the Hastert amendment is an additional opportunity for positive cooperation between our two countries.

It is my hope that once the initial reaction has passed, the Mexican Government will respond with a concerted effort to address the specific vital issues outlined in the Hastert amendment, where the United States and Mexico can do a better job of fighting drug traffic together.

Mr. Speaker, notice that I included the United States in the ''can do better'' category, because we all know the problem is not entirely one of Mexico's making. There are demand issues to deal with in the United States and some lingering questions about the commitment and efficiency of our own administration to the fight against drugs. We are working on that. Having said all of that, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the rule and in passing House Joint Resolution 58.

A little candor on the situation in Mexico will advance our cause a lot further than glossing over the rough spots. That is what friends are for.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to a bad rule for a questionable bill and a truly terrible substitute.

Mr. Speaker, this joint resolution is a slap in the face of our Nation's neighbor to the south, and the substitute, which was brought to the Committee on Rules, is a slap in the face of the President of the United States.

It is unrealistic to expect that the Government of a sovereign nation would be willing to cooperate with the United States if Congress passes legislation such as this. It is ludicrous to think that the President would sign anything which directly condemns him, as does the substitute made in order here.

The fact that this resolution has been brought to the floor in this manner, without opportunity to amend it with a more reasonable approach to a problem that everyone agrees is of critical national importance, demonstrates that the majority in this House is not interested in narcotics control. Rather, the majority is demonstrating its first priority is to bash the President and his administration, and then to bash the Government of one of our Nation's closest neighbors.

Mr. Speaker, no would can deny that drugs are the scourge of our society. Mr. Speaker, no one can deny that the influx of drugs from Mexico is a serious problem that affects every level of our society.

While the Mexican Government and President Zedillo have taken important steps toward implementing a meaningful drug control program, many, many serious deficiencies exist, and evidence of corruption is alarming.

None of us can deny that more must be done, much more. The Government of Mexico has not done everything to fully cooperate with our law enforcement agencies, and, despite 52 requests for drug-related extraditions, has not extradited a single Mexican national. This is serious business. But how can we expect another sovereign nation to work with us, to cooperate in our efforts to stem the tide of the influx of this poison into our country, when we move ahead with legislation like House Joint Resolution 58?

We need to step back, Mr. Speaker, and examine the implications of this legislation carefully and rationally. The lives of American children depend upon our actions.

Yesterday the gentleman from New Mexico [Mr. SCHIFF], a Member of the other party, came to the Committee on Rules and made a compelling case for a sense of the Congress resolution which he proposed as a substitute to the committee bill and the substitute offered by the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. HASTERT].

The Schiff substitute recognizes the direct threat that drugs represent to the United States and that the Government of Mexico has failed to undertake measures which would significantly

curb the drug trade and corruption in that country. The language is strong and right on target.

But the Schiff resolution calls on our Government to continue to work with the Mexican Government to dismantle drug cartels and arrest and prosecute their leaders, to achieve compliance with our extradition requests, to increase interdiction, to step up efforts to enhance law enforcement efforts on both sides of the border, and, finally, to identify and eliminate corruption at every level of the Government of Mexico.

The Schiff resolution would have, had this House been permitted to consider it, sent a strong message to the Government of Mexico but would not have sent along with it a direct slap in the face. I offered an amendment to the rule to include the Schiff resolution in the amendments to be considered today, but my amendment was defeated on a straight party-line vote, with all the Republican Members voting against the substitute offered by their own fellow Republican [Mr. SCHIFF].

Mr. Speaker, the ranking member of the Committee on International Relations told the Committee on Rules yesterday afternoon that the current situation with Mexico and the certification process mandated by section 490 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 shows that the law does not work. The President was faced with an extremely difficult choice when he was presented with the choice of certifying or decertifying Mexico. There is little disagreement that this law does not allow the President adequate flexibility to deal both with the drug problem and with the totality of U.S. national interests. The law should be changed.

But in the meantime, there is little reason to believe that the Republican majority should use this outdated law as an opportunity to specifically condemn the President of the United States by bringing forward a substitute resolution which contains language which specifically states that the administration's policies of the past 4 years amount to, ''the failed antidrug policy.''

So, Mr. Speaker, I intend to oppose ordering the previous question on this resolution in order to try to amend the rule to allow the House to consider the sense of Congress resolution proposed by the gentleman from New Mexico [Mr. SCHIFF]. His proposal is reasonable and sends a strong message and encourages greater cooperation between the United States and Mexico. If we are serious about stemming the flow of narcotics into our country, reason and not insults should prevail.

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

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York [Mr. SOLOMON], the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Rules.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, here on the floor and back in your offices, you know, there is a war going on in this country. Unfortunately, it is a one-sided war. The only people that are fighting are the drug lords, the people that are killing our young children. And we, including our allies, are doing little to fight that war.

I do not have to tell my colleagues I have spoken out many times on this floor about the illegal drug use in this country, criticizing the Mexican Government, the Colombian Government, and yes, criticizing the American Government, and yes, criticizing this Congress as well for not fighting that war.

In my view, if we are going to get results in our foreign affairs, we simply must be willing to use the stick once in a while. We cannot just hang that carrot out there and threaten and keep letting them eat the carrots. That is what we do all too often with our foreign policy.

In this case, unless we are prepared to suspend our aid to Mexico, they will know there will never be a penalty for their lack of cooperation in this war.

Has there been cooperation? Not very much.

Consider the comment from Tom Constantine, head of our Drug Enforcement Agency, one of the most credible law enforcement officers in America. I was proud to work with him in the New York State government for many, many years.

He said, ''There is not one single law enforcement institution in Mexico with whom the DEA has an entirely trusting relationship.''

Can you imagine that? That, my friends, is a damning indictment. And that is why I feel Mexico should be decertified.

Let me read some statistics. Seventy-five percent of all the violent crime in America today is committed against our women and children and it is drug-related, 75 percent of all violent crime in America today.

Did we all know that? Does that not mean anything to us?

And let me tell my colleagues something else that is so startling. The Rand Corp. says that 75 percent of all the illegal drug purchases in America today are made by whom? They are made by upper-middle class Americans. I guess my colleagues and I could be put in that category. But recreational drug users who use a little cocaine, sniff a little cocaine or smoke a little marijuana over the weekend, and they come into the innercities and they buy these illegal drugs. That is what creates the territories, and that is what creates the murder.

Did my colleagues know that marijuana use in American 12- and 13-year-olds is up 127 percent over the last 4 years? Did we know among 14- and 15-year-olds that marijuana use is up 200 percent? And it goes higher and higher as you get up.

We are destroying a whole new generation of Americans, financially and physically. And that is why it is part of our fault, because we are not fighting the war inside our boundaries.

But listen to this, 50 to 70 percent of the cocaine entering the United States of America today transits through Mexico. Seventy percent? And 20 to 30 percent of heroin crosses the borders from Mexico. Eighty percent of grown marijuana comes in from Mexico.

Mr. Speaker, we need to fight a battle here, and that is why I would have liked to have seen a much stronger bill than the one we are considering here today. But this House is a body of compromise. And if we were to send any kind of message expressing our dissatisfaction to Mexico, it was necessary to reach a compromise that took care of the concerns, legitimate concerns, like the gentleman sitting over here from Texas that represents border States. We have to take those considerations into consideration, because they believe that a straight decertification would be destabilizing in Mexico.

While this bill grants a waiver of sanctions to the President and while the Hastert amendment made in order by the rule delays decertification for 90 days, it still does send a strong message of our dissatisfaction with Mexico's level of cooperation in the drug war. That is why I am going to do what Ronald Reagan taught me to do, you cannot always have it your own way, you have to compromise. To me, this is a reasonable compromise.

But, Mr. Speaker, after we do this, let us get on with fighting that war to save our children, please.

□ 1045

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. REYES].

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the time to speak on a very, very emotional issue, and a very important issue to us. I want to say to my colleagues in the House that I deeply appreciate the comments made this morning both by the Speaker and the Democratic leader in the context of the Hershey retreat that half of us attended over the weekend. I think it is important that we listen to what the Speaker said immediately preceding these arguments on the rule.

I stand this morning against the rule because I think at times those of us that understand, those of us that have the experience of the impact of decisions made in Congress and how they impact border communities, not border countries, but border communities on both sides of the international boundary are often disregarded and not taken into account.

We have heard this morning, and probably will hear some more, some rhetorical statements such as there is a war going on, that this issue is tough, but fair, that 75 percent of crime committed in this country is related to drugs, and that drug use is up 100 and something percent. We all know this; I know this.

Yet, over the course of the last week or so, I have been talking to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to try to educate them about the implications of something we are about to do that is going to have long-term and profound impact on the relationship that this country has with our neighbor to the south, namely, Mexico.

I think certification of Mexico is critical. I think it is critical not as an issue of checking off on a report card, but I think it is critical from the context of, we cannot expect cooperation, we cannot expect teamwork if we do not provide our fellow members of the team an opportunity to work with us.

I can tell my colleagues from personal experience, experience predicated on 26½ years of working this Nation's border to enforce immigration and narcotic laws, that the issue is tough, the issue is serious. What we are about to do here in voting to decertify Mexico and voting on the alternative amendment is serious business.

This morning we are being watched and monitored throughout Latin America. This morning we are being monitored because people south of our border know that we do not have our own house in order, yet we are taking a position that we are making an attempt to tell people that they have to have their house in order.

I think it is critically important that we understand that a vote for this rule is a vote that ultimately will come back to haunt us in many different ways, including a profound way where our neighbor to the south may choose a path and a road that ultimately comes back to haunt not just us, not those of us in this Congress today, but ultimately future relationships with future generations of this country. I think we deserve better; I think our children deserve better.

I think we need to step back and we need to have a cooling-off period. From that perspective, I appreciate having had an opportunity to be heard by the Speaker, by the leader, and by Members of both sides of the aisle in terms of what I offer in terms of my experience on that border.

I would urge my colleagues to vote against this rule because it is the wrong thing to do at the wrong time and gives us the wrong kinds of consequences.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to my distinguished colleague, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. DIAZ-BALART].

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Florida for yielding me this time.

I am sorry that my friends on the other side of the aisle do not seem to grasp that one of the essences of democracy is permanent dissatisfaction. I am among those who believe that the resolution that came out of the Committee on International Relations, decertifying the Mexican Government for its blatant and obvious actions, is not fulfilling the responsibilities of all governments in fighting drug trafficking.

I would have supported that resolution if I had been in the Committee on International Relations, and would have preferred that it be the final product today in this House. But as a consequence of a negotiation, a bipartisan negotiation, a very intense negotiation over the last couple of days, there is an amendment that is made in order by this rule that I fully support, an amendment by the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. HASTERT], that while not satisfying many of us, I think at least moves forward in a way that both sides of the aisle and all positions should appreciate this morning.

The gentleman from Illinois [Mr. HASTERT] says that it postpones decertification of the Mexican Government for 90 days, and gives an opportunity to the Mexican Government to show good faith in very concrete ways in the field against the fight against narcotrafficking within these 90 days, and avoid decertification if those steps are taken. I think that is a reasonable measure, a reasonable measure that both sides of the aisle should support. People from the border States as well as from the rest of the country should support and express gratitude to the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. HASTERT] and the Speaker and all others who have so diligently worked for that compromise on both sides of the aisle.

However, I think that even a more important aspect of the Hastert amendment is that this obviously hypocritical and fatally flawed certification process is put under the microscope, and a commission will be created to look at this process, a process that while it says that the Colombian Government, and obviously there is a very serious allegation of the President of Colombia having taken money directly from drug traffickers during his campaign, that is a very serious allegation; while Colombia is decertified, though Colombia has perhaps given the largest quota of blood against the narcotraffickers, the soldiers, the policemen of Colombia, they have given the largest quota of blood against the drug traffickers programs in the entire hemisphere, yet they are decertified.

At the same time, the Mexican Government, infiltrated to the teeth by narcotraffickers, infiltrated to the extent that hours after our President certified Mexico, a major drug trafficker was let out and apparently given a Mercedes to leave, despite that, Mexico was certified and Colombia is decertified.

And wait a minute. The most corrupt government in the hemisphere, even more corrupt than the PRI government, the government of gangsters, by gangsters and for gangsters, the government of the dictator Castro, no, our Government said no, they should not be on the list of people that have to be certified. They are cooperating, Castro is cooperating.

That is what the administration says, despite the fact that I have on video our local drug-fighting authorities in south Florida saying that over 50 percent of the cocaine that comes in through the Caribbean comes by and through Cuba, and yet the Clinton administration says no, they should not be on the list.

This certification process is flawed, it is hypocritical, it is discriminatory, it has to be put under the microscope. The amendment of the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. HASTERT] does that.

Let us look at this process, let us see if there is a better way to cut back on drug trafficking, to reduce consumption and avoid the politicization of this process which is obviously occurring, and I think that my friends on the other side of the aisle would agree. So let us support the Hastert amendment, let us be bipartisan, let us be serious, and let us avoid petty politics.

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

Mr. Speaker, a President of the other party, Mr. Nixon, once observed, watch what I do, not what I say.

The folks on the other side are following that advice, of course. They are claiming to be bipartisan, claiming sweetness and light, and then they bring forward the Hastert amendment on which Democrats were not consulted. They brought it to the Committee on Rules, imposed on a straight party line vote, and they used the Hastert amendment to attack the President and his administration. Let me read from the Hastert amendment which they are presenting as this wonderful compromise.

On page 4:

> United States Government strategy has been weak in responding to statutory deadlines, has been characterized by an absence of statutorily mandated measurable goals, lack of effective coordination and program accountability, and often untargeted and insufficient funding, from the smallest agencies involved in the drug war up to and including the White House Drug Policy Office.

They are not talking about another country, they are talking about our President in our own country.

They further say:

> United States Government policy has emphasized additional funding for unproven drug treatment techniques at the expense of accountable drug prevention programs that effectively teach a right-wrong distinction.

And then they go on to say:

> For the past four years, United States Government strategy has failed to use the media to communicate a consistent, intense anti-drug message to young people.

The folks on the other side, in praising this compromise, I guess they are compromising between their right wing and their far right wing, the amendment offered by the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. HASTERT], neglect to tell us that what they are doing is condemning the President of the United States, condemning the activities of our own Government in trying to counteract this drug trade.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas [Ms. JACKSON-LEE].

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for his kindness.

Mr. Speaker, I rise with the same kind of outrage that has been expressed by my colleagues, but I also understand the frustration and the pleas that has been made by the gentleman from Texas [Mr. REYES]. So I rise in opposition to the rule because I believe there is more that could have been done.

It is crucial that we acknowledge that this is not, this question of drug usage and drug devastation, it is not a Democratic problem or a Republican problem, it is an American problem. I think it is important for us to rise on this floor and come together to associate ourselves with a resolution that is an American resolution.

The Federal Government now spends currently $15 billion per year in the war on drugs. But, interestingly enough, as it is under President Clinton, it has not been substantially or was not substantially different under President Bush. We focused a lot on border control, interdiction, law enforcement, punishment, and prevention. We do work some with education, treatment, and rehabilitation.

Individuals in my community suffer extensively. Black men comprise 12 percent of the total population; 13 percent of drug users, 35 percent of arrests and 55 percent of convictions.

I want a real solution. I want to acknowledge that there are problems with Mexico, but yet we can find data that says that the Mexican officials seized 30 percent more marijuana in 1995, which in turn was up 40 percent over 1994. Cocaine seizures went from 22.2 tons to 23.8 tons, and heroin seizures increased 78 percent from 1995.

So I think we need to recognize that work has been done. We have sufficiently cooperated with many Mexican officials so that the extradition process has been expanded.

I want to see us come together around solutions, to emphasize treatment, to emphasize the importance of bringing down the desire for drugs in our community. I do not want to see us not recognize the problems in Colombia or Mexico, but I do realize that we must do more about international smuggling, we must do more about money laundering, and in that instance I am disappointed that the Schiff amendment substitute was not considered to be brought to the floor of the House. I appreciate that there were those who supported this in the Committee on Rules.

□ 1100

This had viable solutions by offering it as a sense of Congress:

First, the suggestion to dismantle major drug cartels and arrest and prosecute leaders of such cartels; that we would continue to work to implement effective legislation for Mexico to prohibit money laundering.

We would also like to achieve compliance with Mexico with outstanding extradition requests, and that effort has been enhanced; we need more of that. That we would work to increase the interdiction of narcotics and other controlled substances, and we would do more on prevention and treatment, I might add.

It again does this Congress no good and it does us great ill, if you will, in international relations and working with countries to improve this cooperative effort in fighting drugs if we castigate an administration that has shown itself well with the drug czar, that we are concerned about decreasing the amount of drugs that have come into this country, and to have an amendment on the floor that has been offered now that gives some and then takes some away by castigating the hard work of DEA agents, border control agents, and the various other Federal employees that have worked so hard with local government, with the President, and treatment programs, it does not show itself well, and does not get the job done in terms of helping Mexico do what it is supposed to do.

I am frustrated by this process. I want action, but I want us to recognize that it is an American problem and we must treat it as such, to make sure we can fight this drug problem and help the American citizens get rid of it.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. PAUL].

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

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, today, we are potentially faced with a vote to decertify Mexico for not cooperating with the United States to adequately fight the war on drugs. This is yet another of the truly frustrating votes in which a Member of Congress is forced to choose between two alternatives, both of which mandate not only an unconstitutional use of American taxpayer's dollars but pursue an ineffective policy action.

President Clinton recently certified Mexico as a good drug warrior. However, absent some procedural maneuvering to remove a waiver that allows the President to release Mexican foreign assistance notwithstanding decertification, the only choice we as Members of Congress will be left with is: First, certify Mexico and further encourage an obviously corrupt political regime to continue its corruption-based, prohibition-era-style activities with a check from the United States taxpayers in the amount of $25 million; or, second, decertify Mexico and pressure that same regime to increase its corruption-based, prohibition-era-style activities with a check from the United States taxpayers in the amount of $25 million.

Voting against certification does little more than pressure Mexico to pretend it's cracking down on drug producers. Voting for certification condones the President's position that Mexico is doing everything possible and the corruption remains both ignored and subsidized. This vote has become meaningless; the process of Mexican certification has become a kind of political dog and pony show. Unfortunately for the American taxpayer, foreign aid will continue to flow to Mexico regardless of the vote and regardless of whether this money accomplishes anything positive or productive.

Today's war on drugs consists of inherently defective tactics and, as such, a new approach to the drug problem is desperately warranted. If we are going to be honest with ourselves, we would have to decertify our border guards, prison wardens, and school principals; after all, we cannot even keep drugs out of our own country, prisons, or schools.

We never seem to learn anything from our failures. Two years ago Texas banned smoking in all prisons. The price of a 99-cent pack of cigarettes suddenly soared to $25 within the prison system, yet smoking continues while corruption thrives. Just last year, 40 prison employees faced felony charges for dealing in cigarettes.

I cannot possibly vote to certify Mexico as a drug warrior obediently taking orders from the United States Government. How can I in good conscience vote for a resolution to decertify Mexico whether it has teeth in it or not since our whole approach to the drug problem is flawed and doomed to fail. Most Members recognize this and thus, the frustration with this resolution.

This resolution, whether it passes or fails, embraces and subsidizes the same flaws prohibition-era approach and does little more than increase potential corruption and crime. The sooner we realize and acknowledge this, the better.

I urge a no vote on the rule.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3½ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN] the chairman of the Committee on International Relations.

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

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Resolution 95, the rule for consideration of House Joint Resolution 58.

First, I would like to thank the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GOSS] for his skillful work on this proposed rule, and the gentleman from New York [Mr. SOLOMON], chairman of the Committee on Rules, for his support of our resolution.

House Joint Resolution 58, introduced by the gentleman from Florida [Mr. SHAW], disapproves the President's recent certification that Mexico had cooperated fully with the United States' antidrug efforts last year. This resolution of disapproval was reported favorably by the Committee on International Relations by a bipartisan vote of 27 to 5. This measure is supported by our ranking member, the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. HAMILTON] as well as the leadership of both parties.

Mr. Speaker, the latest data indicates that 60 percent of the illegal drugs entering our Nation passed through Mexico. That figure may be higher. It is a conservative estimate. If we do not work together to confront this problem, thousands of Mexican and American citizens, particularly our young people, will pay a terrible price. That is why we expect that our friends in Mexico would give their very best efforts, along with our Nation, to confront this terrible threat.

Regrettably, I have reached the conclusion that Mexico's government up until now has not shown the kind of full commitment that is needed.

We acknowledge that Mexico has indeed been open to new antidrug initiatives. For that we commend them. But that cooperation was completely undermined because Mexico's antidrug chief was actually on the payroll of that country's most powerful cartel. He is now in prison.

We also recognize that several massive drug syndicates continue to operate with impunity in Mexico.

Mr. Speaker, our DEA administrator, Tom Constantine, told Congress just a few days before the President's certification that there is not one single law enforcement institution in Mexico with whom DEA has an entirely trusting relationship.

In short, this administration gives Mexico a failing grade for its antidrug cooperation last year. But it would allow the President to maintain aid programs that are important to us, including some forms of counternarcotics aid that might otherwise be prohibited to a decertified country.

I believe that is a responsible approach to this thorny issue.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 95 provides for a full and fair debate on this issue. It is time we establish a relationship that is trusting and meaningful. We must end the divisiveness that surround drugs, and the best way to do this is to lance this boil and develop real, substantive counter-drug cooperation.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to call our colleagues' attention to a New York Times editorial of March 12 of this month entitled ''Mexico Without Illusions,'' in coming out for decertification, stating: ''Unless President Zedillo attacks these problems boldly by initiating a thorough housecleaning of corporate officials, Congress should override Mexico certification.''

I urge our Members to support the rule on House Joint Resolution 58 and to support final passage of the measure.

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD the editorial I mentioned.

The material referred to is as follows:

[From the New York Times, Mar. 12, 1997]

MEXICO WITHOUT ILLUSIONS

Congress and the Clinton Administration appear headed for a collision over Mexico. Just weeks before President Clinton is scheduled to visit Mexico, Congress is moving to override the Administration's disingenuous certification that its Government is fully cooperating in the fight against illegal drugs. A successful override would invite a diplomatic confrontation with Mexico. But the crisis would be worth enduring if it led Washington to a more realistic appreciation of Mexico's problems and of President Ernesto Zedillo's failure to address them with sufficient resolve.

The Administration invited a Congressional rebuff when it pretended all was well with Mexican drug enforcement. It acted immediately after a series of embarrassing incidents made plain that pervasive corruption in Mexico's police, military and ruling party has blunted drug enforcement and led Mexican officials to withhold vital information from American authorities.

Only days before the certification decision came word that Mexico's recently appointed drug enforcement chief had been arrested for corruption, and that news of his downfall had been kept secret for nearly two weeks.

Largely because of this breakdown of enforcement and cooperation, well over half the cocaine entering the United States now passes through Mexico. Mexico has become the principal conduit for South American cocaine as well as a supplier of homegrown marijuana and heroin.

Mexico already resents the idea of a Washington report card on its law enforcement efforts. The insult would be far greater if Mexico received a failing grade, even if the Administration, as it surely would, waived the economic penalties that decertification could bring. The annual drug certification review is of a useful process. But as long as it is required by law, Washington does best to tell the American people, and itself, the truth.

In Mexico's case, that truth is cause for considerable concern. The drug enforcement problems are symptomatic of a deeper crisis in Mexican political life.

The old regime, represented by the Institutional Revolutionary Party, or PRI, has used patronage networks and, on occasion, electoral fraud to monopolize Mexico's presidency and dominate its politics for nearly seven decades. It is now in deep disarray, unable to reform itself and unwilling to give way to a more democratic and accountable system. President Zedillo is a weak but decent leader, apparently too beholden to the PRI establishment to reform it.

He has failed, for example, to move aggressively to clean up the notoriously drug-corrupted Federal Judicial Police. Mr. Zedillo has instead relied on regular army generals who are themselves proving vulnerable to bribery and other abuses. New reports link army drug fighters to a series of mysterious kidnapping incidents. Mr. Zedillo has failed to challenge federal and state politicians whose failure to halt drug trafficking in their areas of jurisdiction suggests either active complicity or incompetence.

With a long common boarder and a wide array of common interests the United States has compelling reasons to maintain constructive relations with Mexico. But such relations can only be based on an honest assessment of Mexican conditions, including the obvious problems now afflicting its drug enforcement programs.

Unless President Zedillo attacks these problems boldly by initiating a thorough housecleaning of corrupt officials, Congress should override Mexico's certification.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes and 30 seconds to our colleague and friend, the distinguished gentleman from California [Mr. DREIER], vice chairman of the Committee on Rules.

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

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, the gentleman from Sanibel, FL, for yielding me this time.

I would like to say to the House that sometimes we have a tendency around here to do what makes us feel good, rather than what is actually the right thing to do. Clearly, the politically expedient best thing to do is to bash the living hell out of Mexico.

I have plenty of grist for criticism of what we have seen from Mexico, but we have to ask this question, Mr. Speaker: What does it get us? What does decertification get us? What does listing a whole load of items that would exacerbate the anti-gringo sentiment from Mexico get us in this war which, frankly, we are in large part responsible for?

If Members will look at a country that is trying to emerge and bring about economic reforms and political reforms, as Mexico is, and it is a long and difficult struggle, and it has not been as successful as we would like, but if we look at the problems that exist there and then look at the magnet of $30 billion which we in this country are providing, it obviously has to impose quite a strain on Mexico.

There is a sense that every government official in Mexico is corrupt. We know that is not the case. There have been 25 assassinations which have taken place in Mexico. Loads of judges, police officers, and a wide range of other people are strongly committed in Mexico to dealing with this scourge of drugs. But obviously the $30 billion which we are providing as consumers here in the United States has clearly played a role in creating that corruption.

I will support the manager's amendment compromise, but I have trouble with it. Why? Because as we look at that litany of criticisms that we are going to be imposing, which we are going to be leveling at the Mexican Government, it seems to me it will make it tougher for them to try and deal with many of these items.

Why? Because of the political problems that exist in Mexico, as I said earlier, that anti-gringo sentiment. So I will say that reluctantly I will join in support of this compromise, and hope that we can do so in a bipartisan way and deal with this very, very serious problem.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 additional minutes to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. REYES].

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding the additional time to me.

Mr. Speaker, I would call attention to a Dear Colleague letter that I sent out to my colleagues yesterday. It is a follow-up to another letter that I had sent last week, and before I read a portion of this, I would like for my colleagues in the House to know that when I first heard about the question of certification of Mexico for this year, I was in El Paso. I sent a letter to the President urging him to certify Mexico. I did so because the impact that decertification would have on border communities on both sides of the international border would be devastating.

We have a border that is interdependent economically. We have a border where we have made significant progress since the passage of NAFTA, and I know that NAFTA for some of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle is still an issue of controversy. But the progress that we have made is significant.

One of the things that I want the record to reflect that has not been mentioned here is that Mexico has not been sitting on its hands. Mexico has lost a presidential candidate to their effort on the war on drugs. Mexico has lost a bishop to the war on drugs. Mexico has lost a number of clergy that stand up and address drug trafficking and the scourge of the impact of drugs on the society in Mexico, and they have paid with their lives, they have paid with their lives.

Mexico has in the past lost lives of its policemen and soldiers fighting in remote regions of that country against very well-financed and well-armed drug traffickers. So the price Mexico has paid has been significant.

I think when we get caught up in the rhetoric and in the language even of the certification process, where we say we have to have proof that they have fully cooperated, well fully can mean different things to different people. One of the issues here has to be clearly defined and attainable goals in the context of what we expect on this war on drugs, clearly defined objectives, even of what we expect of ourselves.

We should not be on the floor taking this opportunity to again take it out on Mexico in terms of the frustration that we all feel about the impact of drugs in our communities. I think we can reach consensus on this floor on both sides of the aisle that all of us are opposed to narcotics, all of us are opposed to seeing what is going on, even in the neighborhoods around this great institution.

I think we have to understand that from the perspective of the Mexican Government, from the perspective of the Mexican people, decertification, even decertification with a waiver, even with the amendment that we will be voting on and are considering this morning, in all probability, even with all of those things being fully understood by Mexico and Mexican citizens, it is still an affront to them, and an affront to the price they have paid in helping us to try to deal with what can best be termed, from my experience, as an issue of national security for this country. But we forget in the process that it is also a threat on the national stability and the national security of Mexico.

I would urge my colleagues to step back and rethink their position on this. I thank the gentleman for the time.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to yield 1 minute and 15 seconds to the distinguished gentleman from Ohio [Mr. OXLEY], well known in the areas of commerce.

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

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, I served 10 years on the Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse and Control, and having dealt with this issue for a number of years, I truly come to the floor today with mixed emotions. One of the things I learned, I think, long ago when I came to this body was to listen to the folks who are closest to the problem.

When I listen to my colleagues from Texas, from Arizona, from southern California, and they explain to me the difficulties of the decertification process, and what it is going to mean to our relations with our neighbors to the South, I think it behooves us to listen to those arguments.

This is not a partisan issue. While I agree with all of the failed antidrug policy indictments in this resolution with this administration, that is really beside the point. The point is how do we solve the problem of drugs coming in through our borders from Mexico.

I am not certain that the approach we take today, whether it is the Hastert approach or the approach from the committee, really gets that job done. If I had a problem in the Great Lakes region, I would hope that other Members from other parts of the country would listen to my particular problem and pay me some heed, because I might know what I am talking about.

I think we ought to really take a look at the arguments being made by our friends on the southern border, and take that into account before we cast this important vote.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. BARTON].

(Mr. BARTON of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

□ 1115

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman from Texas for yielding me the time.

I rise with some degree of uneasiness because I believe I have established a reputation in this body as one of the strongest antidrug crusaders that there is. With the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Rules [Mr. SOLOMON], we have been successful in having a rule put in that sometime in this Congress there needs to be a drug testing plan put in for Members of Congress. At one time I had a full-time antidrug coordinator on my staff in Texas.

I have consistently voted for the most tough and effective measures to fight the war on drugs so that it would appear that I would stand in support of the rule and in support of the resolution to decertify Mexico. I am not going to do that. I spent 2 days in Mexico this past weekend. I am convinced that, while they have problems in their antidrug efforts, President Zedillo and his Government are making a good-faith effort to be a good-faith partner with the United States in the war against drugs.

If we go ahead today, report this rule, report the resolution and pass either the Gilman resolution that came out of committee or the Hastert substitute, what we are doing is an exercise in self-flagellation. Neither of those has true sanctions. One waives the sanctions, the other delays it for 90 days.

So we have a symbolic effort where we are pointing fingers at Mexico with no teeth behind the finger pointing which is going to infuriate not the Mexican Government but the Mexican people. When the gentleman from Florida [Mr. STEARNS] and the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. BOUCHER] and myself were in Mexico over the weekend, all the Mexican papers had front-page headlines that Mexico viewed this as a very serious issue of national sovereignty. Quite frankly, they could not understand how we could be thinking about decertifying their Government without decertifying our Government.

For example, there are 20,000 Mexican troops in the field eradicating marijuana crops. How many law enforcement officials are in the United States eradicating marijuana crops? My information is the answer in the United States is zero. Last year the Mexican Government extradited or expelled 16 people to this country that were wanted on either murder charges or drug charges or charges of that nature. How many did we expel to Mexico? My understanding is the answer is zero.

I could go on and on, and in the debate later in the afternoon I will go into some detail. But the pure point of the matter is, if we continue with this exercise, we are going to make the House of Representatives irrelevant in a true dialog with Mexico and the administration on the war against drugs. We need to be involved. We have got expertise in this House that needs to be involved, but a symbolic vote that is a 1-day political victory is not the answer. I hope we would vote against the rule and, if that passes, vote against the resolution.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Ohio [Mr. TRAFICANT].

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

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, I support the rule, and I was an original cosponsor of the bill. I support the bill. I do not mean to demean or condemn the President, I am just a pragmatist and I keep a look at the scoreboard. As high as 50 to 70 percent of all narcotics comes through and from Mexico, and, if there is a war on drugs going on in America, I am Stonewall Jackson. I liken certifying Mexico as a cooperative partner in our war against drugs as giving a special tax exemption to Al Capone during Prohibition to sell booze.

Nothing personal against Mexico. It is not working. American cities are busting at the seams with narcotics.

Let me say this to the Congress. Other than a nuclear threat, that is the greatest national security threat our Nation faces and every citizens feels it in every city across this country. In fact, I do not think the bill goes far enough. I recommend to the majority party that they bring to the floor the

Traficant bill that does not mandate but allows for the deployment of military troops falling out of chairs without armrests all over the world, put them on our border, not to make arrests but simply to detain and keep both illegal immigrants out and narcotics. Mr. Speaker, if we are going to have a war on drugs, we cannot do it with the Peace Corps. It is time to start fighting. I support the rule. I support the bill.

I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida [Mr. MICA].

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I am going to vote against the rule, and I am going to vote against the Hastert amendment. Let me tell my colleagues why.

In the 1980's, I helped draft the certification laws as a staffer in the other body. If we read the Hastert amendment, it requires a studying, the decertification process. I come before my colleagues to say that we do not need to study the decertification process. We need to toughen the decertification process and the penalties against countries that traffic in drugs. The 1986 Antidrug Abuse Act established four very clear criteria, tests of cooperation. Let me read them.

It requires steps that would prevent smuggling. And how can anyone in their consciousness certify Mexico when Mexico has 70 percent of the cocaine coming into the United States, when they do not even produce one gram of cocaine that is not naturally produced there? So it is all being smuggled. So by that criteria, do they judge cooperation? Punish money laundering? They have not prosecuted one person under their money laundering law.

Achieve maximum reductions in drug production? Achieve maximum reductions? Eighty percent of the marijuana is coming out of Mexico; 30 percent of the heroin flooding our streets and our neighborhoods and our schools. Are they cooperating with the letter of the law? No.

Do they facilitate the prosecution of traffickers, as the law says to the maximum extent possible? This is what Tom Constantine, the head of DEA, told our subcommittee just before certification.

> There is not one single law enforcement institution in Mexico with whom DEA has a trusting relationship.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Florida [Mr. SHAW], my colleague who is in fact the original proposer of the resolution.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

I ask to speak immediately after one of the cosponsors of the resolution that is going to be before the House today, my friend, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. MICA].

I rise in support of this particular rule. Plain and simple, regardless of where you come down on the Hastert amendment, if you want to vote on the decertification process you must pass this rule. Otherwise, it is not going to happen. It is a question of do you just want to have a sense of the Congress, business as usual in our war against drugs, then vote against the rule. It is that simple.

Now, the fact that we vote for the rule does not mean that we have to vote for the Hastert amendment. I have some very, very serious problems with the Hastert amendment and in all probability will vote against it. However, this is a good rule. I think there are plenty of good things in the Hastert amendment, but there are some things that I would have dropped out.

I think to put the criticism of the administration, even though I think it is deserved, but I think to put that into the bill and then ask the Democrats to vote for it is going to be pretty much of a tough call.

I think also the question of setting up a commission should be done by a separate bill, and I think it should have moved separately through the House. But please, if Members feel that Mexico has not fully cooperated, the bill says, the certification process says, that the President certifies that Mexico has cooperated, fully cooperated, with us, they cannot possibly vote for certification. Therefore, approve the rule and vote for the bill.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Georgia [Mr. BARR].

Mr. BARR of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, as one of the original cosponsors of the resolution calling for the decertification of Mexico, I rise today in support, not wholehearted support of this rule but in support of it nonetheless because it is important, Mr. Speaker, to at least take one small step for the people of this country and let the Government of Mexico know that its days of getting a free ride and having us worry more about Mexico's self-esteem and our children and drugs on our streets has, indeed, come.

We have witnessed some rather strange things during even this preliminary debate on the rule, Mr. Speaker. We have heard Members call for a cooling-off period. A cooling-off period? We have had a cooling-off period for several years in this country which has given us an unprecedented level of teen drug usage.

We have also witnessed a cooling-off period in this country over the last few years that has skyrocketed the amount of drugs coming into this country, and not from 134 counties thousands of miles away but from Mexico itself, which stands before us today trying to convince the American people and this Congress that it is doing everything that it can to stop that flow. Nothing could be further from the truth.

We have also heard Members take to the well of this great body and try to make us feel guilty about standing up and saying the time has come to say that Mexico is not doing everything it can. Rather than a cooling-off period, Mr. Speaker, we need to turn up the heat, and the only way that we can do that is to stand up and say, Mexico must be decertified.

There may be circumstances prevailing here that allow for a waiver, but it must be decertified because, Mr. Speaker, that is the truth. That reflects reality, and it is time to get real in the fight, in the war against drugs which this administration has not seen fit to do.

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

There is a serious matter here that is being discussed, of course. And we are saying that this rule is unfair. We are not suggesting that there is not a serious drug problem, that we have serious reasons to question the degree to which we have gotten cooperation, none of that is under question here.

The question is what is the most reasonable policy to make sure that Mexico will in fact continue to cooperate with the United States and continue to do the things necessary to decrease the flow of drugs into our country.

This is not a fair rule that the majority reported out of the committee. They rejected the amendment offered by one of their own Members, a sense of Congress amendment offered by the gentleman from New Mexico [Mr. SCHIFF].

I include the Schiff amendment for the RECORD at this point:

AMENDMENT OFFERED AS A SUBSTITUTE TO THE COMMITTEE AMENDMENT TO H.J. RES. 58 OFFERED BY MR. SCHIFF OF NEW MEXICO

In lieu of the matter proposed to be inserted insert the following:

SECTION 1. CONGRESSIONAL FINDINGS.

The Congress finds the following:

(1) The international drug trade poses a direct threat to the United States and to international efforts to promote democracy, economic stability, human rights, and the rule of law.

(2) 12,800,000 Americans use illegal drugs representing all ethnic and socioeconomic groups, including 1,500,000 cocaine users, 600,000 addicted to heroin, and 9,800,000 smokers of marijuana.

(3) 10.9 percent of all young Americans between 12 and 17 years of age use illegal drugs, and 1 in 4 children say they have been offered drugs in the last year.

(4) Drug-related illness, death, and crime cost the Nation approximately $66,900,000,000 in 1996, including costs for lost productivity, premature death, and incarceration.

(5) The effort to reduce the social and economic costs imposed by drugs on United States society is contingent on the ability to stop drugs at the Nation's borders and to forge effective cooperative relationships with other nations.

(6) According to the Department of State, Mexico is the source of 20–30 percent of heroin, up to 70 percent of the foreign grown marijuana, and a transit point for 50–70 percent of the cocaine shipped to the United States.

(7) Drug traffickers along the United States-Mexico border smuggle about $10,000,000,000 worth of narcotics into the United States annually, and the drug trade generates $30,000,000,000 for the Mexican economy.

(8) There has been a failure to take effective action against drug cartels and other significant narcotics traffickers in Mexico, and the Department of State reports that there has been insufficient effort to confront the Juarez and Tijuana drug cartels.

(9) The Government of Mexico has to date failed to honor a single United States extradition request for Mexican nationals indicted in our courts on charges of narcotics trafficking.

(10) The number of drug seizures in Mexico in 1996 was only half the number of seizures in 1993, and the number of drug-related arrests in Mexico in 1996 was only half the number of such arrests in 1992.

(11) There is evidence of official corruption in counter-drug efforts in Mexico, including the recent arrest of General Jesus Gutierrez, the Government of Mexico's highest ranking counter-drug official.

(12) There has been insufficient coordination between United States and Mexican drug enforcement agencies, including Mexico's refusal to allow United States agents to carry weapons on the Mexican side of the United States-Mexico border.

(13) The banking and financial sectors in Mexico lack mechanisms necessary to prevent money laundering, estimated at nearly $10,000,000,000 in 1996 by the Department of the Treasury.

(14) The Department of State reports that Mexico has become a majority money laundering center and the preferred international placement point for United States dollars.

SEC. 2. SENSE OF THE CONGRESS REGARDING EFFORTS BY MEXICO TO STOP THE PRODUCTION AND TRANSIT OF ILLICIT NARCOTICS.

It is the sense of the Congress that—

(1) the Government of Mexico has made ineffective and insufficient progress to stop the production and transit of illicit narcotics or drugs or other controlled substances; and

(2) the President should work with the Government of Mexico—

(A) to dismantle major drug cartels and to arrest and prosecute the leaders of such drug cartels;

(B) to implement effective legislation in Mexico to prohibit money laundering;

(C) to achieve compliance by Mexico with outstanding extradition requests by the United States, particularly compliance with requests for the extradition of Mexican nationals indicted in the United States on charges of narcotics trafficking;

(D) to increase the interdiction of narcotics and other controlled substances coming across the United States-Mexico border;

(E) to increase cooperation between the Government of Mexico and United States law enforcement officials by allowing such officials to resume carrying weapons on the Mexican side of the United States-Mexico border; and

(F) to establish and carry out a program designed to identify and eliminate public corruption, and to prosecute officials who are involved in such corruption, at every level of the Government of Mexico, including the Mexican police and military.

SENSE OF THE CONGRESS RESOLUTION ON MEXICO CERTIFICATION

Whereas, the international drug trade poses a direct threat to the United States and to international efforts to promote democracy, economic stability, human rights, and the rule of law; and,

Whereas, 12.8 million Americans use illegal drugs representing all ethnic and socioeconomic groups including, 1.5 million cocaine users, 600,000 addicted to heroin, and 9.8 million smokers of marijuana; and,

Whereas, 10.9 percent of all young Americans between twelve and seventeen years of age use illegal drugs; and, one in four children say they have been offered drugs in the last year,

Whereas, drug-related illness, death, and crime cost the nation approximately $66.9 billion in 1996 including costs for lost productivity, premature death, and incarceration; and,

Whereas, the effort to reduce the social and economic costs imposed by drugs on U.S. society is contingent on the ability to stop drugs at the nation's borders and to forge effective cooperative relationships with other nations, and,

Whereas, according to the U.S. State Department, Mexico is the source of 20–30% of heroin, up to 70% of the foreign grown marijuana, and transit point for 50–70% of the cocaine shipped to the United States; and,

Whereas, drug traffickers along the U.S.-Mexico border smuggle about $10 billion worth of narcotics into the United States annually; and the drug trade generates $30 billion for the Mexican economy,

Whereas, there has been a failure to take effective action against drug cartels and other significant narcotics traffickers in Mexico, and the U.S. State Department reports that there has been insufficient effort to confront the Juarez and Tijuana Drug Cartels; and,

Whereas, the number of drug seizures in Mexico in 1996 was only half the number of seizures in 1993, and the number of drug-related arrests in Mexico in 1996 was only half the number of such arrests in 1992; and,

Whereas, there is evidence of official corruption in counter-drug efforts in Mexico; including the recent arrest of General Jesus Gutierrez, the Government of Mexico's highest-ranking, counter-drug official; and,

Whereas, there has been insufficient coordination between U.S. and Mexican drug enforcement agencies, including Mexico's refusal to allow U.S. agents to carry weapons on the Mexico side of the United States border with Mexico; and

Whereas, the banking and financial sectors in Mexico lack mechanisms necessary to prevent money laundering, estimated at nearly $10 billion in 1996 by the U.S. Department of the * * *.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, the committee did not give us a reasonable series of choices. What they presented was the bill out of the committee, out of the Committee on International Relations, and then their own substitute, a Republican crafted substitute in which they took great pains to criticize the President of the United States.

There are Members on their own side of the aisle, on their side of the aisle who do not agree with this position. We should have had a range of choices. There should have been a sense of Congress alternative offer. That is clearly what is going to be done in the other body. That is clearly what is being presented by the Senator from my State, a member of their own party, Senator HUTCHISON. That is what the Senate perhaps will vote on soon. Yet they deny us the right to vote on that option in the House of Representatives.

I would urge that the House vote no on this rule, send this back to the Committee on Rules so that a fair rule may be crafted on this most controversial and most delicate matter of relationships between us and our neighbor to the south, Mexico.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, we all know that the war on drugs is not a partisan matter. It is going to take the full cooperation of all of us in this country and all our friends and allies around the world that are involved. And that, of course, includes Mexico.

The issue today is the question of certification and the facts are very simple. As ranking member of the Committee on International Relations, the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. HAMILTON] said yesterday, There is just simply no possible way that you can come to a rational conclusion that we can possibly certify Mexico as being fully cooperative in the efforts that we are taking together on the war on drugs.

□ 1130

I think that is very strong. I respect the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. HAMILTON], I always have, and I am glad to find myself in agreement with him on this conclusion.

I think that under Chairman GILMAN'S leadership that HIRC has brought forward a very good resolution. I think the Hastert amendment adds to it in a positive way by giving us some specific matters that we wish to set out in areas that we will measure in terms of cooperation from the Mexican Government as well as it brings into question, can we do better than the certification process that we are using now? I believe the answer is yes, we certainly can do better than the process we have now, and I think the key word here is together with Mexico we can make a huge dent in the war on drugs. That is why I strongly urge passage of this rule and passage of the resolution and the Hastert amendment as well.

I would point out that the Schiff amendment is a sense of Congress and does not address the specific issues that we are talking about in the Hastert amendment nor does it get to the question of overcoming the President's certification situation that he has left us with today.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FOLEY). The question is on the resolution.

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

Mr. FROST. 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 213, nays 209, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 45]

YEAS—213

Aderholt
Archer
Armey
Bachus
Baker
Ballenger
Barr
Barrett (NE)
Bartlett
Bass
Bateman
Bereuter
Bilirakis
Bliley
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Brady
Bryant
Bunning
Burr
Burton
Buyer
Callahan
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canady
Cannon
Castle
Chabot
Chambliss
Chenoweth
Christensen
Coble
Coburn
Collins
Combest
Cook
Crane
Crapo
Cubin
Cunningham
Davis (VA)
Deal
DeLay
Diaz-Balart
Dickey
Doolittle
Dreier
Duncan
Dunn
Ehlers
Ehrlich
Emerson
English
Ensign
Everett
Ewing
Fawell
Foley
Forbes
Fowler
Fox
Franks (NJ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Ganske
Gekas
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gilman
Goodlatte
Goodling
Goss
Graham
Granger
Greenwood
Gutknecht
Hall (TX)
Hansen
Hastert
Hastings (WA)
Hayworth
Hefley
Herger
Hill
Hilleary
Hobson
Hoekstra
Horn
Hostettler
Houghton
Hulshof
Hunter
Hyde
Inglis
Istook
Jenkins
Jones
Kasich
Kelly
Kim
King (NY)
Klug
Knollenberg
LaHood
Largent
Latham
LaTourette
Lazio
Leach
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Livingston
LoBiondo
Lucas
Manzullo
McCollum
McCrery
McDade
McHugh
McInnis
McIntosh
McKeon
McKinney
Meek
Metcalf
Miller (FL)
Molinari
Moran (KS)
Morella
Myrick
Nethercutt
Neumann
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nussle
Oxley
Packard
Pappas
Parker
Paxon
Pease
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Pombo
Porter
Portman
Pryce (OH)
Quinn
Radanovich
Ramstad
Regula
Riggs
Riley
Rogan
Rogers
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roukema
Royce
Ryun
Salmon
Sanford
Saxton
Scarborough
Schaefer, Dan
Schaffer, Bob
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shaw
Shays
Shimkus
Shuster
Skeen
Smith (MI)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (OR)
Smith (TX)
Smith, Linda
Snowbarger
Solomon
Souder
Spence
Stump
Sununu
Talent
Tauzin
Taylor (NC)
Thomas
Thornberry
Thune
Tiahrt
Traficant
Walsh
Wamp
Watkins
Watts (OK)
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
White
Whitfield
Wicker
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—209

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Andrews
Baesler
Baldacci
Barcia
Barrett (WI)
Barton
Becerra
Bentsen
Berman
Berry
Bilbray
Bishop
Blagojevich
Blumenauer
Bonilla
Bonior
Bono
Borski
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd
Brown (CA)
Brown (FL)
Brown (OH)
Capps
Cardin
Carson
Clay
Clement
Clyburn
Condit
Conyers
Costello
Coyne
Cramer
Cummings
Danner
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
Dellums
Deutsch
Dicks
Dingell
Dixon
Doggett
Dooley
Doyle
Edwards
Engel
Eshoo
Evans
Farr
Fattah
Fazio
Filner
Flake
Foglietta
Ford
Frank (MA)
Frost
Furse
Gejdenson
Gephardt
Gonzalez
Goode
Gordon
Green
Gutierrez
Hall (OH)
Hamilton
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Hefner
Hilliard
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Holden
Hooley
Hoyer
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
John
Johnson (CT)
Johnson (WI)
Johnson, E.B.
Johnson, Sam
Kanjorski
Kennedy (MA)
Kennedy (RI)
Kennelly
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind (WI)
Kleczka
Klink
Kolbe
Kucinich
LaFalce
Lampson
Lantos
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Lofgren
Lowey
Luther
Maloney (CT)
Maloney (NY)
Manton
Markey
Martinez
Mascara
Matsui
McCarthy (MO)
McCarthy (NY)
McDermott
McGovern
McHale
McNulty
Meehan
Menendez
Mica
Millender-McDonald
Miller (CA)
Minge
Mink
Moakley
Mollohan
Moran (VA)
Murtha
Nadler
Neal
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Paul
Payne
Pelosi
Peterson (MN)
Pickett
Pomeroy
Poshard
Rahall
Rangel
Reyes
Rivers
Roemer
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Rush
Sabo
Sanchez
Sanders
Sandlin
Sawyer
Schiff
Schumer
Scott
Serrano
Shadegg
Sherman
Sisisky
Skaggs
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith, Adam
Snyder
Spratt
Stabenow
Stark
Stearns
Stenholm
Stokes
Strickland
Stupak
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor (MS)
Thompson
Thurman
Tierney
Torres
Towns
Turner
Upton
Velazquez
Vento
Visclosky
Waters
Watt (NC)
Waxman
Wexler
Weygand
Wise
Woolsey
Wynn
Yates

NOT VOTING—10

Clayton
Cooksey
Cox
Delahunt
Etheridge
Hutchinson
Kaptur
Kingston
McIntyre
Price (NC)

□ 1153

Messrs. CUMMINGS, WISE, DELLUMS, SAM JOHNSON of Texas, UPTON, and BONILLA changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Messrs. SHAYS, CHRISTENSEN, and LEACH changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

Mr. SKEEN changed his vote from ''present'' to ''yea.''

Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut and Mr. PAUL changed their vote from ''present'' 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. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, official business off the Hill kept me detained during the vote on House Resolution 95, the rule accompanying House Joint Resolution 58. Had I been present for this vote—rollcall No. 45—I would have voted aye.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 95, I call up the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 58) disapproving the certification of the President under section 490(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 regarding foreign assistance for Mexico during fiscal year 1997, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FOLEY). Pursuant to House Resolution 95, the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN] and the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. HAMILTON] each will control 1 hour.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN].

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

□ 1200

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from California [Mr. BECERRA] be permitted to control 30 minutes of my debate time, and that he be permitted to yield that time at his discretion.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, the minority is pleased to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California [Mr. BECERRA], and I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman be permitted to yield that time at his discretion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. HAMILTON] and the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN]?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore [Mr. FOLEY]. The gentleman from California [Mr. BECERRA] will control 35 minutes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on House Joint Resolution 58.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, this resolution, House Joint Resolution 58, expresses congressional disapproval of the President's February 28, 1997, certification to Congress that Mexico has fully cooperated with our Nation's antinarcotics efforts during the past year. I am pleased to be joined by the gentleman from Florida [Mr. SHAW] in support of our substitute to his original bill, which did not contain any waiver of imposition of sanctions.

Mr. Speaker, the issue before today is nothing less than a matter of vital U.S. national interest, dealing directly with the well-being of our Nation's children and their future. It is not about the value of the peso nor the health of the Mexican economy nor the status of diplomatic relations between our two nations. These critical issues, while extremely important, must not override the importance of fighting drugs in our bilateral relations.

The importance of Mexico's cooperation with our antidrug efforts cannot be overstated, Mr. Speaker. In the past 4 years, drug use among American

teenagers has nearly doubled. It has been estimated that 60 percent of our Nation's illegal drugs entering our country come from Mexico. The societal costs for the impact of these illicit drugs and the drug-related crime, incarceration, health care, among other costs, is staggering, in the billions of dollars.

The President unwisely certified that Mexico has fully cooperated with our antinarcotics efforts, but the facts show the opposite.

Last month, the Mexican equivalent of our DEA administrator, General Gutierrez, was arrested for conspiring with Mexico's largest drug cartel. Only 4 hours after President Clinton certified Mexico's cooperation, the police allowed a top money launderer to walk out of custody as a free man. Mexico withheld that revelation from our officials with whom they were supposed to be fully cooperating.

Drug cartels have penetrated the highest level of Mexico's antinarcotics law enforcement agencies. Our own DEA Administrator, Mr. Constantine admits, ''There is not one single law enforcement institution in Mexico with whom DEA has an entirely trusting relationship.'' Mr. Speaker, such a relationship is absolutely essential.

Tom Constantine of DEA, according to newspaper accounts, also states that the damage from this most recent Mexican law enforcement scandal to our war on drugs appears to be worse than that done by the United States spy, Aldrich Ames.

The New York Times editorial of March 12 on this issue of drug-related corruption said, ''Unless Mexican President Zedilla attacks these problems boldly by initiating a thorough housecleaning of corrupt officials, Congress should override Mexico's certification.'' That is the New York Times March 12 editorial.

The administration's statement that the prompt arrest of General Gutierrez, the head of their DEA, demonstrates Mexico's full cooperation on drugs is sadly analogous to a young man who attempts murder on his parents and throws himself on the mercy of the courts, since he is now an orphan.

The resolution before us is simple. It gives Mexico's drug cooperation a failing grade instead of the President's passing grade. Not only are we changing Mexico's grade on drugs, we are also sending a message to this administration that its international narcotics control strategy is sadly lacking.

In addition, based upon our experience last year when Colombian decertification unintentionally cut off key antidrug support, this resolution gives the President the authority to continue United States assistance to Mexico, particularly military assistance, which is likely our last best hope down there if he certifies it is in our vital national interests.

We have already provided 20 excess Vietnam era Huey helicopters to the Mexican military to fight drugs along our common border and 53 more will soon follow. To suspend FMS assistance and IMET training for the Mexican military now would be counterproductive and render this excess military equipment useless, and that is why we reiterated the waiver.

The strong 27 to 5 vote in our Committee on International Relations vote on March 6 in support of this resolution was evidence of the strong bipartisan sentiment against the President's ill-advised determination of Mexico's real performance in fighting drugs.

Mr. Speaker, I submit to my colleagues that the President made the wrong decision, and this resolution will help us set the record straight, while preserving appropriate assistance and stability in our relations with the Government of Mexico.

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

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to a good friend, the distinguished gentleman from California [Mr. LANTOS].

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Chairman, I thank my friend for yielding me time.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to this ill-conceived piece of legislation and in strong support of the position of the President of the United States.

Mr. Chairman, it is important that we keep this issue in perspective. The drug problem is an American problem. It is our problem. It is a demand-driven issue. If there were no demand for drugs in the United States, the drug lords in Mexico and elsewhere would not be able to sell their products.

Now, it is very easy to vote against Mexico. It is very easy to decertify. But our question should be what can we do to most effectively help the fight against illegal drugs?

Passing this ill-conceived legislation will make the Mexican Government less likely to cooperate with us, and it will make the Mexican people justifiably outraged.

There are far too many courageous Mexican policemen, soldiers, judges, journalists, government officials who have lost their lives in the fight against the drug lords. It is an insult to them to attempt to decertify this Government, which has given us better cooperation than we have ever had from Mexico.

Mr. Chairman, we all understand that the cases of corruption in Mexico are appalling. We understand that there are high-level people who have been paid off, and not all of them are as yet imprisoned. But do we decertify the New York City Police Department when there is corruption? Do we decertify the FBI or the CIA when there is corruption and even the sale of our national secrets?

Mr. Chairman, this legislation today has much more to do with political posturing than with helping fight the drug war. There are no negative political consequences for Members in this House from insulting the Government of Mexico.

Last November, the American people made it clear that they want a bipartisan approach to solving the drug problem. This resolution and its amendment is an insult to the President. The President clearly understands that Mexico's record is far from perfect, but it is better than it has been, and it is critical that this Mexican Government work with us in fighting against illegal drugs.

Mr. Chairman, I urge all of my colleagues to oppose this resolution.

Mr. Hamilton. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 5 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I support the committee-reported version of House Joint Resolution 58. Let me briefly explain what that language does. It disapproves the President's decision to certify that results in the decertification of Mexico. It permits the President, however, to waive the sanctions associated with decertification if he determines it is in the vital national interests of the United States to do so.

Mr. Speaker, we are confronted here with the application of a law which this Chamber passed. That law requires Mexico, in order to be certified, to have fully cooperated with the United States or to have taken adequate steps to deal with the narcotics problem.

I simply do not believe that Mexico's record over the past year meets the law's high standard for full certification.

I am quick to acknowledge that the president here faced a tough decision. He could certify Mexico as having fully cooperated, and that is what he did; he could decertify Mexico, and of course that raises a lot of difficult foreign policy problems for the United States and Mexico; or he could have decertified but exercised the vital national interest waiver that the law provides.

The President made the judgment that he would certify Mexico. By so doing, he found that Mexico had fully cooperated with the United States in the fight against drugs.

I disagree with that judgment. I believe that this decertification-certification statute should be repealed. It forces the President to make a legal assessment without providing adequate options for the policy dilemma that he faced. It forces him to make a narrow judgment about each country at issue. But, my friends in this Chamber, we do not have the privilege of ignoring the law. We may not like the law, and I do not like the law, but we should not evade the law. And the law provides today, the law which most of us in this Chamber voted for, the law provides that Mexico must fully cooperate. Not partially cooperate, not cooperate more today than it did 2 years ago or 4 years ago. The law provides that they must fully cooperate, and I do not think any person can find full cooperation by the Mexican Government in the fight against drugs. Some cooperation, yes. Maybe it is better than a year or 2 years ago, but not full cooperation.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot play fast and loose with the requirements of the law,

because we are the body that makes the law.

Now, let me say if you look back over the past 6 or 7 years, what we have done again and again and again is to find that the Mexicans have cooperated, that they have had great success in combating drugs. Every President has found that now for 7 or 8 years.

We have been deceiving ourselves. We would better serve the national interest, in my view, if we spoke the truth about that cooperation. Some good things, some bad things, but not full cooperation. We should speak the truth, the good and the bad, and we should apply the law. We should not evade the law.

Everybody in this Chamber knows the Mexican record. It does have some good features. The administration believes at the very highest levels of the Mexican Government we are getting good cooperation today. You go down each of the major measures of cooperation, corruption, extradition, the task force, the number of arrests, cooperation on overflight rights and marine agreements and all of the rest, and you cannot find cooperation.

□ 1215

So I believe the best choice here, and the choices are not easy, is to say that the Mexicans should be decertified. But because this relationship with Mexico is so important, because we understand that the national interest of the United States is to stop the flow of drugs into this country, because we understand that we are not going to be able to do that successfully without the cooperation of Mexico, the better thing to do here is to decertify Mexico because they have not fully cooperated, because that is what the statute demands of us, and then to say, because of the importance of this relationship and all of its aspects, we waive, under the national security waiver, and that is the position I think this body should adopt.

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. HAMILTON], our ranking minority member, for his very strong support of our resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take this moment to respond to the gentleman from California [Mr. LANTOS] that said if we did not have demand here at home, we would not have the problem. Amazingly, we used to hear that the U.S. demand is a problem when we discussed this issue with other nations. Not anymore, as these other nations' drug use soars and we see their democratic institutions corrupted and threatened from within and destroyed by the drug barons.

It is even sadder to hear it right here at home. Sure, we must do something about demand, and we are. But an unlimited supply of ever purer, cheaper, and more addictive drugs also creates demand. So we must fight this problem on both the supply and demand side. But we must recognize that the purer and additional supplies coming into our country creates demand, and that is why we are so concerned about the lack of cooperation south of our border.

I would like to note also that the Governor of California, Mr. Wilson, in an article in the Washington Times on March 13 stated, ''Let us stipulate to the existence of a tragically large market for illegal drugs and to our own obligation to reduce demand for them by every available means, but the drug trade is one business in which the abundant supply creates demand.'' That is the Washington Times today by Governor Wilson of California.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California [Mr. HUNTER].

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. HAMILTON], the distinguished chairman of the committee, for yielding to me, and also for his leadership in this area.

I would just say to my colleagues that now is the time to tell the truth. We have a law which is on the books that orders us to make a judgment, and it is time to make that judgment, and I think that the anecdotal evidence and the statistical evidence that tells us that a large part of the drug trade in Mexico and the drug trade through Mexico to America's children is large segments of the government in Mexico. The government is heavily involved in the drug trade.

Now, if we tell that truth, and that is a truth that is manifested in hundreds of case files, in hundreds of cases that are in the possession of the U.S. attorneys and are on the front pages, if you tell that truth, we cannot in good conscience certify that Mexico has been cooperative in the war against drugs.

About 10 years ago, Kiki Camerena, our drug enforcement agent, was murdered in Guadalajara, and Carroll Quintero, who was later jailed for that murder, coasted down the runway before he took off and toasted our DEA agents with a bottle of champagne as they tried to stop him at the Guadalajara airport, and we said, never again.

We entered a new series of talks with Mexico and thought we would have a new bright dawn, a new era. We thought that that era would rejuvenate, when NAFTA was passed, over the objections of some of us, but that was supposed to boost cooperation with respect to the war against drugs, and that did not work.

Last year, Jefferson Barr was murdered in Texas, and we tried to extradite the killer of Mr. Barr, and Mexico did not give us any more cooperation in extraditing that killer than they did with the killers of Enrique Camerena 10 years earlier.

So I would just say to my colleagues, we have a duty, and it is a simple duty, it is an easy duty to discharge, it is a duty to tell the truth. If we erect that fiction that somehow they have cooperated with us when we know they have not, we disserve the people of the United States, we disserve the hard-working people in Mexico and the people who have died in Mexico, the good prosecutors who were assassinated trying to turn this war around, and most of all, we disserve our children.

There is no interest more important than our children and their well-being, and there is no way you can make an argument that somehow making this certification helps them.

Please support the bill.

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Maryland [Mr. WYNN].

Mr. WYNN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member for allowing me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the committee's bipartisan bill to decertify Mexico with the waiver. The fact of the matter is that 75 percent of the cocaine that comes into the United States comes from Mexico. Approximately 25 percent of the heroin that comes into this country comes from Mexico.

Now, my point today is not to lambast the Mexican people. They are certainly fine people. Not to lambast the Mexican police. Many have given their lives for this cause. But the fact of the matter is that the Mexican Government has not complied with our law with respect to full cooperation. That is American law. We only certify if there is full cooperation. There is not full cooperation.

The fact of the matter is that the Mexican drug czar is in league with drug cartels. The fact of the matter is that he lived in a luxury apartment supplied by a major drug dealer. The fact of the matter is that our DEA could not track him because Mexican officials were tracking them. The fact of the matter is there are 150 extradition requests still pending in Mexico where we have requested that they send drug traffickers back to this country for prosecution.

I have to say that I am very concerned when I hear people say, well, this is totally a demand problem. It is not a demand problem, but it is easy to wag your finger at poor kids in the ghettos. It is much harder to take on official corruption, and that is the dual standard that I take offense at.

We should not smooth over this incident. We should say that Mexico has not cooperated fully. But rather, people would like to have harsher penalties on teenagers and mandatory sentences for teenagers. Well, there is a place for that. But there is also a place to stand up and say to the Mexican Government that we expect better performance, we expect a higher standard.

We should not continue to allow business as usual. We will never convince kids in poor communities that we are serious about fighting the war against drugs when all they see is us shaking hands with governments that do business with drug dealers.

Mr. Speaker, I think we can do better; I think the committee has proposed a fair policy, which is to decertify with the waiver.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. BRADY], a member of our committee.

Mr. BRADY. Mr. Speaker, today's vote is a difficult one. As a Texan, we share the largest border with Mexico of any State in the country. Mexico is a valued friend and a neighbor of Texas and of the United States. Clearly America and Mexico have an equal stake in stopping the sale and use of illegal drugs in our countries.

My goal is to support legislation of the United States that will effectively and significantly cut off both the supply and the demand for illegal drugs. I recognize the strong commitment of President Zedillo and the stand taken by individual prosecutors, of judges and law enforcement officials in Mexico to challenge the powerful drug cartels. It is a stand which is often life threatening, and more than 20 times in the past year has resulted in torture, in death, and in assassination for our heroic fighters in the international war on drugs.

But what is even more tragic is that the leadership of President Zedillo and the sacrifice of these individuals has been undone by an all too pervasive corruption within the Mexican Government, within its police force, and within the judiciary. It has been undone by an estimated $6 billion worth of bribes from the drug cartels, $6 billion which General Barry McCaffrey says has severely impaired Mexico's law enforcement system and, in his words, are ruining cooperative United States-Mexico antidrug operations.

In hearings before our committee America's Drug Enforcement Agency confirms that despite repeated efforts, no Mexican law enforcement agency exists today that the United States can trust, no law enforcement agency with which the cooperative antidrug operations can occur without either compromising the operation itself or the agents, honest agents on both sides of the border, in America and in Mexico.

Now, think about this a minute. Think about how the lack of a single law enforcement agency undermines literally every antidrug initiative our two countries undertake. Imagine the likelihood in America. If the FBI, the Drug Enforcement Agency, every State police, every law enforcement agency could not be trusted, no matter the will of Congress, the will of the President, the chance for success in fighting drugs in our country would be hopeless.

I respect Mexico too much to overlook this fatal flaw, and without the immediate creation of a law enforcement agency we can trust, that both countries can trust, our successes will be isolated, our gains temporary, and our cooperation cosmetic at best.

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from Georgia [Ms. MCKINNEY].

Ms. MCKINNEY. Mr. Speaker, for years Mexico has served as a gateway to the United States for drug traffickers. In fact, just 3 weeks ago, Mexico's drug czar was arrested on charges that he took bribes from cocaine dealers. This was just after he received highly sensitive information from U.S. officials detailing our antinarcotic strategy.

Thus, if decertification is what happens to those who have hurt our efforts in the drug war, we must not only decertify Mexico and Colombia, we must also decertify our other unreliable partner in the drug war, the CIA.

Last year the San Jose Mercury News reported that the CIA has had a major role in the flow of illegal narcotics from Mexico and other Latin American countries into the United States. Former financiers of the Nicaraguan Contras, testifying under oath, admitted that the CIA was an active participant in the drug trade and then used the profits to fund covert military operations.

The administration's decision to certify Mexico, decertify Colombia, and sidestep the CIA has made a joke of the entire certification process. I call on the administration and Congress to report to the American people what role the CIA has played in moving drugs in our country.

While drug dealers are preying on America's youth in the inner cities, millions of dollars are being laundered in American banks. Our prisons are brimming over, young people are dying in the streets, and the message that the administration sends is that a buck of trade is worth more than the tears of our mothers, the deaths of our brothers, and the shattered lives of too many American people.

□ 1230

Some of us have just, quite frankly, had enough.

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York [Mr. ACKERMAN].

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to oppose House Joint Resolution 58, as well as the amendment to be offered by the distinguished gentleman from Illinois [Mr. HASTERT], because I believe the resolution and the amendment send the wrong message to Mexico at a very critical time.

Even with a waiver of the sanctions, the damage will have already been done. Clearly the President had and we have a difficult and unpleasant decision to make. Mexico has serious problems, which no one doubts. The arrest of General Gutierrez-Rebollo, the former commissioner of the National Counternarcotics Institute; the release of Humberto Garcia Abrego, a reputed money launderer; and the general pervasiveness of corruption in Mexico all indicate the depth of the problem.

At the same time, we must recognize the circumstances that President Zedillo and the Mexican Government face. Mexico is striving to defeat the narcotraffickers at a time of wrenching social and political change. It would be naive to assume that any Mexican leader could produce the kind of change we want in a short time and without enormous effort. So the point of this process ought to be the measurement of the progress Mexico has made, not just a regurgitation of the problems that Mexico has.

A few months ago Mexico had a corrupt drug czar and nobody knew. Two weeks ago, at a crucial point in the certification process, President Zedillo announced that they had arrested their drug czar for bribery and corruption. Had their President not taken this step, we would likely have certified Mexico without much fuss. Now that he has, he is rewarded for his courage with the threat of decertification.

The message here is, do not expose corrupt officials and do not cooperate with the United States. Decertification would have terrible consequences for our relationship with Mexico and for the future of our reform efforts. Already the Mexican Congress has reacted badly to the decertification vote in our Committee on International Relations. With midterm elections coming in July, does anyone think that Mexican politicians who advocate closer ties with the United States will not pay a price? How would a Mexican Congress that we cause to be hostile to the United States help us in the fight against drugs?

And lastly, decertifying Mexico would tell the financial markets that there is greater investment risk, which would lead to higher borrowing costs, higher inflation, lower growth, undermining the economic recovery that benefits us as well as Mexico.

I believe that the better message to send would be to certify Mexico and continue to work with President Zedillo to reduce the flow of drugs into the United States. It is just common sense.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona [Mr. KOLBE].

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

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about House Joint Resolution 58. While I will not support it on final passage, I do intend to vote for the Hastert amendment to it.

Let me begin by saying that I have grave concerns about the whole decertification process and whether we should be acting to decertify any country. But I do think that the Hastert amendment represents a real compromise. It is a good-faith effort to try to make the process work better. It stays decertification for 90 days, and it gives the United States and Mexican Governments and diplomatic people time to work on resolving some of the common problems we have.

I am not very optimistic about reaching agreement on those, given the glare of this amendment—of this bill—by

putting people under the gun. But I do think it is a much better solution than full and immediate decertification.

Mr. Speaker, I think everyone in this Congress and everyone in this country wants the same thing. We want the eradication of the poison of narcotics and the scourge of them in our society. And I think everybody agrees we are losing this battle. In the last 4 years we have seen drug use double. We have seen that happen after a 12-year decline in drug use by adolescents. Over the past 3 years, 227 agent positions have been eliminated by the administration from the Drug Enforcement Agency. That is 227 fewer agents at a time when drug use among our youth is increasing.

I represent a district in Arizona along the border. Because we share this common border with Mexico, we see it; we are right on the front lines of this drug war. I can tell the Members from experience, we need more DEA agents, not less. We have to get the support we need on the front lines, and we need it today.

Yes, there is a problem of cooperation with Mexico. We saw that the Mexican drug czar, Gutierrez-Rebollo, was arrested recently. It shows the deep roots of corruption in Mexico. We want to see more progress in this area. But I do not think decertification is the solution. In fact, it is a big part of the problem. Rather than enhancing international cooperation with our neighbors, the process has a boomerang effect. It results in a further deterioration in our international relations.

Like it or not, deterioration of our bilateral relations spills over into cooperation or lack of cooperation in a number of other areas, including drug control. I think the Hastert amendment, while representing a compromise, is likely to prove this out when we come to negotiations on these specific issues.

The conditions placed on Mexico puts them in an almost impossible political situation. If progress is made in the six specified areas, it will be seen in Mexico as kowtowing to the will of the United States. Such a perception puts all reform-minded politicians in Mexico in a box. Even if they want to meet the conditions, it will be politically impossible for them to do so, and remember they have elections in just 90 days there.

Mexico is a proud country. Some might even say it is a nationalistic country. There is a saying in Mexico: Every time the United States sneezes, Mexico gets the flu. There is no question that today's vote is going to have an impact on Mexico and our cooperative efforts to stop narcotics trafficking. Let me tell the Members, I think it is going to have an adverse impact. That is why, in the end, I will vote against the bill on final passage.

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from Florida [Mrs. MEEK].

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, Members are looking at a desperate woman, a woman who is worried and distressed by what I see going on in our country. I have been elected to do something about this problem. I have tried my very best. It has pretty much gone on ears who do not realize what is happening in the inner cities of this community, the community of this world of ours.

I applaud the efforts that have been made by the Clinton administration, the drug czar. I applaud what Mexico has done. But I say to the Members, it is not enough. It is just not enough. The cooperation, the safeguards and all, have not been enough. Mexico has not fully cooperated. They have cooperated, but not fully.

Therefore, I beg this Congress to vote ''yes'' on decertifying Mexico so the message will be taken that until they straighten up and fly right, we are going to stop the flow of drugs coming into our communities. My constituents say to me, CARRIE MEEK, why can't you do something to stop the drugs coming into inner cities, into the housing projects, killing our senior citizens, killing our children? Why? Why can't you do something? We know, they say to me, that this can be stopped. Whatever the Government wants to stop, they have the resources to stop.

So as much as I would like to help Mexico and all other countries, now we have to save our children, Mr. Speaker. It is just that desperate. We have got to take desperate action. We can no longer say, let us equivocate and try to help. I do not want to help anymore. I want some action. I want to see that the crimes committed in my community by addicts who are selling drugs that were dropped off, and remember, drugs are not brought into the black community by the store, they are brought there by people who are making a living out of this. There is a trade. There is trafficking.

Let us take some drastic action, Mr. Speaker, and see if we can call on this country to stop the flow of drugs by decertifying Mexico or any other country that is assisting this traffic.

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan, Mr. BART STUPAK.

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

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, when I came down here I was going to speak about extradition and the concerns I have, but as I have listened to the debate, what has gone on here, being a former law enforcement officer for 12 years, I want to tell the Members a little what I see here.

What I see here today is everybody pointing fingers. Everyone is saying this person is corrupt, that person is no good, this policy is wrong. Mr. Speaker, if we take a look at it from a law enforcement point of view, they are probably very cynical about what is going on here. They are probably very frustrated about what they see in the U.S. Congress.

We cannot be changing policy every 2 years and expect to win a drug war. It is going to take more than 2 years; it is going to take more than 5 years. It is going to take more than 6 or 7 years. From a law enforcement point of view, we cannot be fighting a war on drugs or crime in the United States if we are changing policy.

We are going to have an amendment later today, the Hastert amendment, which basically condemns the administration. In 1993 the administration put forth a crime bill. I did not agree with all of it, but it passed. It became the law of the land. So what happened in 1995? We tried to repeal it. What is going to happen in 1997? We are going to try to repeal it again. What happens in 2000? We will have a new President and they come with a new drug policy, a new drug war, a new get tough on crime.

Mr. Speaker, if we are serious about fighting drugs, whether it is here in the United States or abroad, we must have a sustained policy. By sustained I mean more than 2 years, more than the next election. I know it is not politically expedient, but I ask Members to look at the long-term effect of what we are doing here. It is going to take more than 2 years.

Mr. Speaker, I would hope that as we vote today, I would hope we would all recognize there is no magic bullet in the war against drugs. If there was, we would have recognized it by now and we would not have a drug problem here in the United States. I would hope that we take a look at what is going on, that we set a course, a policy, and stick to it more than the next election, longer than the next Presidential term, but look at it over the long haul and put our resources and our investments in education, in economic opportunities for everyone, and in working with our partners abroad to fight the drug war.

Mr. Speaker, I do not think Mexico has been there, but let us take a bigger view. Let us take a broader view of this whole thing. Again, from the law enforcement point of view, we are not helping any of us by changing policy every 2 years. The poor ATF agent, the CIA, DEA, ATF, the Customs, the Secret Service, they do not know if they are on foot or horseback, because we keep changing policy. We share some responsibility here.

Before we all point fingers, I hope we would just at least look at what we are doing. I implore the Members to put forth a long-term policy, more than one election's worth.

Mr. Speaker, as we debate whether to disapprove the certification of Mexico as fully cooperating in antinarcotics efforts I feel compelled to voice my concerns on a related matter, the extradition of criminals to the United States from Mexico.

Although I am pleased by recent State Department reports suggesting improvements have been made regarding Mexico's compliance to extradition agreements, I am still extremely concerned with the low number of extraditions being fully carried out. There are currently 110 pending extraditions that the United States Government has requested from Mexico. Fifty-two of these requests are related to drug trafficking.

I am most concerned with Mexico's lack of willingness to extradite Mexican nationals. The Mexican Constitution prohibits extradition of Mexican nationals except under ''extraordinary circumstances.'' Mr. Speaker, no Mexican national has ever been extradited to the United States.

In September of last year, Mexico's President Zedillo delivered his State-of-the-Nation address. In this address, he emphasized the need for a ''new culture of respect'' for law and law enforcement officials in order to fight crime. We need more than just words to foster an atmosphere of respect. By continuing to allow these criminals freedom from extradition, Mexico is actually endorsing criminal activity. Until the Mexican Government fully follows through with their promises to extradite criminals, a culture of respect will not be possible.

I am truly hopeful that recently held talks between U.S. drug czar Barry McCaffrey and President Zedillo which did address this problem, will result in drastic improvements in the area of extradition. I am aware that President Zedillo's administration has made tremendous strides. Before President Zedillo's administration we never saw any extradition from Mexico, but in 1995 we saw 5, and in 1996 we saw 13.

If we vote to decertify, there is no reason to believe Mexico will continue on their path of progress, or that we will ever see an extradition of a Mexican national. Although the Mexican Government is far from where it should be, we cannot ignore, and should acknowledge the progress they have made. It is because of this progress that I will vote against House Joint Resolution 58.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. CHABOT].

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

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the bipartisan resolution, and I commend our distinguished chairman, the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN] for his strong leadership in this area.

As my colleagues know, our Nation's chief drug enforcement officer on February 25 said, ''There is not one single law enforcement institution in Mexico with whom the DEA has an entirely trusting relationship.'' Yet on February 28, just 3 days later, President Clinton determined that Mexico has cooperated fully with the United States in the war against drugs.

Finding that determination incredible, I asked a DEA official at a hearing last week if in fact his drug-fighting agency could cooperate in fighting against drugs in this country when there has not been full cooperation, and when we cannot fully trust and depend upon that particular country and the agencies there. He said absolutely not.

We have a serious drug problem in this country, and as the gentleman from California [Mr. LANTOS] in committee and I and many others recognize, we in this country certainly share some of the blame. There is a demand from this country, and we have to fight against that demand coming from this country. But we must also understand that the demand within our own borders is so much easier to satisfy because of the tremendous amount of narcotics flowing across the borders from Mexico.

The State Department, the very agency that is defending President Clinton's decision to certify here on Capitol Hill, reports to us that approximately 80 percent of the marijuana entering this country comes through Mexico, 70 percent of the cocaine, 30 percent of the heroin. We have learned Mexico now dominates the methamphetamine market. Yet in recent days President Clinton has stepped up his efforts to uphold his determination that Mexico is fully cooperating in the war against drugs.

That, I believe, sends a very bad message to the American people, Mr. Speaker, and it sends a bad message to Mexico as well. Mr. Speaker, some of those who oppose this resolution maintain that decertification of Mexico will lead to destabilization of Mexico. I disagree. In fact, I agree with the New York Times, a paper I do not always agree with. They say that decertification is certainly something we have to consider.

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from New York [Mr. RANGEL], the ranking member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

□ 1245

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, it is ironic that 25 years ago we had the same debate, and Mexico was cooperating then. We have had any number of declarations of war, and yet it seems as though we send the DEA, we send so many people over there, not with the bullets and the resources even to attempt to negotiate a truce as the situation worsens.

How ironic, the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN] over there and me over here having drafted the bill on which we are working today; and I think everyone is saying, it just does not work. For those that join with the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. HAMILTON] and some on the other side to say, let us get out of the business of certification, let me join. It was a good-faith effort. I thought war meant war. But I do not throw sand in people's faces unless I am prepared to bury them.

There is no sense running around insulting people and threatening people if you do not intend to do anything. With all the wars that we have had, one office has never been on our side in the war, and that is Secretary of State, no matter whether it was a Democrat or Republican administration.

I am on the Committee on Ways and Means. I have negotiated with them on the North American Free Trade Agreement. Do my colleagues think we might be able to talk about drugs when we are talking about this historic treaty? No, the State Department says, that is apples and oranges. The Trade Representative said: You cannot insult the Mexicans in talking about drugs when you are talking about legitimate trade.

So now we have sanctions here. I tell my colleagues who is going to get the sanctions: Cuba, Iran, Syria, Afghanistan, any country that does not matter to us as it relates to trade or diplomatic relationships. So what have we done? We have just embarrassed ourselves. Now we are just dealing with the sensitivities of the offending nations. I do not think a Nation as great as ours should be shaking their finger at the people on the other side of the border where they know, if we have the decertification or not, nothing, nothing is going to change.

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Guam [Mr. UNDERWOOD].

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

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California for yielding me this time.

I rise in opposition to House Joint Resolution 58 and in support of Mexico's certification as an ally in our war on drugs. We should not see the Government of Mexico as our enemy on the war on drugs but as our most important ally. This is a pivotal issue governing our relations with one another. If we take steps to counter the President's decision to recertify Mexico, we will reverse the progress that we have made, even limited progress.

The Mexican Government has made significant steps in their own internal efforts to curb trafficking of illegal drugs. President Zedillo's administration has been engaged in a campaign to reform the judicial system and crack down on government corruption. Some of our colleagues have cited the occurrences of corruption amongst high-level Mexican officials charged with drug trafficking crimes and other such activities as the basis for decertification.

However, the record demonstrates that the Mexican Government has the political will to purge such characters from its system and that the preponderance of the officials risk their lives and work hard to cooperate on the war on drugs. We need to show our confidence and support of our allies and our friends in Mexico's resolve to counter this internal problem, and we do not do that by slapping Mexico around.

The drug problem runs deeper than the certification and decertification of countries as our allies in the war

against drugs. As long as there are large numbers of drug consumers in our country, the dealers will have great incentives to seek other routes to bring the drugs in. If they do not bring it through Mexico, and I know this from representing an island thousands of miles from Mexico, they certainly will bring it in from other countries. We need to remember that, as long as we have this social scourge in our midst, we will continue to have problems regardless of what happens in Mexico.

We must continue our joint efforts and expand on the progress we have already made and not be caught up in a short-sighted, bad neighbor policy with one of our friends and closest neighbors.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida [Mr. MICA].

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

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, this is a historic vote. In fact, this is the first time in the history of the House of Representatives that we have voted to decertify a nation. It is our duty under the Constitution to protect our citizens against all enemies foreign and domestic, but I submit to my colleagues that our Nation, our way of life, and our children's future are in fact under attack by the scourge of drugs that are entering our lands.

If Mexico were to lob missiles across our border, they could not do as much damage as they have done in expediting the flow of drugs into our Nation. I know Mexico is our friend and neighbor, but friends are not accomplices in the painful deaths of our children. Neighbors do not turn away when crime is committed in their backyard. This is the headline from my paper. It has been said by those who support certification of Mexico that we may endanger United States trade and business. To that argument one must ask, can we ignore the slaughter on our streets for the sake of a few dollars on Wall Street? Tens of thousands of Americans have lost their lives as Mexico has reached the status of a narco capital of the world.

What has Mexico done to deserve certification? You heard the statistics. The cocaine, 70 percent of all the cocaine. I submit to my colleagues that a few years ago there was hardly a blip of cocaine coming through. They do not even produce 1 ounce of cocaine in Mexico, and it is coming in, 70 percent, destroying us. Heroin, marijuana, tons of metamphetamines. So my colleagues, I ask, just take a few minutes, look at the facts. It is our responsibility and duty under the laws of this Nation, under the Constitution to pass this certification and decertify Mexico.

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. Barrett].

Mr. BARRETT of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the measure that came out of the committee that decertifies Mexico and gives a vital national security interest. The issue today is not whether we like Mexico or whether we like the Mexican Government. The issue today is whether Mexico has fully cooperated with us in trying to stop the inflow of drugs into this country.

I do not see how there is a person in this room who can say they have fully cooperated when the fact is 70 percent of the cocaine in this country today has come through Mexico. I am sensitive to the concerns of offending Mexico. But it is also a reality that, if we were going to offend them, if we were going to cause economic damage to them, we would not give them a vital national security interest.

All we are doing today is stating the obvious. The obvious is Mexico has not fully cooperated with us. But I am also sensitive to the young men and women in the district I represent in the inner city of Milwaukee who come to me and say: This Government is not serious about the war on drugs; because if this Government were serious about the war on drugs, they would be doing more to stop the drugs from coming into this country. There are many people in my district who think that the Government is part and parcel of this entire scheme. And we have to be sensitive to them and we have to do what we can to send the message that we do not want those drugs in inner cities. We also have to look at this issue in relation to the jobs that have left this country.

When I look at the people in my district, I see many jobs that have now gone to Mexico. What do we get in return? Cocaine on our streets. It is time that the companies that have moved their jobs to Mexico start putting more pressure on the Mexican Government as well. Yes, there is corruption in the Mexican police force. Part of the corruption is due to the fact that they are not paid enough. But you have corporations that have moved down to Mexico to reap huge profits, and they are not paying to increase the professional nature of the Mexican police force.

That is how we are going to end the corruption in the police force in Mexico. But to stand here today and say that there has been full cooperation simply belies reality. We have to recognize what is going on, and we have to send the message that we want full cooperation.

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. BENTSEN].

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time.

While I agree with some of what my colleague from Wisconsin just spoke about, I have to say this is an emotional resolution. This is from the heart and not from the head. That is what the problem is that we are dealing with today.

There is no question we are all frustrated with Mexico. We are frustrated that they have not made the progress that we want them to make. But if we look at Mexico in this last century, they are a changed country. They have made progress. They are moving from a one-party dictatorship to a multiparty democracy. For those of us who have lived along the border, those of us who have traveled and studied in Mexico, the change has been tremendous.

This resolution does not move us forward. It moves us backward. Yes, we do not want more drugs on our streets, we want the Mexicans to do more, but we want to engage the Mexicans to do more. We do not want to push them back into that corner, and that is what this resolution would do. It would do it in a number of ways. First, we would be thumbing our nose at them. Second, we would be undercutting them in the financial markets throughout the world. We want to maintain confidence in the Mexican economy and stabilize the peso so it does not continue to devalue against the dollar so it does not create more exports into the United States but creates more exports back into Mexico.

We want to build up their economy so they have a strong middle class, so they can pay the police officers, pay the military officers, fight off the drug dealers, just like we need to do here in our own country. This resolution takes us in the wrong direction for doing it. Why should we undercut the Zedillo government when it is the really true reform government that is in there trying to make these changes? That does not make any sense whatsoever.

Now, I appreciate that we want to try and do things. I appreciate that we want to try and move them, but we are not going to do it with this resolution. It is in the wrong direction. It is wrong headed. It will not solve the problems with Mexico. It will not belie the fact that we will tomorrow, after we pass this, continue to share a 2000-mile border. They will continue to be our third largest trading partner. They will continue to trade with every State here.

Let us not make this mistake today because of emotions. Let us do what is right.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. BARR].

Mr. BARR of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished chairman for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, the only thing perhaps more troubling than this administration's lack of a true drug strategy is the inconsistency of its policies with which it seeks to carry out a nonstrategy.

We are certifying or this administration is seeking to certify Mexico saying they are an A No. 1 full-fledged cooperating partner in the war against drugs, and we are decertifying Colombia which although it has its problems, I think over the course of the last year during which it has been forced to work under the disability of decertification, has made progress.

That is one reason, to bring a little bit more consistency back, that I have introduced a bill, with a number of other very distinguished proponents of consistency in our foreign policies and in our drug policies, that would continue the decertification against Colombia but grant a very important waiver.

Let us talk very briefly about what the debate today concerning Mexico is about and what it is not about. It is not about building up Mexico's self-esteem. It is not about NAFTA. It is not about loans to prop up Mexico's economy. It is not about interfering in a sovereign state.

What we are talking about here is placing limitations on what we are giving to Mexico. That is not interfering in anybody's sovereignty. There is no way, Mr. Speaker, that when one looks at Mexico's sorry, sorry record in the war against drugs that one can reach any conclusion other than the fact that they are not a full-fledged A No. 1, fully cooperating partner in the war against drugs. And to claim that is to lose whatever shred of credibility this administration might have or might have able to salvage in the war against drugs.

Mexico does not deserve the imprimatur of a certified country in the war against drugs, and we are not going to do anything whatsoever to get it to get its own House in order by certifying it and say that what you are doing is just fine with us, keep on giving us more of the same.

Those who say, what would decertification get us, are asking the wrong question. We must ask, what has certification gotten us. Nothing.

At least it is time to stand up and do something, Mr. Speaker. I urge support for the resolution.

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Louisiana [Mr. JEFFERSON].

Mr. JEFFERSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to oppose the administration's certification of Mexico as a country cooperating in the war on drugs and to support the bipartisan committee version of House Joint Resolution 58.

Mr. Speaker, my State, Louisiana, is being overrun by drug traffic from Mexico. And my city, New Orleans, is fighting the reputation as the murder capital of our Nation, largely because drugs entering Louisiana from Mexico are driving a spiraling crime rate. Drug merchants battling over drug money and drug turf are killing each other on the streets of our city and across America, often catching innocent citizens, even our children, in the crossfire.

Mr. Speaker, I recognize that because Mexico has been a traditional political and economic ally, it is difficult to now declare that it is not an ally with us in our war against drugs. But the issue here is not politics or the economy. The issue is, how do we find a way to close the floodgates out of Mexico through which the vast majority of marijuana and cocaine and a large percentage of the heroin flow into our country.

□ 1300

I am not sure how effective our present certification policy is to address this question. I do not know if its inflexible requirement of a pass/fail grade, an A or an F is preferable to a multitiered grading system. And I am far from certain that it makes sense for us to have a certification policy that cuts off antidrug support to countries with the poorest drug fighting records, ensuring that they will do even less, and that punishes the innocent citizens of the decertified countries through the imposition of sanctions that cut off international monetary assistance to their countries while leaving drug kingpins in these countries unaffected and free to continue their illegal drug enterprises.

I do not know, therefore, Mr. Speaker, if we would not be better off to scrap the entire approach of the decertification process and replace it with a law better designed to achieve a more targeted campaign against drug importation.

But this I do know. So long as we have our present policy of listing decertified countries, Mexico deserves its place on that list.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the day when our country has a better and more effective policy to achieve cooperation with Mexico and other countries in stemming the flow of smuggled drugs.

Common sense and compliance with current law demand that we now vote to overturn the certification of Mexico, and I urge the Congress to do so.

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California [Ms. SANCHEZ].

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, President Clinton was right in certifying to Congress Mexican cooperation on narcotics matters with the United States. Critics of the President's decision are mistaken in arguing that there has been little progress on narcotics cooperation. In recommending decertification, they exhibit a limited understanding of the fundamental changes that are occurring in Mexico and the enormous stakes for the United States of continued cooperation with one of this country's most important partners.

At this delicate time in Mexican history, a decision on the part of the United States to decertify Mexico could seriously jeopardize Mexico's efforts to strengthen the rule of law and the collaboration that we have in the war against the drug lords. It would also dampen the Mexico-United States relationship, from trade, to immigration, even to border environmental concerns.

The financial markets would react poorly to a rumble in bilateral relations, undermining the painstaking efforts that Mexico has made to stabilize its currency and to strengthen its economy. It is the Mexican people who would end up paying the economic price for decertification, not drug traffickers.

And as one who has family in Mexico who fights every day to stop this drug trafficking, it is an affront that this Congress would think that the Mexican people are not working hard to stop drug trafficking. By certifying Mexico, the United States can continue the progress achieved thus far, mindful of the fact that drug trafficking is as much an American problem as it is a Mexican problem.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Kentucky [Mr. BUNNING].

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

Mr. BUNNING. I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Joint Resolution 58.

The President's decision to certify Mexico's nonexistent antidrug efforts is just one more step in his ongoing retreat from the war on drugs. And this Congress should not allow it to stand.

First he cut funding for our own Nation's antidrug programs and emasculated the drug czar's office and now he is saying to Latin America, the status quo is just fine with us.

But take a look at the status quo. It's putrid. Fifty to seventy percent of the cocaine entering the United States comes through Mexico. Twenty to thirty percent of the heroin coming into our country is supplied by Mexico. Eighty percent of the foreign-grown marijuana entering our country comes from Mexico.

With statistics like this staring us in the face, we cannot and should not pretend that the Government of Mexico is making any kind of good-faith effort to stem the tide of corruption and money laundering and drug activity that currently exists in that nation.

I urge my colleagues to support the Hastert amendment to delay certification for 90 days unless the President obtains real assurances that the Government of Mexico intends to cooperate in our antidrug efforts.

Certifying Mexico now would send the wrong message to our friends in Latin America and around the world. If we are serious about fighting drugs, we have to show Mexico we are serious now.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Mexico [Mr. SCHIFF].

Mr. SCHIFF. I thank the chairman for yielding me this time. I especially appreciate his integrity because he knows I am going to come up here to speak against the resolution.

Mr. Speaker, there is no difference here in my view of the facts than those who are speaking in favor of this decertification resolution. The issue is, what is the approach to get the better cooperation of the Government of Mexico with the United States in reducing the drug trade which affects both of our countries?

I propose that the best approach is a sense of Congress that would embody

many of the statements we have heard here today. I tried to make that in order with the Rules Committee. They chose not to make it in order. If decertification ultimately is not approved, I will still again propose a sense of Congress resolution.

Why do we vote for decertification? Well, first we have been told it is required that we vote for decertification under the law, because Mexico is not fully complying with cooperation in the antidrug trade. But the definition of being fully cooperative seems to be that every official at every level has to be doing his or her utmost, in this case in Mexico, to fight the drug trade.

If that is the standard, Mr. Speaker, there is no country that could probably be certified under that kind of guideline. In fact, if one looks at the Hastert amendment, which states numerous criticisms of the Clinton administration toward fighting the drug trade, one could argue that our own Government could be not fully certified under this exact same criteria if it were being examined from the outside.

The fact of the matter is I believe that we should look at the top of the government, at the top officials. I have heard both Chairman GILMAN and ranking member HAMILTON say that they believe that President Zedillo and his top people in government are committed to fighting the drug trade.

I believe that there are governments in this world where there is no such commitment, and for those governments I do support decertification. But we have to look at the impact of having the President and the top government officials of Mexico on our side.

Several speakers have already mentioned the fact that the recently appointed drug czar in Mexico was removed from that position because he might have ties to the drug trade in that country. How was that gentleman identified as possibly being involved in the drug trade? It was not by our government's intelligence. In fact, my recollection is that General McCaffrey, our own drug czar, was lavish in his praise for the Mexican drug czar, General Gutierrez Rebollo.

It was the Mexican Government that identified this person's connection to the drug trade in Mexico. It was the Mexican Government that removed him publicly from office, knowing that they would take a severe international hit for that kind of action, that it would be a severe international embarrassment for them. They did it, anyway. I believe that we should be working to cooperate with Mexico and not to just trade insults with them.

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from Ohio [Ms. KAPTUR].

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I also thank the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN], the chairman of the committee.

I rise in support of the committee resolution and do not wish to question whether or not this is the perfect vehicle. It is the only vehicle that we have. And though the certification-decertification process may not please any one of us completely, at least it provides us with a way of ending the denial by both Governments, the United States and Mexico, of what is going on with our respective countries.

In fact, I think we should hold a session of Congress at the border. As a member of the Committee on Agriculture, I have traveled along that border and have had our own border agents tell us, ''Well, Congresswoman, you know if you really want to move drugs, you don't do it through this checkpoint. You just drive an over-the-road vehicle a mile away where there aren't any inspectors. And, by the way, hear that airplane up there? We know where that's headed.''

Our own Government knows that the border is a sieve. We know of the corruption throughout Mexico related to the drug trade. And today this is the only vehicle that we have to express our displeasure at this administration's actions and prior administrations' actions that continue denial.

I ask myself, why the denial, what are we afraid of as a country? We know we only inspect maybe 1 of every 100 to 200 trucks and vehicles that now come over the border. We have a $40 billion trade deficit over the last 2 years with Mexico and it is growing. We cannot possibly inspect all of the vehicles that come over that border, and the drug traders know it. They are even picking which vegetable crates to put the stuff in and whether they put it in steel drums or auto rims. It is that cleverly done.

The GAO tells us that Mexico is the primary transit route for cocaine coming in from Colombia. So we decertify Colombia and the administration sort of closes its eyes with Mexico. What sense does that make?

Mr. Speaker, I support the resolution, but I hope that we would move in more expeditious ways, beginning with a session at the border. I would urge the chairman's consideration of that alternative.

Mr. Speaker, I include the following newspaper article for the RECORD:

[From the San Diego Union-Tribune, Aug. 4, 1996]

THE DRUG TRADE CLIMBS ABOARD SHIPMENTS OF GOODS FROM MEXICO

(By Peter Andreas)

Mexico has long been enmeshed in the drug trade, but its involvement has been transformed in the last decade. Primarily, Mexico has emerged as the primary shipping point for Colombian cocaine into the United States.

The State Department estimates that the percentage of the cocaine bound for the U.S. market entering through Mexico was negligible during the mid-1980s but increased to as much as 70 percent by 1995. Mexico also supplies up to 30 percent of the heroin consumed in the United States and up to 80 percent of the imported marijuana, according to a March 1996 State Department report.

Mexico earns more than $7 billion a year from the illegal drug trade, Drug Enforcement Administration estimates. Some Mexican estimates place the figure much higher. The prosecutor general's office estimates that drug traffickers operating in Mexico accumulated revenues of approximately $30 billion in 1994.

Mexico's growing role in the drug trade has significantly increased the power and wealth of Mexico's trafficking organizations and that has, in turn, exacerbated well-entrenched political corruption.

Corrupt officials sell an essential service to drug traffickers: the nonenforcement of the law. Not surprisingly, as Mexico's role in the illicit drug trade has grown, so too has the buying off of law enforcement—not only within Mexico, but on the U.S. side as well.

Not coincidentally, Mexico's expanding role in the drug trade parallels the opening of the Mexican economy and the deepening of U.S.-Mexican economic integration.

Colombian cocaine traffickers began turning to Mexico as a major entry point to the U.S. market in the early 1980s after the United States cracked down on cocaine shipping through the Caribbean. By now a strategic alliance exists between Colombian and Mexican traffickers. The Colombians process the cocaine and ship it to Mexico, the Mexicans smuggle it into the United States.

Mexican imports of legal goods from Colombia increased from $17 million in 1980 to $121 million in 1985. At the same time, Mexican imports from the rest of Latin America decreased from $768 million to $630 million.

Legal exports from Mexico to the United States doubled between 1986 and 1993. Hiding drug shipments within the growing volume of goods exported from Mexico to the United States has become an increasingly favored method of smuggling cocaine.

These trends thrive under the North American Free Trade Agreement.

A report written by an intelligence officer at the U.S. embassy in Mexico City claims that cocaine traffickers established factories, warehouses and trucking companies as fronts in Mexico in anticipation of the cross-border commerce boom under NAFTA.

''If NAFTA provides opportunity for legitimate businesses, it may clearly provide opportunities for illegitimate businessmen,'' Assistant U.S. Attorney Glenn MacTaggart has said.

Trucking provides the most concrete illustration of this trend. According to one senior customs official, to inspect every truck coming across the border would create a traffic jam as far as Mexico City. So only a small percentage of trucks are fully inspected.

Under the NAFTA agreement, trucking into the United States from Mexico is increasing rapidly. In 1994, 2.8 million trucks crossed over from Mexico. In 1993, on the eve of NAFTA, the number was 1.9 million. The U.S. Southwest Border Capital Improvement Program will upgrade the road network so that it will be able to handle more than double today's traffic level—as many as 8.4 million trucks annually.

Mexican truckers will soon be allowed to operate throughout the border states of Arizona, California, New Mexico and Texas. They will eventually be able to travel anywhere in the United States and Canada.

Trucks can carry illegal goods as easily as legal goods. One truck that was stopped near San Diego carried 8 tons of cocaine stuffed into cans of jalapeno peppers. Law enforcement officials believe that the cocaine belonged to a businessman who owns one of the biggest trucking companies in Mexico.

As part of an effort to hide drugs within trans-border shipments of legal goods, some Mexican traffickers have reportedly hired trade consultants to determine which products move most quickly through border inspection under NAFTA guidelines. ''They

have very specific issues,'' notes Craig Chretien, the special agent in charge of the DEA's San Diego office. ''Does a perishable get through quicker than a load of steel? What kind of cargoes go through faster than others?''

Concerns about drug control were not discussed during the negotiations over NAFTA. ''This was in the too hot to handle' category,'' says Gary Hufbauer, an economist at the Institute for International Economics in Washington, D.C. Reportedly, U.S. customs and drug enforcement personnel openly call NAFTA the ''North American Drug Trade Agreement.''

Meanwhile, the privatization of state-owned enterprises and the deregulation of the Mexican banking system facilitate the laundering of drug profits.

And the cutting of government subsidies in Mexico's rural areas are increasing the incentive for peasant farmers to produce illegal crops such as marijuana.

An internal DEA report—obtained by the National Security Archive through the Freedom of Information Act—concludes that ''increased illicit drug production will probably be a direct result of the discontinuation of subsistence crop subsidies.'' Drug production is expanding in Mexico's more remote rural regions.

Efforts to cut the foreign drug supply into the United States have a long history of failure. And the likelihood of success diminishes further as market liberalization and economic integration propel ever more extensive cross-border exchange.

Evaluations of free market reform are largely divorced and insulated from evaluations of drug market prohibition. Thus, congressional committees and government agencies endlessly debate how to attack the drug supply and gain greater cooperation from Mexico and other Latin America countries.

Meanwhile, those concerned with the implementation of market-based reforms carefully monitor an assortment of economic indicators. The reports they publish rarely even mention the drug trade, let alone discuss its ties to the formal economy.

It is as if drug trafficking were not an economic matter at all. But while such institutionalized denial may be politically convenient, it perpetuates both a fundamental misreading of the problem and unworkable strategies for dealing with it.

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from American Samoa [Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA].

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

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, the level of drug corruption in Mexico is indeed a real and serious problem. I sympathize with many of our colleagues who are frustrated with America's own drug addiction and are in search of quick solutions. However, Mr. Speaker, humiliating Mexico with the threat of decertification is not the answer. Neither is cutting off Mexico's bilateral aid and access to multilateral bank loans, which decertification mandates, while thrusting Mexico in the company of Iran, Burma and Afghanistan.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that Mexican President Zedillo has acted in good faith in stating narcotics trafficking is the greatest threat to Mexico's own national security. Certainly his administration has taken steps to combat the tremendous drug trade.

Mr. Speaker, in February, Mexico's appointed drug czar, General Rebollo, was arrested for ties to drug lords. While many of our Members were outraged and saw this as a sign of pervasive corruption in the Mexican Government, I see it differently. I believe President Zedillo should be commended for his courage in revealing this embarrassing and damaging incident at a highly sensitive time, and his administration's commitment to pursue corruption at the highest levels should be recognized and commended.

Mr. Speaker, in examining the situation in Mexico, it raises doubts in my mind about the entire drug certification process conducted by our own country. I find it hypocritical that we sit here and condescendingly judge other sovereign nations on their anti-drug efforts while America constitutes one of the largest consumer narcotics markets in the world.

Mr. Speaker, I ask, how many Americans, not foreigners, how many American drug lords have we prosecuted lately? How would it sit with us if other countries suddenly based their relations with our Nation on foreign assessments of how rigorously and successfully we are combating drug consumption in America? Is it any wonder that this month the Mexican Congress voted unanimously to condemn the United States certification process as being insulting to their national dignity?

Mr. Speaker, decertifying Mexico will only deny the real accomplishments of President Zedillo, discourage Mexican cooperation in the future for joint narcotics interdiction, and alienate the good people of Mexico.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Florida [Mr. MCCOLLUM], chairman of the Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime and an acknowledged longtime fighter and expert on the drug war.

Mr. MCCOLLUM. I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I think that everybody here understands that today in our history the United States has a supply of drugs that is cheaper, more potent and more available than any time in our history. One of the primary reasons why that is so is because the Government of Mexico has not been fully cooperating with the United States in the war on drugs. It is by no means the only reason why we have this problem. I think up front we need to say that President Zedillo has been cooperating, he personally has been, and some of the top people in his administration have been cooperating. They have been encouraging money laundering laws to be established, they have been doing things recently to vet the situation there for their law enforcement community to get rid of the corruption that is rampant. But the truth of the matter is that Mexico is not fully cooperating, which is what the certification laws require. They have clearly not been fully cooperating when we look at the question of the fact that our Drug Enforcement Administration officers that interface the most in law enforcement on the drug issue have been unable to accept the word or trust anybody in law enforcement in Mexico for some time, and when they did put their faith recently in one individual, they got burned. It is not fully cooperating when that condition exists. And so the resolution is very appropriate today. We need to pass it. I believe the Hastert amendment is also appropriate, not only because the certification process is flawed in my judgment and we need the commission that is in there, but also because it lays forth some of the other facts that I think are very critical to us today in this war on drugs.

The fact of the matter is that we cannot win the war on drugs unless we have a balanced program. The particular program that we are looking for is to say two things: First, in the interdiction area with regard to Mexico, there is going to be a 90-day period in this Hastert amendment which if the administration, our administration, gets Mexico to cooperate more on, then the decertification trigger will not even happen.

□ 1315

One of those things is to get more law enforcement agents of the United States inside Mexico. If they will show progress toward doing that, that will be one of the things that will help, and that these DEA agents, if they are inside Mexico, can carry arms for their safe protection, and there are more radar sites to be handled, and so on. If certain things happen, then there would not even be a decertification of the Hastert amendment occurring and the debate will not even be there.

The other thing is the Hastert amendment shows and spells out the fact that we have not been doing enough in the United States in a balanced approach to win this war on drugs. Too much emphasis, and I think we should have some on rehabilitation, and not enough emphasis on education, and most of all not enough emphasis on the interdiction program, on the resources we need to supply; our own Government has not been doing enough, and it is spelled out in the Hastert amendment.

So I urge the adoption of the amendment and the adoption of this decertification resolution.

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. ORTIZ].

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

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, as my colleagues know, as a former law enforcement official I am deeply concerned about the certification and the effect that it will have because we do have cooperation on both sides, and I wonder how many of us has taken time to travel to the border and to talk to judges

from both sides of the border, to talk to police on both sides of the border, because believe me, now we have a tier, a level, of cooperation that begins here all the way down. We are looking at the top. Well, what about the cooperation between State, county and cities? If we decertify Mexico, we destroy this foundation that has taken time to build.

I know this. I used to be a sheriff in south Texas. There exists a tremendous working relationship between officers who care, officers who have given of their life, whose families have been threatened. But they have been dedicated to making both countries a better place for their children and my children to reside.

It is not easy; it is hard. But the dedication continues to be there, their loyalty to make our areas better. Do we want to destroy this foundation that has taken time to build? We cannot afford to do that.

As my colleagues know, last year Mexico captured and extradited to the States, Humberto Garcia Abrego, a world-renown lord, the head of the Gulf cartel. Garcia Abrego was recently sentenced to life in prison. That was an act of enormous national political courage on Mexico's part.

As my colleagues know, both sides of the border are poor. We have enormous problems on both sides of the border. I was in law enforcement for 15 years before I came to this House. There is a lot of things that go on that we do not see. A lot of information is traded back and forth between local, State, county officials on both sides, and I implore to my friends: Let us take time before we do anything that we will regret for a long time. There is a lot at stake.

Mexico is a country that has pride, sure. Bad apples? We got them on our side, and we continue to lose friends, and I am talking about this great country, because we seem to want to appear worldwide as a knight in shining armor. Everybody is wrong; we are the only ones that are correct and right.

Let us not make this mistake. Let us not decertify Mexico.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. BURTON], the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight and a senior member of our Committee on International Relations, a gentleman who has stood shoulder to shoulder in this war against drugs, especially with helping our allies, the Colombian National Police.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, let me just say that there is enough blame to go around. Obviously we do have a consumption problem here in the United States, but a major part of the responsibility for the drug problem in America rests in Mexico, and for people to deny that and say that it is all our problem is in my opinion a ludicrous argument. Let me just give you some facts:

Seven hours after the President's certification of Mexico was made public Mexico's attorney general issued a statement that its own senior officials had allowed Humberto Garcia Abrego, a reputed money launderer and brother of convicted drug kingpin Juan Garcia Abrego, to walk free from police custody. They waited until the certification took place, and then they released this known drug dealer.

Thomas Constantine, the administrator of the U.S. DEA said on February 25, ''Historically, corruption has been a central problem in DEA's relationship with counterparts. In short, there is not,'' now get this, ''In short, there is not one single law enforcement institution in Mexico with whom DEA has an entirely trusting relationship,'' not one in all of Mexico.

According to the DEA, 70 percent of the cocaine entering the United States comes across the Mexican-American border, and that is up from 50 percent just about 3 or 4 years ago, a huge increase. Despite an apparent increased level of production in transit, Mexico's cocaine seizures in 1996 are less than half of what they were 5 years ago. There has been an increase, but the seizures are down by more than 50 percent, 23.8 metric tons in 1996 compared to 50.3 metric tons in 1991.

The bottom line is they are not cooperating. Should we reward that kind of activity? It makes no sense to me. The Mexican Government takes credit for firing 1,200 officials for corruption, but not one of those people has been prosecuted, not 1 out of 1,200. U.S. extradition documents cite evidence in a single case that the attorney general and 90 percent, get that, 90 percent of the police, prosecutors and judges in Tijuana and the State of Baja California are on the payroll of a major drug cartel, 90 percent of them. That is amazing.

Although the United States Department of Justice has submitted provisional warrants for the arrest of Mexican drug kingpins, only one, Juan Garcia Abrego, a dual national, has been sent to the United States to face justice.

And finally, drug-related arrests in Mexico are down dramatically, dramatically down in the last 4 years; 11,283 in 1996 compared to almost 28,000 just a few years ago.

Mr. Speaker, we need to send the strongest possible message to Mexico right now. Let them start helping us. America is fighting a losing battle against drugs, and we need their help.

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MCGOVERN].

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Gilman-Hamilton bipartisan committee proposal and in opposition to the Hastert amendment.

Mr. Speaker, on March 8 the Mexican police and the State of Chiapas illegally detained two Jesuit priests and two Mayan Indians. The two priests, Fathers Rosas and Hernandez, had been beaten, tortured and continued to be imprisoned on the outrageously false charges of participating in the deaths of two policemen. The priests were actually at a religious conference at the time the deaths occurred.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to enter into the RECORD at this time the announcement of this abuse by the Society of Jesus in Mexico and a summary of the news articles. We can no longer turn a blind eye to such human rights abuses in Mexico, and again I urge a no vote on the Hastert amendment in order to get to a yes vote on the Gilman-Hamilton proposal.

Yesterday, the 8th of March, the Government of Chiapas illegally detained two priests of the Society of Jesus, Gonzalo Rosas Morales and Jeronimo ALberto Hernandez Lopez, as well as Francisco Gonzalez Gutierrez and Ramon Parcero Martinez whom it attempted to like to a supposed ambush in which two members of the State Public Security Police were supposed killed.

The Society of Jesus in Mexico utterly rejects the version of the events that has been given out by the State Government of Chiapas. It similarly rejects that these detained persons had any responsibility in the illicit acts of which they are accused. The State Government of Chiapas has falsified reality and in so doing has given serious provocation against the rule of law and order, against the peace and against human rights.

Fathers Rosas and Hernandez have distinguished themselves in their work of several years of pastoral accompaniment in solidarity with the Indian peoples of the northern part of Chiapas State. In like manner, they have participated in processes of organization and initiative that the indigenous communities have been furthering in their search for a greater justice, welfare and fraternity between peoples. We affirm categorically then they had no involvement in the acts for which they have been wantonly accused.

For its part, the Coordinator of Social Organizations, Xi'Nich',—and not ''Arriera Nocturna'' which the State Government mentions—is a legal group made up of indigenous people who are struggling peacefully to satisfy their most basic needs. The false accusation against Xi'Nich' and against its detained members represent an aggressive message against those who keep within the legal framework to find a solution to their demands.

In the difficult context of violence that is being experienced in the State of Chiapas, this provocation is extremely irresponsible.

We ask for the immediate and unconditional release of all the detained persons. We ask for the truthful clarification of the events and the cessation of all police harassment. We repeat that, despite the defamations of this type, the work of the Jesuits will be maintained, faithful to our mission in the service of the faith and the promotion of justice.

Reuters News Service reported today that two Jesuits had been arrested, beaten and charged ''with leading a deadly ambush against police'' in the Mexico state of Chiapas.

Arrested were Frs. Gonzalo Rosas and Jeronimo Hemandez. The arrests took place on Saturday afternoon at Palenque, a tourist city 150 km. east of the state capital Tuxtla Gutierrez.

Two Mayan Indian leaders were also arrested—Francisco Gonzalez and Ramon Parcero. The four were charged with ''taking part on Friday in an ambush of state police who hours earlier forcibly removed peasants

from farms they had illegally occupied. In the ambush two policemen were killed and five others injured.''

Diocesan officials in San Cristobal de las Casas contradicted the police version, however, saying the two priests were in that city ''at the time of the ambush after having taken part in a religious conference.''

Reuters reported that dozens of plainclothes and uniformed police violently yanked the pair from their car. The police showed no arrest warrant and have since added false weapons possession charges against one of the priests.

According to Reuters, after the police removed the peasants on Friday from two local collective farms they had occupied since 1994, members of a local Indian rights group called Xi-Nich blocked a local highway to protest the police operation and demand the release of their arrested comrades. Police claim they peacefully broke up the protest and were later ambushed by the priests and the two Xi-Nich leaders.

Xi-Nich, however, said in a statement on Sunday that police, backed by helicopters, began firing at the highway protesters, who fired back.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. ENGLISH], a distinguished member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

(Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Joint Resolution 58. As one of the 10 original cosponsors of this bill, I want to commend the distinguished gentleman from Florida for his leadership in sending this important message that the status quo on the war on drugs is not good enough.

The deadly tide of illegal narcotics, much of which flows to the United States through our southern border, should be a top national health and security priority. What other external threat has such a direct impact on our communities, our streets, and our children every day?

The President's decision on February 28 that Mexico had fully cooperated with the United States in the battle against illegal narcotics sends the wrong message at the wrong time. Mexico sadly has simply failed to make the progress in joining us in the war on drugs that we had every right to expect.

Our message today is that this is totally unacceptable. Much of the violence on our streets of our cities is related to the torrent of illegal narcotics flooding into our country. This is a matter of life and death for many of our citizens.

As the gentleman from Georgia earlier noted, the President felt it was important to send a message to Colombia again this year by decertifying them and withholding assistance. If this was a good drug policy, then I believe it is critical to make clear to Mexico that our assistance to them is conditioned on strong bilateral cooperation and domestic action. To do otherwise is to hold out a double standard, which is not in the long-term best interests of the citizens of Mexico or the citizens of the United States.

In my view this resolution finds the appropriate balance between an honest assessment of Mexico's performance in drug interdiction efforts and continued support for those in Mexico committed to arresting, prosecuting, and convicting drug traffickers.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to join in support of this important resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support for House Joint Resolution 58, Disapproving the Certification of the President Regarding Foreign Assistance to Mexico. As one of 10 original cosponsors of this bill, I want to commend the distinguished gentleman from Florida for his leadership in sending this important message that the status quo in the war on drugs is not good enough.

The deadly tide of illegal narcotics, much of which flows to the United States through our southern border, should be a top national and security priority. What other external threat has such a direct impact on our communities, streets, and children each day? The President's decision on February 28, that Mexico had fully cooperated with the United States in the battle against illegal narcotics sends the wrong message at the wrong time. Mexico, sadly, has simply failed to make the progress in joining us in the war on drugs that we had every right to expect.

Our message today is that this is unacceptable. Much of the violence blighting the streets of our cities is related to the torrent of illegal narcotics flooding our country. This is a matter of life and death for many of our citizens. As the gentleman from Georgia noted, the President felt it was important to send a message to Colombia again this year by decertifying them and withholding assistance. If this is good drug policy, then I believe it is critical to make clear to Mexico that our assistance is conditioned on strong bilateral cooperation and their vigorous domestic action. To do otherwise is to hold out a double standard which is not in the long-term best interests of the citizens of Mexico or the citizens of the United States.

This resolution finds the appropriate balance between an honest assessment of Mexico's performance in drug interdiction efforts and continued support for those in Mexico committed to arresting, prosecuting, and convicting drug traffickers. Thomas Constantine, Administrator of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, told a congressional committee on February 25:

Historically corruption has been a central problem in DEA's relationship with Mexican counterparts. In short, there is not one single law enforcement institution in Mexico with whom DEA has an entirely trusting relationship.

We should not make a mockery of the annual certification process by turning a blind eye to the shortcomings of Mexican efforts.

Mexico's criminal cartels are now our No. 1 threat when it comes to drugs; 70 percent of the cocaine that enters the United States comes from the southwest border and we even see this poison in my district on the U.S. northern border. Increasingly we are seeing larger levels of methamphetamine, marijuana, and heroin moving across our border. Last year, Mexico's drug cartels shipped approximately 300 tons of cocaine, 150 tons of methamphetamine and 15 tons of heroin to the United States. Moreover, the Mexican Government has refused to let the 20 new DEA agents Congress appropriated money for to enter Mexico, and barred U.S. law enforcement agents from carrying weapons. This is inexcusable and vitiates any argument about full cooperation and partnership.

Omniously, illegal drug use has been on the rise in recent years among our young people in America. It is clear that the wrong response to this tragic increase is to be satisfied with where we are. While as some have argued here we need to work harder in our communities to limit the demand for narcotics which kill dreams and kids, we should not be telling our children that the status quo is adequate, when it is not. We should not be telling Mexico and the predatory drug cartels which operate in Mexico, that our Nation is apathetic to outcomes. We are no longer satisfied with an annual public relations gesture; the time has come to condition assistance on results not promises. This resolution does just that and has my wholehearted support.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution, oppose the Clinton administration's ill conceived policy of expediency, and send a message that Congress won't tolerate the Mexican drug trade any longer.

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. REYES], a distinguished new Member and a good friend.

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate this opportunity to come again for the third time, I think, today to urge my colleagues to stop and think about the ramifications and the serious consequences of what we are doing in this great institution today. I say that with a tremendous amount of trepidation because, having firsthand experience, having the background that I share in common with my colleague from Florida [Mr. SHAW], my colleague from Texas [Mr. ORTIZ], it is difficult to sit here and watch what is going on here in terms of the statements that are going on the RECORD that will be scrutinized not only by our constituents in respect to our districts, but also will be scrutinized very carefully by the people of Mexico, by the Government of Mexico and the people of Latin America.

I think there have been a number of points that have been made here. I think there have been way too many statistics that have been thrown around. I think we have obfuscated the real issue and the real context of what we ought to be doing in this body representing the people of this great Nation.

I know that all of us share a frustration about what the scourge of drugs has done to our neighborhoods, what it has done to our children, what it is doing to our institutions, but no one understands these issues better than the Government of Mexico, better than the citizens of Mexico. Certainly nobody has paid a higher price than the Government of Mexico, nobody has paid a price and continues to pay the price and will continue to pay the price

if we stand here and allow the amendment or the resolution to go forward to decertify Mexico.

I am proud to tell this body that I was probably the first to urge the President to certify Mexico. I think to not certify Mexico would be very counterproductive. Not only does it send the wrong message to the Mexican Government, but it sends clearly the wrong message to the Mexican people, a people that collectively have paid a very high price.

□ 1330

I ask my colleagues in this Congress to listen to the implications, to listen to the consequences. For anyone to think that a decertification move on Mexico would not have serious political consequences and would not destabilize the country and would not lead to economic destabilization, is to me incredible. But then in the context of the argument, in the context of what we have discussed, in the context of what I have heard in this Chamber today, that, for me at least, would not be surprising.

Mr. Speaker, I just hope that sanity and reason prevail. I hope that we understand the implications of what we are about to do if we do not stand with the President and agree to certify Mexico.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. GILCHREST].

Mr. GILCHREST. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to strongly emphasize that all of us in this Chamber take the responsibility to listen to this debate, to come to some resolution. We are missing the mark, and I think to a large extent overpoliticizing this statement about certifying or decertifying.

We have got to get together, decent, honest Americans, must get together with decent, honest Mexicans. It is as simple as that.

There are drug profiteers in Mexico; there are drug profiteers in the United States. It is an external problem; it is an internal problem.

Let us be clear on just a couple of points. The United States is responsible for 60 to 70 percent of the world's consumption of drugs. It is a lucrative, lucrative business.

The Mexican Government is spending billions of dollars trying to fight this. They are confronted with tens of billions of dollars on the other side which we, the American consumers of drugs, are supplying to Mexico.

As has been documented, Mexico's problems arise because the shift in the drugs from the Caribbean up from Colombia through Mexico has taken place in dramatic proportions in the last few years. Amazingly, we are now discussing at a point when Mexico is moving into an arena where they can begin, however small, in a very small way, to begin to resist the drug cartels. We are talking about decertifying Mexico as though it was somehow Mexico's problem, Mexico's problem, to save us from ourselves.

We have all these laws which say just say no. Now, we say it with our laws, but we do not seem to say it with our noses. We always seem to be pointing the finger at the wrong people.

Mr. Speaker, it is always politically convenient to blame somebody else. It is time that we demand from Mexico what we must demand from ourselves.

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

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member of the committee for yielding me time.

I rise in strong opposition to House Joint Resolution 58 in its totality and to all amendments. This effort to disprove the decertification of Mexico as a fully cooperating partner in the fight against drugs is misguided. If Congress adopts this resolution, the United States is sending the wrong message to the government and the people of Mexico.

We should be strengthening our ties to Mexico and helping the Mexican Government in its fight against drugs rather than punishing them with punitive measures that will hurt, not help, the fight against drug trafficking.

By any reasonable standard, the efforts and policies that President Zedillo has instituted over the last several years to combat the scourge of drugs in his country have been a success. Marijuana, cocaine, and heroine seizures are all up by 40 percent since 1994. Drug-related arrests are up significantly. The extradition process has been strengthened. Major anticrime legislation dealing with money laundering and organized crime in Mexico have been passed and adopted into law.

I know many Members see the arrest of General Rebollo on ties to the Mexican drug cartels as an indication of systematic, systemwide failure on the part of the Mexican Government. If nothing else, the swift arrest of General Rebollo is a strong indication of President Zedillo's commitment to punish corruption and to ensure that no one else is seen as above the law.

The United States Government must continue to keep the pressure on and work with those elements of the Mexican Government that are on the side of change. But decertifying Mexico and cutting off the minimal assistance we do provide would be a major mistake.

We have made great strides with Mexico in the last several years, and we should not undermine that success with this vote. Decertifying Mexico will only hurt the Mexican economy, fuel nationalistic resentment, and set back United States-Mexican relations.

We have to be aware of the fact that it is the insatiable craving for drugs in this country that does as much to undermine Colombia and Mexico and others who have developed these huge narco-drug trafficking involvements. These folks are suffering far more than many Americans who we represent here on the House floor.

We have got to get our House in order. We have got to reduce our demand through every possible means, not just in terms of corrections and law enforcement, but in terms of helping people in this country through education and treatment.

Mr. Speaker, when we take those steps, then perhaps we will be in a better position to take an attitude of somewhat self-righteous criticism toward our friends to the south.

So I urge a no vote at this time on H.R. 58 and on the Hastert amendment.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. GEKAS], a member of the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, when I first came to the Congress during the Presidency of Ronald Reagan, that President faced a situation in which he needed to have our Congress commit an additional $10 billion to the International Monetary Fund.

You might say what does that have to do with the issue at hand? But it laid the background for this Member on how I finally cast my vote on the pending measure.

The President saw that many of us were reluctant to commit additional American dollars for an International Monetary Fund where we could not see immediate benefits or additions to the national security. But the President then, Ronald Reagan, at a meeting we had in the Oval Office, termed it and turned the question into one of foreign policy. He felt that support for the additional $10 billion was to support the President in a foreign policy initiative.

That was enough for many of us. We turned around and did support the infusion of new American dollars into the International Monetary Fund.

Faced with that same configuration here, at first my inclination was to support the President, because I termed it first in my own heart as a foreign policy question, should we not support the President in a foreign policy initiative? But that would mean I would have to overlook the statute, which is the organ at issue here. And in doing so, I would be, in trying to support the President, flaunting the congressional act which is at the core of this entire issue.

So, reluctantly here, I differentiated from a foreign policy question, and I simply term it as one of implementation of current law as we, the Members of Congress, fashioned it, and as we are bound to enforce it.

Mr. Speaker, with that background, I support the resolution at hand.

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Texas, [Mr. BARTON].

(Mr. BARTON of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we are here today engaged in a debate about whether the government of Mexico has fully complied in their efforts to cooperate with the United States of America in the war against drugs.

We seem to be putting a lot of emphasis on the word ''fully.'' I want to ask the Members of this body, have we fully cooperated with ourselves? How many Members of this body have a drug testing program in their office? One, two. I have got mandatory, and the gentleman from Florida [Mr. SHAW] has one. That is 2 out of 435.

How many Members of this body have a full-time antidrug coordinator on their congressional staffs in their district and how many Members of this body have done everything possible in terms of education and outreach in their congressional districts?

I think we should first look at ourselves before we look south of the border. But let us look south of the border, and look at what happened just in the last year.

Is Mexico trying to do its part? In 1996, they eradicated 56,000 acres of marijuana production. How many did we eradicate in this country? In 1996, they eradicated 36,000 acres of poppy production. In 1996, they seized 24,000 kilograms of cocaine, they seized 363 kilograms of heroin, and they seized 1,006 of marijuana.

Let us look at extradition. There seems to be quite a bit of concern in the Congress about extradition. Before 1995, the Government of Mexico had never extradited anyone, nada, zero. In 1995, they extradited 5 non-Mexicans. In 1996, last year, 16, of which 2 were Mexican nationals. In the 2 months of this year, January and February, they have extradited six people.

We have pending 135 active requests for extradition, of which we classify 14 as priority. Eight of those are drug related, three are murder related, and two are violent crimes-related. Eleven of them are Mexican nationals, one is a United States citizen, and one is a Cuban. I feel very confident that throughout the legislative process this year, many of those people will be extradited once they have been apprehended in Mexico.

Let us look internally. In 1996, Mexico arrested within their borders 28 major drug kingpins. They made over 11,000 total arrests. Within their own law enforcement agencies they arrested, detained, or dismissed 1,200 of their 4,500 national antidrug force.

They have passed and changed their Constitution to have the first organized crime statutes on their books. That was not passed until October 1996. They changed their Constitution and changed their penal code to make money laundering illegal. That was done in the latter part of this year, begun in May 1996. They have decided they cannot totally cleanse their antidrug law enforcement agencies as they are, so they are starting from scratch to rebuild in totality. Overall, they spent $1.7 billion, which is double as a percent of their Federal budget what we spent on antidrug efforts.

Are they doing enough? No, they are not. Should we decertify them because they are not doing anything? No, we should not. Please vote against these resolutions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would advise Members that the gentleman from Florida [Mr. SHAW] has 18½ minutes remaining, the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. HAMILTON] has 7¼ minutes remaining, and the gentleman from California [Mr. BECERRA] has 8½ minutes remaining.

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

Mr. Speaker, I would point out to the gentleman who just left the well that not one of those extraditions has been a Mexican national on a drug offense. That is the problem that we are facing.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman New York [Mr. PAXON].

Mr. PAXON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Joint Resolution 58, a resolution to reverse the President's February 28 certification of Mexico as a nation fully cooperating with the United States in its war on drugs. The facts, unfortunately, show otherwise.

Mexico is the entry point of most of the drugs that are sold in the United States. It is the transfer point of 70 percent of the cocaine and up to 80 percent of the marijuana brought into this country and sold on the streets of the United States.

However, this is not and should not be just a debate about Mexico and its failed war on drugs. Rather, unfortunately, this debate is underscoring the lack of leadership from our own administration in the war on drugs.

One of the President's first actions was to slash the budget of the drug czar. Then his Attorney General suggested we reduce mandatory minimum sentences for drug traffickers. But the icing on the cake if you will remember back was when one of the top leaders of his administration suggested legalizing marijuana.

□ 1345

It is ironic, I believe, that the President was claiming success in the war on drugs during his press conference certifying Mexico at the exact same time that the Partnership for a Drug-Free America was releasing a study showing that the domestic war on drugs is a total and utter failure.

Mr. Speaker, what are the results of this failed leadership? Well, let me tell my colleagues. The war on drugs was successful in the 1980's, and drug use went down steadily for 11 years prior to 1992. Since 1992, drug use by teenagers has risen 105 percent. The Partnership study released last week showed that in 1 year drug use doubled amongst teenagers, from 1995 to 1996, doubled amongst teenagers. We have now found, according to the Partnership, that 1 in 4 children nationwide was offered drugs in 1996.

Most of these drugs end up in the hands of children in our communities, in our home towns. But let me emphasize, this is not a debate on statistics, this is a debate on real lives, the lives of the children in our country today.

I believe very strongly that the sponsors of House Joint Resolution 58 are right on track. We need to make very clear to the Government of Mexico we are serious, but it must not stop there. If the administration in this country is not willing to take the leadership in fighting the war on drugs, this Congress will have to step up to the plate and exercise our leadership to make sure that the war on drugs is real and that the future of our children is saved for the generations to come.

Before I yield back I would note that the attorneys general of both Arizona and California, Attorney General Grant Woods and Attorney General Dan Lungren, have sent a letter to the President, of which we have obtained copies, underscoring their support for the effort to decertify Mexico and to take this very strong and clear stand today.

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Missouri [Mr. GEPHARDT], the minority leader.

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

Mr. GEPHARDT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the committee's resolution and against the Hastert amendment. I have to say that I come to this floor reluctantly. I regret that I and many other Members find themselves in the unfortunate position of having to support the decertification and waiver for Mexico as an ally in the drug war.

Over the last several weeks, Democrats and Republicans working together authored legislation that would decertify, but waive sanctions. I commend the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN] and the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. HAMILTON] for their hard work.

The bill also includes language requiring that the administration begin to consult and work with Congress in addressing the problem facing both of our countries with regard to drugs.

There are many who oppose this effort and I deeply respect their opinions. But I believe that under the law, we have to respond, and the response that I think has to be given is decertification, but waiver. I hope that in the days ahead we get a chance to consider changing the underlying law. I am uncomfortable with certifying or decertifying Colombia or Mexico or other countries, or our own efforts with regard to the war against drugs.

Unfortunately, the Republican leadership yesterday chose to allow an amendment to be offered that gratuitously attacks the President's actions to address the problem of drugs in this country. To me, this is simply an effort to gain partisan advantage from the fear that we all share about the impact of drugs in our country.

The war on drugs should not be a political football. Parents across America deserve to know that their leaders are working together to solve these problems. They want to be able to send their kids to school and to play with their friends free from the fear that drugs will be offered.

The question before us today is whether or not Mexico has fully cooperated to fight the war on drugs. This is not a question of motive. It is a question of fact. I deeply respect those who are valiantly fighting against the drug lords and cartels in Mexico. Many valiant police officers and prosecutors and government officials in Mexico are giving their lives and fighting on a daily basis to stop this problem. They must be honored in all that we do.

Mostly, we cannot validate the status quo. None of us can be satisfied with what we are doing, what America is doing, what Mexico is doing, what Colombia is doing, what we are all doing to fight this problem of drugs. It is an evil influence that is stalking our people. What we are doing is not working. Blame is everywhere.

I hope that if nothing else comes out of this debate and this action today, that in the days ahead we can find new ways and more effective ways of fighting this problem of drugs. If all we do today is place blame, we have failed again. If what comes out of today is renewed vigor and enthusiasm to fight this problem in Mexico and to fight it in the United States, then this will have been a day well spent.

I appreciate the efforts of the gentleman from California [Mr. BECERRA], my friend, and the other members of our caucus who have worked on this. I congratulate the ranking member, I congratulate the chairman, and I hope that we will come out of this today with a renewed sense of purpose to work together to solve the problem and to change the facts of today.

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the minority leader [Mr. GEPHARDT], for his strong arguments in support of this legislation, and hopefully, by working together on both sides of the aisle, and on both sides of the border, we will find a better way to fight this war on drugs.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. SOUDER].

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, it is important in the decertification process that we not only look toward the future but, indeed, that whole process has to look somewhat toward the past as well, not only on what Mexico has been doing but acknowledging in the Hastert amendment some things that we did not do. We cut back our interdiction funding, we cut back our source country funding, so we acknowledge that we have made some mistakes in our country, too.

But the evidence and the facts are staring us straight in the face. If indeed we are going to have a decertification process, if the drugs coming into our country increase, if up to 90 percent of the police forces in Tijuana and Baja California are corrupt, so corrupt that we have pulled our DEA back; if we have questions about the top leadership of the country, I mean one of the things even that the administration passed out said that the defense department and the national police in Mexico cooperated more together last year. Yes, they moved a guy who was on the payroll of the cartel from the defense department over to the drug czar, and they cooperated in giving the information to the drug dealers.

I personally believe that President Zedillo and his top staff are committed to changing their Nation. He understands the terrorist threat of the narcotraffickers there. But we have to make this decision today based on the facts that are in front of us, and the facts that are in front of us say a 90-day delay is helpful, they have more time to do that; we are not putting the sanctions in effect with the decertification in the Hastert amendment. I support that in the sense of giving them additional time.

When I met with President Zedillo, along with the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. HASTERT] and Senator COVERDELL, he expressed his concern about his son being approached by drug dealers in Mexico and what was happening to his country. I am concerned about my sons being approached at school as well. I am concerned about my daughter in college.

We cannot, in Fort Wayne, IN or anywhere else in this country, we cannot get enough drug dogs, we cannot get enough prisons, we cannot do enough in prevention programs and treatment programs if the supply keeps pouring in the way it is. We have to work in partnership with our friends in the south. We need maritime agreements, we need DEA agreements, we need extradition agreements, and then they do not have to fear decertification.

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished 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 want to thank the distinguished ranking member of his kindness, and I would like to thank the Committee on International Relations for its hard work, and certainly the chairman.

Mr. Speaker, I rose on the floor earlier to express my opposition to the rule because I believe there is much more opportunity for us to discuss what is really at issue, and that is the devastation of drugs in our community. I just had an opportunity to talk to a constituent, a banker in our community, and he spoke the truth: Find the money and you will find the drugs.

So I rise today to make this an issue about drugs and the abuse that is going on in our Nation. I want to see us discuss real laws dealing with money laundering. I want to see us have real legislation that helps to eradicate drugs in our community. The inner cities see young African-American men convicted 55 percent on drugs charges, most of them under 25 years old. I would like to see legislation that truly helps to eliminate the crossing over of drugs over the border into our inner cities and communities, eradicating the transfer of drugs that come from the border into my city and community. I would like to see the eradication of the viciousness and the travesty that it impacts on the lives of citizens.

I will vote for a drug czar proposal by General McCaffrey to be able to fight on two fronts, and that is to be able to fight the illegal utilization of moneys that help to create opportunities for drugs in our community, and to fight for hard-core, no-nonsense prevention and treatment with money that directly gets to the victims of drug abuse and not to the bureaucrats.

I will not vote, however, for drug bashing, and I will recognize that it is extremely important that this debate be turned around to make it a debate on how we can end the ravages of drugs in America. I hope we will turn to that.

With that in mind, maybe we will help solve the problem and begin real legislation that faces what I am concerned about, which is the loss of lives in our Nation.

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California [Mr. BILBRAY].

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

Mr. BILBRAY. Mr. Speaker, I think it is no secret that this Member came from the southern parts of San Diego County to this institution, in no little way to try to sensitize this institution in Washington, DC, to the extent and the massiveness of the problems along our frontier and the problems that we encounter, those of us that live along the border.

I find myself in a very, very interesting position here today, because I have to say quite frankly that I think that we are seeing this week Washington and Congress finally starting to talk about and realize the magnitude of the problem that lies across our border to the south, and along our border and the entire area that we call the Frontera.

I have to say to my colleagues that I find it hard to believe that this institution did not realize, and does not realize today, the magnitude of the quest and the challenge the people of the Republic of Mexico have faced for many years and face today in trying to liberate their country from the tyranny of drug traffickers. Their national sovereignty is being threatened not by a force from outside, but from within. I think for us to underestimate the magnitude of that impact and that challenge is really demeaning to both of us.

Mr. Speaker, let me point out, Mexico has done things to fight drug trafficking that we in the United States have not been brave enough to do. Mexico has not found it easier to put only half as many agents at the border as has been authorized by Congress. So I will say that about the administration. But I will also say this about the majority in Congress. Mexico has put troops at the border, not because they want armed troops at the border, but because they realize the problem is so big that they cannot find excuses not to do everything humanly possible.

So I would ask the administration, put the resources to cooperate with Mexico along the frontier, but I would also ask the majority, look at the bipartisan Traficant-Hunter bill and tell me, have we done everything, everything possible to be certified as being one who is willing to take on this battle and be able to judge Mexico?

Mr. Speaker, I ask that we do not judge those who are doing more than we have ever dreamed. Let us cooperate with them and move forward.

□ 1400

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution is certainly not intended to bash Mexico or to insult the Mexican people. Millions of Mexicans are in the cross hairs of the drug cartels, just as a number of our people are in the same situation. We stand together with those honest Mexican officials in facing the fact that their government is simply not doing enough to help us front the scourge of drugs on both sides of the border.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out that we have been doing something in our own Nation about drug use. When we fought the scourge on the supply as well as on the demand side simultaneously, we reduced monthly cocaine use by nearly 80 percent between 1985 and 1992. We reduced monthly cocaine users from 5.8 million in 1985 down to 1.3 in 1992, so the old argument that nothing works is not true, and that we must reduce demand is pure nonsense. It has to be fought on every level.

In a recent letter by the Mexican Ambassador, Silva Herzog, said to me in concluding his letter, ''It is important to stress three basic points: First, Mexico and the United States have carried on with an intense agenda of cooperation against drug trafficking. It has been, despite political and external interests, an uninterrupted work at all levels of government. Second, to truly fight drug lords and drugs present on both sides of the border, we have to work effectively on both sides; third, regardless of any circumstances,'' he states that Mexico will continue to fight against drug trafficking.

We want to enhance that cooperation. What we are seeking is a more effective policy on both sides of the border.

Mr. Speaker, let me also take this opportunity to thank our courageous DEA agents who, day in and day out, fight the battle for future generations. We have lost a number of them in the drug battle.

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

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. FRANK].

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, even on its own terms I think the variants of this resolution are kind of silly.

As I understand it, what they say is we will decertify Mexico but we will immediately then waive the decertification so it will have no tangible effect. This is a new policy. It is called substituting insult for injury. We will not deny anything substantive to Mexico, we will just call them some names. People seem to think somehow that this will help. I do not understand how they think it will. It may help some people politically. It clearly will not help promote cooperation with Mexico.

What it says is, we will decertify you and immediately thereafter make sure the decertification has no effect except to hurt your feelings and make you angry. We spent all last week congratulating, this is our first step on the way to legislate, and as of now I would say that my colleagues seem to be better congratulators rather than legislators because I do not understand what this does, except make it worse.

Second, it is fundamentally flawed. The notion, and my friends have forgotten, particularly on the other side, what they, I thought, knew about a free market. The notion that in a free society, where tens of millions of people come and go on a regular basis monthly, where goods come and go, the notion that you can physically keep something in great demand out as your main strategy is seriously flawed.

The resolution that came from the Republican leadership denounces drug treatment, untested drug treatment, and says we should rely instead on physical interdiction. That has it absolutely backward. The notion that this country points the fingers of blame and objects to others because they meet an unfortunate high demand in this country absolves us of responsibility, plays political games. It does nothing to really advance the problem.

What we ought to do is to allow the President to go forward, change our legislation, and focus our resources on the kind of efforts within our own country, which is the only place we can deal with this problem.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Florida [Mr. SHAW], the main sponsor of this provision.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the chairman and the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. LEE HAMILTON], and I want to congratulate both the Democratic ranking member and the chairman for working so hard to bring this legislation forward and in doing it in such a bipartisan manner. I hope the spirit of that bipartisanship continues through the amendment process and that we get a good, unified vote out of here. I will have more to say about the amendment when my turn comes to do so.

Mr. Speaker, much has been said about the certification process itself on the House floor. Let us turn our attention just a moment to whether or not this is really interfering within the internal affairs of Mexico. The question has been made, why would we insult them, why would we embarrass them? Let us look at some of the things we use to judge our foreign policy toward other countries and what we look at in determining what our foreign policy is to be.

Every year we go through a debate on the human rights in China, and the human rights and the way people treat their own citizens is always a consideration in our own foreign policy. We even look at the economic system that other countries have. We look at how they vote in the United Nations. We look at what their trade laws are, whether they protect our copyrights, their banking laws. We look at all of these things. We even look at the way they treat dolphins in deciding what our foreign policy and trade law is going to be with other countries.

Surely we can also judge them as to how they treat our kids, how they treat our drug laws, how they assist us in a problem that is tearing the fabric out of America today.

We have long worried about hostile countries throughout the world and the weapons of giant destruction they have. We go in and take out and bomb plants that have the ability to create and build weapons of great destruction. Surely we can enforce our own laws.

We are talking about has Mexico fully cooperated. Fully cooperated. The answer under any measure, as the gentleman said in his opening statement, is of course not; they have not fully cooperated. In fact, it could be argued whether they have hardly cooperated.

Let me run down a few items that I think must be placed on the table and must be considered by this body when we go to our vote today on decertification. Well over 50 percent of the illegal drugs coming into the country today come in through Mexico. They supply 20 to 30 percent of the heroin in the United States. Eighty percent of the foreign-grown marijuana comes in from Mexico, and they supply it.

The corruption in Mexico and their law enforcement is monumental. A nation with between $10 and $30 billion in an annual drug trade, this is Mexico we are talking about. Almost half a billion dollars a year is spent in bribes, and they have failed to extradite one single Mexican national on a drug offense.

Mr. Speaker, surely we should not tiptoe around and worry about offending them. I want every Member of this body this afternoon, when they come

down to vote, to think about looking in the eyes of their children, their grandchildren, the innercity kids, the kids whose future is being destroyed, look at those who are struggling to get out of welfare today. Over 1 million of them are going to need drug rehabilitation before we can even find jobs for them. Think of all the people who are flunking drug tests and cannot be hired today because of policies that corporations have. Then look and see where these drugs are coming from.

For a moment, dream with me about a drug-free America. Should this not be the No. 1 issue on our foreign policy today? The gentleman from New York [Mr. RANGEL] talked about it a few moments ago. There was a question of where does it stand on the priority list of our State Department. I am not talking about just the Clinton administration, I am talking about previous administrations, too.

It should be No. 1. It should be No. 1. There should not be one single issue that should rise above the question of the drug problem here in the United States. That is where we are going to lose our country. That is where we are going to lose our future if we do not get serious about it.

This is a small step. The gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. FRANK] said this is only an insult. Let us begin with an insult. But we have to bring about the reality of what is going on, what is going on in the world today. We have a certification process. Let us use it. Let us go forward. Let us continue this bipartisan effort that we have to pass this most important piece of legislation.

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time on general debate to the distinguished gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. OBEY]

The SPEAKER pro tempore [Mr. CHAMBLISS]. The gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. OBEY] is recognized for 1¼ minutes.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I do not agree with the administration policy on Mexico. I certainly do not agree with their policy on NAFTA. But I am going to support the committee proposition because I think this entire process is ridiculous.

Under the certification process, what happens is that the Congress requires the President to certify that the world is perfect and the conduct of other people in the world is perfect. Then when he has to do that to further the interests of American foreign policy, the Congress as an institution then poses for political holy pictures because he has to do it when we put him in a box and virtually require him to do it in the first place.

It seems to me the question is not whether Mexico has cooperated. Of course they have not, certainly not to the degree we would like to see them cooperate. But the question is whether or not we will take an action which will make it more difficult to obtain the goal we want with respect to drug control, because we give additional arguments to those in the struggle against drugs who are not our friends.

That is the issue. The issue is simply what action can be taken by the Congress today which will produce the best results for our kids and for our country. I submit that that action is to stick with the committee, not to get into other political arguments. So I would strongly urge that we support the committee's position.

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

Let me begin by first thanking the chairman of the Committee on International Relations and also the ranking member for having yielded me time for this debate.

Mr. Speaker, let me also take a moment to give appreciation to all those who have risen today and spoken against the political Goliath that is decertification. Let me begin by saying that our goal, I hope our goal here, is to keep the drugs off of the streets and out of the homes of America. Decertifying Mexico, however, dampens our cooperation with Mexico, and I fear will do just the opposite of keeping those drugs out of those homes and off of those streets.

Let me call Members' attention to some statistics and some studies. Almost 13 million Americans today use illicit drugs, and they spend, by most estimates, somewhere between $50 billion to perhaps as much as $150 billion to satisfy that desire.

According to a 1994 Rand Corp. study, if we want to reduce the consumption of drugs, we are going to have to spend a ton of money, but for every $1 million we spend on trying to reduce the demand on our side, drug rehabilitation, trying to keep kids off of drugs to begin with, to do the same amount of work we do with keeping the demand down, we have to spend $23 million to try to stop or help do the eradication in some of the foreign countries that are producing the drugs in the first place; $1 million to try to curtail the demand, $23 million to try to do the eradication.

If Members think that is bad, how much do they think it costs to eradicate, as opposed to trying to reduce the demand? For every $1 million you spend to reduce the demand domestically, you have to spend $11 million to try to interdict those same drugs that otherwise would be used.

Certainly it is more cost-effective for us to try to reduce the demand, make sure they never hit the streets, those drugs never hit the streets, and that we do the best job we can to rehabilitate those who are using drugs.

Third, a former DEA official has been quoted to say that the average drug organization can afford to lose between 70 to 80 percent of its product and still be profitable. With that type of losses being sustainable, it is going to take a lot to stop someone from producing and shipping drugs into this country. When you can lose fully 70 to 80 percent of your product and still come out ahead, you know there is going to be a big supply.

□ 1415

Well, what helps make that supply so efficient? There are estimates that somewhere between $10 billion, or 60 percent, of the annual proceeds that drug cartels receive is placed by them into corruption financing, buying off elected officials, buying off law enforcement, buying off business people to help them launder the money, $6 billion available to drug cartels just to buy people off. Is it any wonder that on both sides of our border and not just the United States-Mexican border but the United States-Canadian border, we find that there are so many people willing to help allow these drugs to flow into our borders.

Mr. Speaker, I think the problem is one that goes beyond the issue of who is right, who is wrong, who is helped, who is not helped. Let me talk for a moment about the issue of cooperation. I know many folks have cited already some of the work that has been done by the Mexican Government and of course our own Government to try to stop the flow of drugs. But I should note for the record that, since President Zedillo took office in 1995, the Attorney General from Mexico has dismissed more than 1,250 Federal law enforcement officers and technical personnel for corruption or incompetence and placed those individuals' names on a national register to ensure that they would not be rehired by any other agency.

Further, Mexico has eradicated per year more hectares that have marijuana than any other country in the hemisphere. Those are all statistics that point out that cooperation is necessary, not attacks. If we go the route of cooperation, what we will find is that we will be able to do a better job of interdicting the drugs that come into our country.

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

As I prepare to conclude our arguments, I would like to note some thoughts expressed by an experienced drug fighter, DEA Deputy Administrator Stephen Green, who recently stated that the Mexican nationalism is no excuse for its failure to stop drugs and went on to say, I always question the argument that United States law enforcement is infringing on Mexican nationalism and that they do not need United States help. He went on to say, if that is the case, they should do what they say they are capable of doing.

Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. ARMEY], the distinguished majority leader.

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York for yielding me this time.

I would like to begin by expressing my appreciation to the committee of jurisdiction, the gentleman from New York, chairman of the committee, and

our distinguished colleague from Indiana [Mr. HAMILTON], who recently disappointed us all with his announcement that he may soon retire from this body.

Mr. Speaker, I understand how difficult it was for the committee to deal with this issue. There are a great many facets of this action that deserve consideration, and there are many troubling things, not the least of which is the point made just a few minutes ago by the gentleman from Wisconsin that perhaps the whole process of certification is a process we might want to reexamine.

But we really have to address things where we are. As we do that, we have to have a really sharp focus about what is it really about. We are concerned about the political stability of Mexico, and we are concerned about the economic prosperity of Mexico. And I think I can say that this Congress, this body has on many, many occasions expressed their concern on both those points with concrete actions. We want for the people of Mexico everything we want for the people of the United States in political stability and economic well-being.

So the possibility that an action that we take on this floor might impair either of these two goals for the people of Mexico is a possibility that weighs heavily on our hearts as we bring a resolution to the floor. But that, Mr. Speaker, is not what this resolution is about. This resolution is about whether or not this Congress will put its stamp of approval on a certification of an effort by the Government of Mexico to control the flow of drugs through their nation and into our Nation.

We are concerned with our focus here about the adequacy of our own Government's effort to control drug usage in this country, and there have been many statements in this debate about the inadequacy of that effort. I do not have to recite chapter and verse. So the essential question is, is this Congress going to demonstrate a resolve to save not only our children but the children of Mexico as well from what can only be described as the horrors of drug usage and drug trafficking, the attendance crime, the attendance violence, the personal and critical danger that each child faces if they are lured into this trap of drug usage or drug trafficking? Can we demonstrate a resolve to the children of this Nation and the children of our friends and neighbors south of the border by doing anything less than saying with this resolution that this Congress believes too much about the importance of these children, cares too much about the outcome in their lives, demands too much in the effort that would be made by any government in the interest of protecting these children to allow a certification by a government that has failed in its own responsibilities on behalf of another government that, too, has not fulfilled all its responsibilities for those very same precious children in both countries?

That is what it is about, Mr. Speaker. That is what it is about. It is not about this Congress's duty to this Government. It is not about this Congress's duty to the Mexican Government. It is not about this Congress's duty to things that are real and yet somewhat abstract in the lives of real people in their ordinary business of life called political stability and economic growth. It is about the safety, security, happiness of the children of both countries, and the sacred moral obligation of all governments, all places to protect the children from harm, violence, moral decay, and personal tragedy.

We must stand in support of both the Hastert amendment and the resolution brought by this committee because the children are precious, and the children is why we address this issue; in doing so, do so in all respect and a wish of Godspeed for the prosperity of the Mexican people and a tranquil stability in the politics of our friends to the south as well as a resolve to fulfill our responsibility in this Congress and this government for all these children.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished majority leader for his supporting arguments of our proposal, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I supported House Joint Resolution 58 today to decertify Mexico as fully cooperating in the war on drugs. There are few threats to the health and welfare of our country more dangerous than the flood of illegal drugs which is inundating our borders. President Clinton was correct when he decertified Colombia as a fully cooperating partner in the international war on drugs, but his certification of Mexico's efforts is completely unjustified.

My constituents and all Americans face a very grave danger from illegal drugs from Mexico. Let's examine just a few of the facts. In each of the last 4 years Mexico has been certified as fully cooperating in the war on drugs. But, in 1993, 50 percent of all the cocaine entering the United States came from Mexico. During this period of fully cooperating, the amount of cocaine entering the United States from Mexico increased by 40 percent. Today, Mexico is the source of 70 percent of all of the cocaine entering the United States. I do not understand how any thinking person can characterize this as fully cooperating.

There are many examples of the corruption within Mexico's law enforcement agencies, but the two most recent examples, which occurred in the days just before the State Department certified Mexico's cooperation, are nothing short of outrageous. Gen. Jesus Gutierrez Rebollo, the top official in Mexico's counternarcotics program was arrested last month because of his close association with one of that country's most notorious drug lords. How can this happen? The man who was commanding Mexico's war on drugs is an associate of a drug lord? Unbelievable.

Or, take the example of Humberto Garcia Abrego, the brother of the head of the Gulf Cartel. He was arrested on a money-laundering charge, released by a local court because it was an illegal arrest, taken into custody again on another court order, and then he simply walked out of the National Institute for Combating Drugs. The explanation from the Mexican Government was that Abrego ''left * * * before the investigation was completed. These are examples of Mexican behavior during a period of heightened sensitivity toward the impending certification deadline.

This level of cooperation is unacceptable and must not be tolerated. Certification of Mexico at this time will only send the message that the United States is more than willing to give a wink and nod to Mexico's corruption and inadequate law enforcement. If our war on drugs is going to succeed, we must vigorously enforce our policies and hold Mexico accountable for its clear lack of cooperation in our efforts.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on the final passage of House Joint Resolution 58, the decertification of Mexico. This is not a Democratic problem or a Republican problem, this is indeed an American problem. I do not think we need a resolution passed by the House castigating the administration's drug policy. My colleagues, this problem should be solved in a more constructive manner. I propose that we pass a sense of Congress resolution that does not attack the President of the United States but that is critical of Mexico. In the case of Mexico, it is generally estimated that the illegal drug trade generates $30 billion per year and the U.S. Treasury estimates that Mexican financial institutions launder in the neighborhood of $10 billion per year. It is true that at least four-fifths of all the illicit drugs consumed in the United States are of foreign origin, including all the cocaine and heroin. It is also true that most of the cocaine is produced and transported through Mexico. However, the real problem is not what is going on in Mexico, but what is going on with the drug trade in America, and in my own 18th Congressional District of Houston. In 1994, 47 percent of all drug arestees nationwide were in the city of Houston. We must combat the drug problem at home and we must impress upon our Mexican neighbors that if they want to continue a good working relationship with the United States, then they must improve their enforcement of the drug trafficking into the United States. However, decertification in this case might not be the best answer. Mr. Speaker, I am calling for a sense of the Congress resolution that would compel Mexico to cooperate with the United States when it comes to extradition of major drug traffickers, cutting down on organized crime, and arresting and convicting Mexican drug lords. There are other and more constructive ways the Congress can act in this matter, but decertification right now might not be the way to go. Cutting the source of money through tougher money laundering laws, however should be one of our major considerations.

Ms. VELAZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the administration's decision to certify Mexico. If we are serious abut combating money laundering and drug trafficking, we must help Mexico and keep them as our ally. They should not be expected to fight this war alone.

Money laundering and narcotic trafficking are a global epidemic—not just Mexico's. The Mexican Government—itself—recognizes these activities as the principal security risk to that nation. It is up to us to help Mexico constructively, instead of slamming the door on a strong and close friend.

My colleagues, if we do not support the administration, we will be sending the wrong message to the Government of Mexico. We should make it clear to our neighbor that we truly intend to fight this war together. I urge all of you to support the administration's Mexico certification decision and to oppose this resolution.

Mr. BONILLA. Mr. Speaker, the legislation to decertify Mexico, reflects the failed practice of legislating foreign policy. My friends, history has clearly demonstrated that doesn't work. This Congress has no authority over foreign nations and our efforts to legislate another country's actions will either be ignored or fan the flames of anti-Americanism.

The fact is that the normal diplomatic process provides the tried and true means to voice our concerns. Traditional actions such as withdrawing our Ambassador, limiting or stopping cooperation, opposing loan requests and a variety of other measures that impact the day-to-day relations between nations are by far the most effective means of forcing other nations to consider our concerns.

What we really should be voting on today is scraping the entire failed certification process. Policies, like decertification, which are waived once they are implemented only serve to increase contempt, while lessening respect, for American power. Decertification has not stopped the flow a single dollar's worth of drugs from Colombia and decertification of Mexico will prove no more effective. I represent well over 600 miles of our border with Mexico. I know first hand that our current domestic policies are not working. Too many of my constituents are living in fear of the drug smugglers. This must stop.

Our Government needs to take substantive action to get more cooperation from Mexico. Further statements, such as decertification, promise only to deliver further failures in the war on drugs while possibly threatening the stability of the Mexican economy leading to increasing illegal immigration. My colleagues, please join me in rolling up your sleeves and do the hard work of stopping the flow of drugs rather than continuing the business-as-usual decertification approach of empty promises.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Joint Resolution 58, and the Hastert amendment. The President failed to exercise good judgement when, on February 28, he certified Mexico as a fully cooperating ally in the war against drugs. Some 30 percent of the heroin, 70 percent of the marijuana, and 60 percent of the cocaine imported into the United States originates in or is shipped through Mexico.

That fact alone demonstrates that the brave men and women of Mexico and Latin America who are our allies in the war against drugs face tremendous odds. They face corruption in their governments. The evil influence of drug kingpins threatens their lives, livelihoods, and families day after day. We should recognize the very real and personal sacrifices they make to fight an enemy who, by every measure, is stronger, richer, and more brutal than they are. All of us salute those allies south of the border who fight individual wars against illegal drugs not because the financial and professional rewards are great, but because they believe it is right. Though they are not Americans, they are fighting on behalf of our children, our families, and our country. We owe them a debt of gratitude.

These allies in the war against drugs simply do not get the support they need from north of the border.

The enormous global enterprise that is the illegal drug trade simply would not exist if there was not an available and willing American market to purchase its deadly product. If there was no domestic demand for illegal drugs, if illegal drug abuse was seen by all of us socially unacceptable, these international drug kingpins and their ill-gotten wealth would vanish.

Unfortunately, there is a domestic market for illegal drugs. It is our young people.

Among 12- to 17-year-olds, since 1992:

Marijuana use has doubled. More importantly for our children, today's marijuana is far more potent than the drug abused in the 1960's.

LSD use has climbed to record highs.

And the number of young people who have used any illegal drug has risen an appalling 78 percent.

Furthermore, while teen drug abuse has climbed the past 4 years, leadership in Washington has been pulling in different directions. A parent whose child has lost a life to drugs does not care which politicians bicker for partisan advantage. They want to know what has been done, and what needs to be done.

What kind of leadership has President Clinton exercised in the war against drugs?

In 1992, an MTV interviewer asked Bill Clinton whether he would ''inhale'' given the chance to ''do it over again.'' Of course, we're talking about inhaling a marijuana joint. Bill Clinton's reply: ''Sure, if I could. I tried before.''

President Clinton slashed the drug czar's office 83 percent.

When President Clinton had a Democratic Congress, they cut Safe and Drug Free Schools, by $111 million in fiscal year 1994, and by an additional $21 million in 1995. Meanwhile, lack of oversight at the Department of Education gave over the program to waste and fraud. Safe and Drug Free Schools money was spent in Michigan on giant plastic teeth and toothbrushes, on the idea that kids who brush don't abuse drugs. In Fairfax County, it was spent on a $176,000 staff retreat, on Funds for Lumber for a step aerobics class, and on a field trip to Deep Run Lodge.

The President's negotiating team, seeking to expand antidrug activities in Mexico just days before the President's 1997 certification was due, came away from those negotiations emptyhanded—and then recommended recertification of Mexico as an ally in the war on drugs.

The President's National Security Council placed the war on drugs as its 29th priority out of 29—dead last on its list of national security priorities.

Faced with these facts, Lee Brown, the President's drug policy director, wrote in 1995 about a ''troubling'' decline in drug prosecutions. And a senior Democratic Congressman, CHARLIE RANGEL, who is very active on the drug issue, said ''I have never, never, never seen a President who cares less about this issue.''

Despite the ambiguous message from the White House, Congress has taken decisive action in the war against drugs.

We have provided level funding for the Safe and Drug Free Schools Program, while fighting fraud and abuse. No cuts.

We increased the drug czar's office, the DEA budget, Coast Guard antidrug operations, the State Department's international narcotics control program, the Southwest Border States Anti-drug Information System, and several other programs like military drug interdiction over the President's request.

We are taking action against crystal meth, which is a major problem in California and the Southwest, and against trafficking of so-called roofies, otherwise known as the date-rape drug.

Without a doubt, more must be done. The Border Patrol and the Customs Service should be provided additional resources, beyond the essentially status-quo levels in the President's budget, to fight illegal drugs at the border and at our ports of entry to combat the supply of illegal drugs. And domestic demand for illegal drugs can be reduced through more stringent law enforcement, random drug testing campaigns, and a relentless campaign of public education. No one will help our children better than those closest to them—their parents, pastors, neighbors, teachers, local police, and community leaders. When we all publicly agree that drugs kill, and that their use will not be tolerated, and repeat that message with clarity over and over and over again, only then will we make headway in the war on drugs.

We cannot win the war on drugs with the Keystone Kops. The unsung heroes who are fighting drugs every day, in Mexico and across Latin America, and in homes and schools across the United States, demand a vote of confidence in their work. Let us take up their battle and fight to win.

I am attaching two articles that Members may find of interest. The first outlines the Clinton administration's complete failure to properly advance the war on drugs in Latin America. The second is an op-ed I wrote last fall, making a call to arms against illegal drug abuse.

[From the San Diego Union-Tribune, Mar. 12, 1997]

U.S. FAILED TO GET MEXICO TO RESHAPE WAR ON DRUGS

(By Marcus Stern)

WASHINGTON—Eight days before President Clinton's Feb. 28 decision to give Mexico's anti-drug program his seal of approval, U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno issued a tongue-lashing to Mexico Foreign Minister Jose Angel Gurria.

The icy rebuke delivered in her stately conference room and Gurria's angry reaction to it set a confrontational tone for the next eight days as U.S. officials tried—and ultimately failed—to wring meaningful concessions from Mexico to reshape the fight against drugs.

Mexico's refusal to grant immediate concessions could influence a House vote expected this week to try to overturn Clinton's controversial decision to label Mexico a cooperative partner in the war on drugs.

Throughout the week leading up to Clinton's decision, Reno and other U.S. officials aggressively pushed Mexico on numerous nettlesome issues, such as a broader extradition policy and permission for U.S. antidrug agents to carry guns in Mexico.

But, even though they came away emptyhanded at the end of the week, senior Clinton administration officials nonetheless walked into the Cabinet Room of the White House on Feb. 28 and urged the president to certify Mexico. Those who were troubled by continuing signs of corruption in Mexico, including Reno, nonetheless concluded that certification was the only realistic political option.

''Some people thought it was the right thing to do,'' said one of those in attendance, ''and some people thought it was the only choice.''

But many members of Congress are rejecting the administration's view that yanking Mexico's certification could jeopardize its economic recovery, undermine President Ernesto Zedillo's political standing and lead to less cooperation.

With sentiment running heavily against the president, the House is expected to vote this week on whether to overturn Clinton's decision, and the full Senate is expected to consider similar legislation as soon as next week.

Clinton administration officials insist that no effort was made to pressure Mexico into concessions in exchange for certification. However, the discussions have been shrouded in secrecy and confusion. Conflicting and ambiguous statements have been issued by both sides about what transpired between the two countries during the days leading up to the president's decision.

Unofficial accounts of the flurry of diplomatic exchanges suggest that concerted efforts were made to win concessions from Mexico during that period. However, the tone of the exchanges became marked by confrontation rather than conciliation, and by the end of the week there were no signals coming from Mexican officials that they were ready to consider clear concessions.

The U.S. push for them began when Foreign Minister Gurria landed in Washington on Feb. 20 for two days of talks with administration officials.

It was his first visit since U.S. officials had been stunned by news that Gen. Jesus Gutierrez Rebollo, the newly installed coordinator of Mexico's anti-drug program, had been arrested after allegations that he had maintained a long association with one of Mexico's most power drug cartel leaders.

After making a stop at the State Department, Gurria headed to the Justice Department for a 45-minute meeting with Reno, who would play the role of the bad cop during the U.S. negotiations with Gurria that week.

''It was not a pleasant meeting,'' said a senior Mexican official. ''The attorney general was very tough. She said they were very upset about the whole incident of Gutierrez Rebollo. She said it turned the whole question of certification upside down.''

Reno raised a range of issues on which quick progress was needed.

''We clearly understood them as requirements the U.S. administration felt it needed either to certify or to justify a decision to certify,'' the Mexican official said. ''We knew there was a lot of infighting within the administration and without some of these issues being resolved it was going to be very difficult for them to certify us.''

The next morning, Gurria met Clinton's drug czar, Gen. Barry McCaffrey.

''The tone was the same,'' said a White House official. ''Gen. McCaffrey expressed how extremely distraught he was with what happened with Gutierrez Rebollo. He told Gurria we face a problem with Congress and that progress in some areas would be extremely helpful.''

Gurria flew back to Mexico City and during the days ahead he publicly warned the Clinton administration that anything less than full certification would ''make us doubt whether cooperating with the United States would bring anything other than a lot of grief.''

The tough rhetoric was partly a precaution to avoid public impressions in Mexico that he was yielding to demands from Washington, but it was also a genuine statement of his pique with the pressure from U.S. officials, said officials close to Gurria.

''I don't think he was happy with the way things were being played out,'' said a senior Mexican official. ''All of his statements in Mexico City are a clear indication of that.''

At one point during the week, Gurria reportedly called Reno and gave her an unusually blunt piece of his mind over the pressure being applied.

The night before Clinton was to announce his decision on whether he would certify Mexico, there were still no signs from Mexican officials that they intended to act on the points raised by Reno, McCaffrey and others. Officials in Mexico City remained in the dark about whether Mexico would be certified the next day.

Shortly after noon Feb. 28, a group of senior officials filed into the White House Cabinet Room, where they soon were joined by the president. Among those in the room were Reno, McCaffrey, Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright. She would make the official recommendation to the president.

Despite the failure to conclude any concrete agreements with Mexico during the previous eight days, the president accepted Albright's recommendation that he certify.

[From the San Diego Union-Tribune, Sept. 24, 1996]

A CALL TO ARMS AGAINST YOUTH DRUG ABUSE

(By Randy ''Duke'' Cunningham)

America's young people are in danger.

Alarming new statistics show drug use skyrocketing among teen-agers. Drugs have invaded our classrooms, our homes and our communities. They have destroyed promising young lives, torn families apart and crushed hope. We can continue to go down this destructive path, or we can act now to save our children's future.

Illustrating the depth of this crisis are reports from the Department of Health and Human Services that show overall drug use among 12- to 17-year-olds has increased an appalling 78 percent from 1992 to 1995. Among 14- and 15-year-olds, marijuana use has jumped 200 percent. Use of LSD and other hallucinogens has nearly tripled among young people during the same time.

In 1994, emergency-room reports of cocaine-related episodes were at their highest level over. And emergency room reports for methamphetamine (''meth''), a powerful and deadly drug widely popular among teens in San Diego and the western United States, are up a whopping 308 percent.

These are not mere statistics. Behind every number is a young person whose life has taken a dangerous turn. We must take this crisis seriously. We must strengthen America's families by having a real war on drugs at our borders, in our communities, schools and homes. We can win this war, but only with a serious commitment from everyone—parents, teachers, clergy, local police, entertainers, the media, Congress and the president of the United States.

We cannot, however, win this war with the current cavalier attitude toward illicit drug use. It has sent a powerful and dangerous message to America's children that drugs are OK. We don't need parents or society saying drugs are just a passing fancy that we all go through. We don't need the entertainment industry to falsely romanticize drugs in movies or TV shows. And we don't need President Clinton to maintain the attitude of candidate Clinton, who told teens on MTV that he would inhale if he had the chance to do it again.

What we need from our policy leaders and law enforcement is a real war on drugs. We must get tough on drug dealers, fully fund the war on drugs, and stop drugs at the border. We must reverse the Clinton record: 80 percent cuts in the Office of National Drug Control Policy staff, fewer drug-enforcement agents, reduced drug-interdiction efforts, declining drug prosecutions, reduced mandatory-minimum sentences for drug trafficking and ''soft on crime'' liberal judges.

Congress has already begun to revitalize the drug war by pumping $7.1 billion into anti-drug programs. We are going right to the source, focusing our efforts on countries where drugs originate. And to help halt the flow of drugs into America, our immigration-reform bill doubles our Border Patrol over the next five years. We also passed a law that stops activist federal judges from ordering the early release of violent criminals and drug traffickers. Those who would peddle destruction on our children must pay dearly.

To give states the resources and flexibility to crack down to juvenile drug use and violent crime, I introduced the Juvenile Crime Prevention Act. It established mandatory-minimum prison sentences for juveniles who use firearms during drug-trafficking offenses.

And the bill gives states the tools they need to hold youth accountable for their actions before they become serious, violent criminals. We recognize that if we turn troubled young persons around, we give them another chance at the American Dream.

Crucial to winning the war on drugs and education and community campaigns. So on Thursday, my House Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth and Families will team up with Government Reform Oversight to send a strong message to Americans: Drugs kill. We will hear from health and community experts on what can be done to reverse the drug crisis. And we will also examine ways to marshal community leadership and resources to start local anti-drug coalitions.

Finally, I believe we must revive in word and deed the simple phrase, ''Just Say No,'' coined by Nancy Reagan in the 1980s. While cynical elites once joked about its effectiveness, I believe it played a significant role in reducing drug use.

Many successful community-based initiatives were modeled on this campaign. It helped establish the mind-set among America's teens that zero tolerance for drugs was ''cool,'' an attitude that is in jeopardy today.

While Washington sets a standard and provides resources to fight the drug war, no one can help our children better than those closest to them—parents, teachers, local law enforcement and community leaders. We cannot fail our children by dismissing drug use with a wink and a nod, ignoring it, or slashing funds to fight it. We must meet the challenge head-on. We must let our children know that drugs kill, and their use will not be tolerated. Only then will we be victorious.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CHAMBLISS). All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 95, the joint resolution is considered read for amendment.

The text of House Joint Resolution 58 is as follows:

H.J. RES. 58

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That pursuant to subsection (d) of section 490 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2291j), the Congress disapproves the determination of the President with respect to Mexico for fiscal year 1997 that is contained in the certification (transmittal No. 97–18) submitted to the Congress by the President under subsection (b) of that section on February 28, 1997.

The Clerk will designate the committee amendment printed in the joint resolution.

The text of the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute is as follows:

Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert:

H.J. RES. 58

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. DISAPPROVAL OF DETERMINATION OF PRESIDENT REGARDING MEXICO.

Pursuant to subsection (d) of section 490 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2291j), Congress disapproves the determination of the President with respect to Mexico for fiscal year 1997 that is contained in the certification (transmittal No. 97–18) submitted to Congress by the President under subsection (b) of that section on February 28, 1997.

SEC 2. WAIVER OF REQUIREMENT TO WITHHOLD ASSISTANCE FOR MEXICO.

(a) WAIVER.—Notwithstanding subsections (e) and (f) of section 490 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, the requirement to withhold United States assistance and to vote against multilateral development bank assistance contained in such subsection (e) shall not apply with respect to Mexico until March 1, 1998, if at any time after the date of the enactment of this joint resolution, the President submits to Congress a determination and certification described in subsection (b) of this section.

(b) DETERMINATION AND CERTIFICATION.—A determination and certification described in this subsection is a determination and certification consistent with section 490(b)(1)(B) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 that the vital national interests of the United States require that the assistance withheld pursuant to section 490(e)(1) of such Act be provided for Mexico and that the United States not vote against multilateral development bank assistance for Mexico pursuant to section 490(e)(2) of such Act.

SEC. 3. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.

For purposes of section 490(d) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, this joint resolution shall be deemed to have been enacted within 30 calendar days after February 28, 1997.

SEC. 4. CONSULTATIONS WITH THE CONGRESS.

(a) CONSULTATIONS.—The President shall consult with the Congress on the status of counter-narcotics cooperation between the United States and each major illicit drug producing country or major drug-transit country.

(b) PURPOSE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The purpose of the consultations under subsection (a) shall be to facilitate improved discussion and understanding between the Congress and the President on United States counter-narcotics goals and objectives with regard to the countries described in subsection (a), including the strategy for achieving such goals and objectives.

(2) REGULAR AND SPECIAL CONSULTATIONS.—In order to carry out paragraph (1), the President (or senior officials designated by the President who are responsible for international narcotics programs and policies) shall meet with Members of Congress—

(A) on a quarterly basis for discussions and consultations; and

(B) whenever time-sensitive issues arise.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. It is now in order to consider the further amendment specified in House Report 105–20, as modified by the order of the House of today.

AMENDMENT, AS MODIFIED, OFFERED BY MR. HASTERT

Mr. HASTERT. Mr. Speaker, I offer an amendment, as modified.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will designate the amendment, as modified.

The text of amendment, as modified, is as follows:

Amendment, as modified, offered by Mr. HASTERT:

Page 2, after line 7, insert the following:

SECTION 1. CONGRESSIONAL FINDINGS; DECLARATION OF POLICY.

(a) GENERAL FINDINGS.—The Congress finds the following:

(1) International drug traffickers, aided by individuals in the United States and across the Western Hemisphere who sell and distribute deadly drugs, pose the largest threat to Americans since the end of the Cold War.

(2) The United States is faced with a supply of drugs that is cheaper, more potent, and more available than at any time in our history.

(3) The drug cartels are becoming wealthier, bolder, and closer to the United States, and their corruption of officials is beginning to reach inside the United States.

(4)(A) No single action is a sufficient response to the threat posed to our society by illegal drugs.

(B) The goal of the United States is to save our children by eliminating the illegal drug trade.

(C) The United States Government must set forth a comprehensive strategy that dedicates the resources necessary to decisively win the war on drugs.

(b) THREAT DRUGS POSE TO OUR CHILDREN.—The Congress further finds the following:

(1)(A) Casual teenage drug use trends have suffered a marked reversal over the past 5 years. Casual teenage drug use has dramatically increased for virtually every childhood age group and for virtually every illicit drug, including heroin, crack, cocaine hydrochloride, lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD), non-LSD hallucinogens, methamphetamine, inhalants, stimulants, and marijuana (often laced with phencyclidine (PCP) and cocaine).

(B) Specifically, illicit drug use among 8th and 10th graders has doubled in the last 5 years. 8 percent of 6th graders, 23 percent of 7th graders, and 33 percent of 8th graders have tried marijuana. Since 1993, the number of 8th graders using marijuana has increased 146 percent and overall teen drug use is up 50 percent.

(2) Rising casual teenage drug use is closely correlated with rising juvenile violent crime, as reported by the Department of Justice.

(3) If rising teenage drug use and the close correlation with violent juvenile crime continue to rise on their current path, the United States will experience a doubling of violent crime by 2010, according to the Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

(4) The nature of casual teenage drug use is changing, such that annual or infrequent teenage experimentation with illegal drugs is being replaced by regular, monthly, or addictive teenage drug use.

(5) Nationwide, drug-related emergencies are at an all-time high, having risen for 5 straight years by increments of between 10 and 30 percentage points per year for each drug measured.

(6) The nationwide street price for most illicit drugs is lower than at any time in recent years, and the potency of those same drugs, particularly heroin, crack and marijuana, is higher.

(c) THE FAILED ANTIDRUG POLICY.—The Congress further finds the following:

(1) United States Government strategy has dramatically shifted precious antidrug resources away from United States priorities set in the 1980's—away from the prior emphasis on drug prevention for children, drug interdiction, and international source country programs.

(2) United States Government strategy has been weak in responding to statutory deadlines, has been characterized by an absence of statutorily mandated measurable goals, lack of effective coordination and program accountability, and often untargeted and insufficient funding, from the smallest agencies involved in the drug war up to and including the White House Drug Policy Office.

(3) It has been reported that United States Government policy reduced the national security priority placed on international drug trafficking from the top tier (number 3) to the bottom tier (number 29).

(4) United States Government policy has emphasized additional funding for unproven drug treatment techniques at the expense of accountable drug prevention programs that effectively teach a right-wrong distinction.

(5) The United States Government has failed to assess the outcomes of $3,000,000,000 spent per year in drug rehabilitation and has failed to shift resources from ineffective programs to programs that save lives.

(6) United States Government policy has not offered sufficient flexibility to local and State law enforcement agencies to combat drug abuse through measures such as additional block grant funding.

(7) United States Government strategy has not properly emphasized the important, increased role that can legitimately be played by the National Guard, the United States military, and United States intelligence agencies in confronting the rising drug trafficking threat.

(8) United States Government strategy underemphasizes community and parental actions and the need to engage children at an early age in prevention activities.

(9) For the past four years, United States Government strategy has failed to use the media to communicate a consistent, intense antidrug message to young people.

(d) DECLARATION OF POLICY.—The Congress declares that—

(1) a thorough review of the United States counternarcotics strategy is urgently needed; and

(2) the establishment of a commission on international narcotics control in accordance with section 6 will assist in such review.

Page 2, line 8, strike ''**section 1**'' and insert ''**sec. 2**''.

Page 2, line 10, strike ''Pursuant to'' and insert ''(a) IN GENERAL.—Pursuant to''.

Page 2, line 11, insert before ''Congress'' the following: ''effective 90 days after the date of the enactment of this joint resolution''.

Page 2, after line 16, insert the following:

(b) EXCEPTION.—Subsection (a) shall not take effect if, within 90 days after the date of the enactment of this joint resolution, the President determines and reports in writing to the Congress that the President has obtained reliable assurances of substantial progress toward—

(1) obtaining authorization from the Government of Mexico to allow additional agents of the Drug Enforcement Administration, or other United States law enforcement agents (as of February 28, 1997), for critical narcotics control operations in Mexico, including authorization of appropriate privileges and immunities for such agents;

(2) obtaining authorization from the Government of Mexico to allow United States law enforcement agents in Mexico to carry firearms for self-defense in areas where required to cooperate with the Government of Mexico on narcotics control efforts;

(3) obtaining assurances of substantial progress by, and commitments from, the

Government of Mexico that the Government will take concrete measures to find and eliminate law enforcement corruption in Mexico and will cooperate fully with United States law enforcement personnel on narcotics control matters;

(4) obtaining assurances of substantial progress by, and commitments from, the Government of Mexico that the Government will extradite Mexican nationals wanted by the United States Government for drug trafficking and other drug-related offenses;

(5) obtaining assurances from the Government of Mexico that the Government is making substantial progress in securing aircraft overflight and refueling rights that are necessary for full cooperation with the United States on narcotics control efforts, including adequate aircraft radar coverage to monitor and detect all aircraft entering and transiting through Mexico that are suspected of involvement in drug trafficking; and

(6) obtaining assurances from the Government of Mexico that the Government is making substantial progress toward a permanent maritime agreement with the United States to allow vessels of the United States Coast Guard and other appropriate vessels to halt and hold drug traffickers pursued into Mexican waters.

Page 2, line 17, strike ''**sec. 2**'' and insert ''**sec. 3**''.

Page 3, line 12, strike ''**sec. 3**'' and insert ''**sec. 4**''.

Page 3, line 17, strike ''**sec. 4**'' and insert ''**sec. 5**''.

Page 4, after line 12, add the following:

SEC. 6. HIGH LEVEL COMMISSION ON INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds the following:

(1) The consumption of narcotics in the United States is a serious problem that is ravaging the United States, especially America's youth.

(2) Despite the dedicated and persistent efforts of the United States and other nations, international narcotics trafficking and consumption remains a serious problem.

(3) The total eradication of international narcotics trafficking requires a long-term strategy that necessitates close international cooperation.

(4) The annual certification process relating to international narcotics control under section 490 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2291j) is flawed because—

(A) the process addresses only whether or not the source country is cooperating with United States narcotics control efforts and does not take into account all underlying factors;

(B) the process reviews narcotics control efforts only on an annual basis; and

(C) the process fails to account for the divergent economic, political, and social circumstances of countries under review which can influence the decision by the United States to decertify a foreign nation, thereby leading to unpredictability, non-transparency, and lack of international credibility in the process.

(5) The problem of international narcotics trafficking is not being effectively addressed by the annual certification process under section 490 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2291j).

(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established a commission to be known as the High Level Commission on International Narcotics Control (hereinafter referred to as the ''Commission'').

(c) DUTIES.—The Commission shall conduct a review of the annual certification process relating to international narcotics control under section 490 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2291j) to determine the effectiveness of such process in curtailing international drug trafficking, and the effectiveness of such process in reducing drug use and consumption within the United States.

(d) MEMBERSHIP.—

(1) NUMBER AND APPOINTMENT.—The Commission shall consist of 14 members, as follows:

(A) The Secretary of State or the Secretary's designee.

(B) The Secretary of the Treasury or the Secretary's designee.

(C) The Attorney General or the Attorney General's designee.

(D) The Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy or the Director's designee.

(E) The Governors of the States of Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas, or their designees.

(F) The following Members of Congress appointed not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this joint resolution as follows:

(i)(I) 2 Members of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

(II) 1 member of the House of Representatives appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives.

(ii)(I) 2 Members of the Senate appointed by the majority leader of the Senate.

(II) 1 member of the Senate appointed by the minority leader of the Senate.

(2) TERMS.—Each member of the Commission shall be appointed for the life of the Commission.

(3) VACANCIES.—A vacancy in the Commission shall be filled in the manner in which the original appointment was made.

(4) CHAIRPERSON.—The Chairperson of the Commission shall be elected by the members.

(5) BASIC PAY.—Each member shall serve without pay. Each member shall receive travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, in accordance with sections 5702 and 5703 of title 5, United States Code.

(6) QUORUM.—A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

(7) MEETINGS.—The Commission shall meet at the call of the chairperson.

(e) DIRECTOR AND STAFF; EXPERTS AND CONSULTANTS.—

(1) DIRECTOR.—The Commission shall have a director who shall be appointed by the chairperson subject to rules prescribed by the Commission.

(2) STAFF.—Subject to rules prescribed by the Commission, the chairperson may appoint and fix the pay of such additional personnel as the chairperson considers appropriate.

(3) APPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN CIVIL SERVICE LAWS.—The director and staff of the Commission may be appointed without regard to title 5, United States Code, governing appointments in the competitive service, and may be paid without regard to the requirements of chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of such title relating to classification and General Schedule pay rates, except that an individual so appointed may not receive pay in excess of the maximum annual rate of basic pay payable for GS-15 of the General Schedule.

(4) EXPERTS AND CONSULTANTS.—The chairperson may procure temporary and intermittent services under section 3109(b) of title 5, United States Code, at rates for individuals not to exceed the daily equivalent of the maximum annual rate of basic pay payable for GS-15 of the General Schedule.

(5) STAFF OF FEDERAL AGENCIES.—Upon request of the chairperson, the head of any Federal agency may detail, on a reimbursable basis, any of the personnel of the agency to the Commission to assist the Commission in carrying out its duties.

(f) POWERS.—

(1) OBTAINING OFFICIAL DATA.—The chairperson may secure directly from any Federal agency information necessary to enable the Commission to carry out its duties. Upon request of the chairperson, the head of the agency shall furnish such information to the Commission to the extent such information is not prohibited from disclosure by law.

(2) MAILS.—The Commission may use the United States mails in the same manner and under the same conditions as other Federal agencies.

(3) ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES.—Upon the request of the chairperson, the Administrator of General Services shall provide to the Commission, on a reimbursable basis, the administrative support services necessary for the Commission to carry out its duties.

(4) CONTRACT AUTHORITY.—The chairperson may contract with and compensate government and private agencies or persons for the purpose of conducting research, surveys, and other services necessary to enable the Commission to carry out its duties.

(g) REPORTS.—

(1) INTERIM REPORT.—Not later than 6 months after the date of the enactment of this joint resolution, the Commission shall prepare and submit to the President and the Congress an interim report on the following:

(A) The overall effectiveness of the annual certification process relating to international narcotics control under section 490 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C 2291j) in curtailing international drug trafficking.

(B) The impact of such annual certification process in enhancing international counternarcotics cooperation.

(C) The transparency and predictability of such annual certification process in curtailing international drug trafficking.

(D) Recommendations for actions that are necessary—

(i) to eliminate international narcotics trafficking;

(ii) to improve cooperation among countries in efforts to curtail international narcotics trafficking, including necessary steps to identify all areas in which inter-American cooperation can be initiated and institutionalized; and

(iii) to improve the transparency and predictability of the annual certification process relating to international narcotics control under section 490 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2291j).

(E) Any additional measures to win the war on drugs.

(2) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this joint resolution, the Commission shall prepare and submit to the President and the Congress a final report that, at a minimum, contains the following:

(A) Information that meets the requirements of the information described in the initial report under paragraph (1) and that has been updated since the date of the submission of the interim report, as appropriate.

(B) Any other related information that the Commission considers to be appropriate.

(h) TERMINATION.—The Commission shall terminate 6 months after the date on which the Commission submits its final report under subsection (g)(2).

(i) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out this section.

(2) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts authorized to be appropriated under paragraph (1) are authorized to remain available until expended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 95, the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. HASTERT] and a Member opposed, each will control 10 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. HASTERT].

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

I want to thank the chairman of the Committee on International Relations, the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN] and certainly the ranking member, the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. HAMILTON] for the fine work that they have done on this issue.

Let me say that my amendment, first of all, does not change the decertification of Mexico. What we do is to stay that decertification for 90 days. What we are trying to say is there has got to be a commonsense approach with our Government, who is not without fault, certainly, in the drug program, we have the demand problems and, certainly, with the Government of Mexico who I do not think anybody can argue that they have fully cooperated over the years and deserve certification.

What we are saying is that our President and our State Department reach out to the people of Mexico and the President of Mexico to get, over a 90-day period, assurances of substantial progress in several areas, several areas such as our law enforcement agents being able to work in Mexico and being able to defend themselves, assurances that Mexico does not become a safe haven for dangerous drug felons who commit crimes. We need to be able to, both countries, get the extradition agreements that we need to have.

We need to get vital antidrug radars in place in the south of Mexico. That needs to happen. We need to get permanent maritime agreements to stop drug traffickers who are skirting our law enforcement agencies and duck into Mexican waters. Twenty out of twenty six countries in the Caribbean have that agreement.

And we need to get concrete progress on rooting out corruption, not only on our side of the border but also on the Mexican side of the border. That needs to happen.

Who benefits from this? Is it the Mexican Government? No. Is it our Government? No. But let me tell Members about my district.

I have the cities of Aurora and Elgin, IL. Aurora, IL, where my brother teaches in junior high, has had one of his Mexican American children, Hispanic children killed this year by narcotics traffickers, shot down in the streets next to his home. Why? Because the drugs come across our borders. It is not just American kids who get killed. It is kids that are of a Hispanic origin, American and Mexican origins. We need to work together to solve the problem.

People have said that this whole issue of certification is flawed. We need to have a commission to take a look at it and find a commonsense way to treat it. This amendment is a commonsense way that our Government can work together, that we stay the decertification for 90 days, that we find a way to solve the problem.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore [Mr. LAHOOD]. Is the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. HAMILTON] opposed to the amendment?

Mr. HAMILTON. I am, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Indiana [Mr. HAMILTON] is recognized for 10 minutes.

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. GEJDENSON].

Mr. GEJDENSON. Mr. Speaker, let me say that what we are faced with here is a diversion from Hershey. We have great discussions about bipartisanship and rather than dealing with the responsibilities that are before us, we take up the campaign rhetoric over the debate on how to proceed internally in this country on the issue of fighting drugs. A legitimate issue, we ought to take it up.

You are in the majority. Bring a bill to the floor that provides a new drug policy. But the challenge before the Congress, as it came from the Committee on International Relations, is a challenge that has to deal with the issue of whether or not we feel that our Mexican neighbor has met the requirements in laws established in this Congress to deal with fighting of drugs and fighting the shipment of drugs and the operations in the drug industry.

When we look at the bottom of page 3, page 4 and page 5, we are not dealing with Mexican certification. We are taking the Dole campaign language or some variation on it. We are going after the Clinton administration. You may want to go after the Clinton administration and maybe you ought to be after the Clinton administration on drug policy. Maybe you have differences.

□ 1430

That is not what we ought to be doing here today. What we ought to do here today is fulfill our responsibilities. There are some people here that say the Mexicans have tried, they maybe have not made it, but it would be very damaging to reject the Mexicans altogether.

Some of us on the Committee on International Relations understand the pressure the President was under to help a President of Mexico he was working with, and he certified them. Some other people, myself included, joined with the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN] to say, ''Maybe they tried but they haven't met the law and we don't think they've met certification, they haven't really fulfilled their responsibility, but we think it is in the vital national interest to continue to work with the Mexicans.''

That is not what this amendment is about. This amendment is about bashing the administration. That is a great sideshow. But we ought to make a decision here. If we are going to have speeches about bipartisanship, about sticking to the substance, then we ought to do it. There are legitimate positions to argue here. Some people argue, ''Certify them, they're trying, they've lost lots of police officers, they're making an effort and this would hurt the Mexican Government if we don't do it.''

Some feel, ''Yes, you've made an effort, you haven't met the law, we ought to use our vital national interests of both countries to certify.'' That is not what this amendment is about.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my friends on both sides of the aisle to reject this amendment if we want to do the work we were sent here to do. If we want to play politics and rerun the Presidential campaign, then vote for this amendment. If we want to deal with the national policies on how we fight drugs here in more than political rhetoric, bring the bill forward, bring the budget forward. If we want to deal with the responsibilities we have, then let us deal with this issue in the way it was meant to be dealt with.

Mr. HASTERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN].

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

Mr. GILMAN. I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise in support of the amendment of the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. HASTERT]. He has worked long and hard in the fight against illicit narcotics from abroad.

Staying the effect of decertification for 90 days until we see evidence presented by the President of increased Mexican cooperation in fighting drugs is a sound idea.

Extraditions of Mexican nationals on real drug charges so that they can stand trial here in the United States, maritime boarding agreements, and the effective assignment of more DEA agents to Mexico; these are significant efforts forward. They can seriously help fight the war on drugs along our long Mexican border to the South.

For far too long, the administration has been satisfied with business as usual in this serious drug situation with Mexico, and glossed over it with high-level official photo ops, while these items languished unresolved.

No more. Congress wants to see real, concrete action by the administration to bring about real change in stemming the flow of nearly 50 to 60 percent of the illicit drugs coming to our Nation across Mexico, and later destroying our kids.

For those critics who might say nothing works, and the United States demand is the major factor in the crisis of drugs, let me remind them of a little recent history.

Not long ago, this nation was able to reduce monthly cocaine use by nearly 80 percent during a sustained period from 1985 to 1992. We went from 5.8 million monthly cocaine users down to just 1.3 million cocaine users, each month. Few Federal programs can point to such success.

Nancy Reagan's ''Just Say No'' policy, combined with tough eradication, interdiction, and strong law enforcement on the supply side, along with education, treatment, and rehabilitation on the demand side, worked.

The administration needs to get back to basics.

Accordingly, I urge my colleagues to support the Hastert amendment to House Joint Resolution 58.

Let's send a message both to this administration and to the Mexican Government that the American people have spoken, enough is enough. Let our children and our future generations not have to endure the scourge of illicit drugs from abroad.

Mr. HASTERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. PORTMAN] who is well noted for his work on both supply and demand reduction in this country.

Mr. PORTMAN. I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I am rising today because I am in strong support of this approach, the Hastert amendment. I think it is a balanced and reasonable approach. As the gentleman said, I have been involved in this issue, actually not on the supply side, on the demand side. I have focused more on prevention, on education, on trying to help in our communities to change kids' attitudes so they do not do drugs, trying to make a real difference in reversing what is a very tragic trend around our country of younger and younger kids using drugs more and more.

One thing I like about this amendment is I do not think it does point the finger at Mexico. Let me read something in the amendment. It clearly states in the findings, ''No single action is a sufficient response to the threat posed to our society by illegal drugs.'' It goes on. It talks about the need to emphasize in our drug control policy prevention, education, community action, parents, getting our parents to talk to their kids about the dangers of drug abuse, why it is wrong. If we do that, we are really going to make a difference. I do not think anything is more important.

But this fight also needs to be fought at every level. How can we say we are really serious about fighting the drug war if, in the face of all the evidence we have, we simply certify Mexico? It just does not make any sense.

It does not need to be partisan, it should be bipartisan, but how can we in our communities push this, do everything we can in Congress? And I was just testifying on the bill we have got before a subcommittee on the community side of this thing. We need to do more, all of us, both sides of the aisle. And Congress needs to do more.

But how can we with any legitimacy be out there pushing this drug war and then say Mexico deserves certification? They cannot get a clean bill of health. It just does not make sense.

Instead we need to do something reasonable. I think this is reasonable. We do not decertify Mexico. Instead we give the President 90 days. We say the President can work with Mexico for 90 days on 6 what I think are very tangible, very concrete and legitimate concerns. If the President works with Mexico during this 90-day period, certification can result. The effort to reduce drugs in this country, the future of our kids, is too important for us not to do all we can to get Mexico to do the right thing.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The Chair would advise both Members that the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. HAMILTON] has the right to close on this amendment.

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Florida [Mr. SHAW].

Mr. SHAW. I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, in the years that I have been in Congress, I cannot think of one time that I have disagreed with the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN] or the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. HASTERT] on a question having to do with the war on drugs. Both of these gentlemen have been in the forefront of every worthwhile project. And I must say, in looking at the amendment that has been filed and that is before the House at this time, that the 6 points are very well thought out and should be in this bill.

However, going on to the second provision in the bill, we find what for many of our Democrat friends will be a poison pill. It is unnecessary. It does not add to the meaning of the bill and it should not be part of this particular bill. I regret that it is in there, and therefore I must reluctantly oppose this particular amendment.

I think it is time for us to build an alliance on what we agree upon and not try to, when we find that we are coming together on an issue and working on such an important issue, with Democrats and Republicans working together and building an alliance, we should not trample on that alliance by putting something into an amendment that is going to be a difficult poison pill for our friends on the Democrat side to swallow. Therefore, I disagree with this particular provision within the amendment.

I think it is vitally important, and I would speak now to my Republican side, it is vitally important that we come out of this particular session and this vote with a huge majority. We need to send a message down to the Senate that we are serious about what we are talking about on decertification.

We need as many on the Democrat side as we can possible get. It is a difficult vote for them voting to override the certification that the Democrat President has placed upon Mexico. Let us not make it tougher. Let us work together.

These 6 points, I am confident that they add so much to the bill that they will end up in the bill that will finally come back after the conference, because it is a good amendment until you get to the poison pill. But we do not have the ability here to separate the amendment. We do not have the ability under the rule to separate out that particular portion. But we do have the ability in conference to put back the good, sound thinking of the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. HASTERT] on the part of the amendment that really makes sense and has substance to it.

Therefore, I would ask that the Republicans look at this as a chance to build bridges to the other side and to build on this alliance. Drug policy has never been and should not be a partisan issue. We will have plenty of times to talk about the record of Mr. Clinton as far as the drug issue. As a Republican, I cannot say that anything I disagree with is in the bill, but this is no place for it. It should not be in this amendment. Therefore, I ask all the members to vote ''no'' on this amendment.

Mr. HASTERT. Mr. Speaker, I ask the Chair how much time do I have left?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Illinois has 5 minutes remaining.

Mr. HASTERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from California [Mr. COX].

Mr. COX of California. I thank the gentleman from Illinois for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, the reason that we are here, of course, is that last month Mexican President Zedillo had a tough decision to make and he made it. The arrest of General Gutierrez at the same time makes it impossible for us today to say that Mexico has met the standard in our statute that would permit us to certify them as fully cooperating in the war on drugs. That is because, according to our own administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration, General Gutierrez's damage, the damage that he did to ongoing operations in the United States and in Mexico, was so serious that it ranks with the damage caused to our international intelligence operations by admitted spy Aldrich Ames. The conditions in the law have not been met, and we cannot certify. And yet the President has already done so.

There is some talk on the floor of the need for bipartisanship, but every Democrat and every Republican on the committee that sent this bill to the floor, even though there was unanimity, found himself or herself in direct opposition to the Clinton administration because the President and the administration have already certified Mexico even though all of us agree that is wrong.

If, therefore, the committee bill is passed, we have this inexorable result. Not only will the Senate not take it up, and we know that our colleagues in the other body have told us that nothing will come of this if we pass it unamended, but the President will ignore it, and the committee itself put a waiver in it which if somehow this

were to become law, the President would exercise. So after a lot of sound and fury and possibly injury to our bilateral relations with Mexico, we would have accomplished precisely nothing. But with this considered amendment, we have an opportunity to do significantly more than nothing. We have an opportunity to take the decertification process, itself a blunt instrument, and make it a more delicate one, one that will encourage both the United States and Mexico to redouble their efforts in the war on drugs. Our goal should be not simply to decertify Mexico as a partner in the war on drugs but in fact to fully certify them, to bring them to the point where they are in compliance and to bring the United States efforts up to par where we will not have to admit honestly to ourselves that drug use among adults has gone up every year in this country since 1992, the first sustained increase since the 1970s; where we will have to no longer admit to ourselves that marijuana use among teens is doubling.

We and Mexico both have steps that we must take. By decertifying, as this amendment will do, because it leaves the committee bill intact in that respect, and staying that for 90 days during which time the administration of President Clinton and the administration of President Zedillo can work and take positive, constructive steps to satisfy our concerns that cause us now to say we cannot certify, we will have done far more, both in fighting the war on drugs and for improving our relations with Mexico.

Our goal should not be in the end even to have Mexico as a fully certified partner in the drug war, but to have Mexico as a full partner in all matters, civil, societal, cultural, defense, and national security. They should be our close ally. Many people in Mexico intend for that indeed to be our relationship.

The arrest of General Gutierrez and the exposure of all the damage he caused is the reason we are here today. Let us make sure that this is an opportunity for us to move forward and not a permanent setback.

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I think we have the right to close. We have only one other speaker here. I believe they have time remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Illinois [Mr. HASTERT] has 1 minute remaining and the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. HAMILTON] has 1 minute remaining.

Mr. HASTERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida [Mr. STEARNS].

Mr. STEARNS. I thank my colleague from Illinois for allowing me this opportunity to close the debate.

Mr. Speaker, I was down in Mexico last weekend when the headlines appeared in the newspaper and President Zedillo said that the sovereignty of Mexico was at stake. What became apparent to me is that this country (Mexico) would react very unfavorably to a motion to decertify. I think the motion that the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. HASTERT] has outlined is an able compromise that we should all get behind, particularly on this side of the aisle. For those Members who are considering that this is not a compromise, it is a compromise, because we could get something that could be much more damaging to economic progress in Mexico and to their feeling that their integrity is being questioned. There is no doubt we could improve our relationships, improve our drug programs between the two countries. We need to improve our drug program here too. So I pose this question to all my colleagues. How does the money get from the people who use drugs here in the United States back to the Mexican drug cartels? Does the United States not have a level of responsibility here? These are huge sums of money, billions of dollars.

Mr. Speaker, I honestly think the best solution is to vote for the Hastert amendment.

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

First let me say a word of appreciation to the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN], the chairman of the House International Relations Committee. He has cooperated with me and with the minority throughout this process and I am deeply grateful to him. I think the work product of the committee is still the best option before us, and he deserves a lot of credit for that. Second, although I am not able to support the amendment of the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. HASTERT], I recognize that he has tried very hard to build a consensus on a critical issue, he has done it in a very nice manner, and I want to let him know that I appreciate his willingness to talk with me and try to develop a consensus.

□ 1445

I am not able, however, to support the Hastert amendment. Before I mention specifically the reasons, I think it is important to recognize in this debate that there really are a lot of areas of agreement. Debate tends to emphasize the areas of disagreement.

We all want to stop drugs flowing into this country. We all know we need the cooperation of the Mexican Government in order to stop the flow. We all know we are wrestling here with a difficult law in many respects. We are applying a present law here more than we are drafting a new law, and that law puts us in some difficult positions.

There are two reasons I think why I cannot support the Hastert amendment. One of them is that I really think it is highly partisan and will not permit us to adopt a bipartisan posture which I think is most important here. In many ways the amendment is a vehicle for criticizing the President's drug policy.

I do not need to quote a lot of things here, but it talks about the U.S. Government strategy being weak, it talks about our policy reducing the national security policies, it talks about supporting unproven drug treatment techniques, and in general has a pretty strong attack against the President. I think it ensures that the President would not be able to sign it, and that means the amendment that we are debating and discussing and will vote on in just a few minutes will not be enacted into law.

I say to my colleagues, ''If you adopt the Hastert amendment, you abandon the opportunity we have had under the bill reported by Chairman GILMAN for a clear bipartisan message to the world about the seriousness with which the Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle consider narcotics.''

Now, second, I want to say on the substance of the Hastert amendment that I think it puts President Zedillo in a real box. The U.S. national interest here is clear. We want to stop the flow of drugs through Mexico to the United States, we have got to have the cooperation of Mexico, but what this does is to require the President to report to the Congress in 90 days that he has obtained reliable assurances and substantial progress toward 6 critical areas of United States-Mexican cooperation on counternarcotics.

I want to remind my colleagues that 90 days from now we have national elections in Mexico. The United States congressional decertification debate has generated a nationalist fury in Mexico, and we can be sure that no one in Mexico, and especially not the President, will be able to advance these critical initiatives without being accused of conspiring with the United States to infringe on Mexican sovereignty. What we do here is we put President Zedillo, I think, in a box by detailing the demands for Mexico in this amendment, and he simply cannot be seen, especially in these next 90 days, as capitulating to a long list of American demands. And during that 90-day period we put him in the spotlight, and anything that he does to cooperate with the United States will be revoked and criticized by opposition politicians and by nationalists within his own party. And so I think we threaten the prospect of cooperation.

Let me urge if we defeat Hastert, then we will vote immediately on the committee product, and I urge that course.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). All time having expired, pursuant to House Resolution 95 the previous question is ordered on the joint resolution and on the pending amendments.

The question is on the amendment, as modified, offered by the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. HASTERT] to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute.

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

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 212, nays 205, answered ''present'' 9, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 46]

YEAS—212

Aderholt
Archer
Armey
Bachus
Baker
Ballenger
Barr
Barrett (NE)
Bartlett
Bass
Bateman
Bereuter
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bliley
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bono
Boucher
Brady
Bryant
Bunning
Burr
Burton
Buyer
Callahan
Calvert
Camp
Canady
Cannon
Castle
Chabot
Chambliss
Christensen
Coble
Coburn
Collins
Cook
Cooksey
Cox
Crane
Crapo
Cubin
Cunningham
Danner
Davis (VA)
Deal
DeLay
Diaz-Balart
Dickey
Doolittle
Dreier
Duncan
Dunn
Ehlers
Ehrlich
Emerson
Everett
Ewing
Fawell
Foley
Forbes
Fowler
Fox
Franks (NJ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Ganske
Gekas
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gilman
Gingrich
Goodlatte
Goodling
Goss
Graham
Granger
Greenwood
Gutknecht
Hall (TX)
Hansen
Hastert
Hastings (WA)
Hayworth
Herger
Hill
Hilleary
Hobson
Hoekstra
Horn
Hostettler
Houghton
Hulshof
Hutchinson
Hyde
Inglis
Istook
Jenkins
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Kasich
Kelly
Kim
Klug
Knollenberg
Kolbe
LaHood
Largent
Latham
LaTourette
Lazio
Leach
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Livingston
LoBiondo
Lucas
Manzullo
McCollum
McCrery
McDade
McInnis
McIntosh
McKeon
McKinney
Metcalf
Miller (FL)
Molinari
Moran (KS)
Myrick
Nethercutt
Neumann
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nussle
Oxley
Packard
Pappas
Parker
Pastor
Paxon
Pease
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Pombo
Porter
Portman
Pryce (OH)
Quinn
Radanovich
Ramstad
Regula
Riggs
Riley
Rogan
Rogers
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Royce
Ryun
Salmon
Sanford
Saxton
Schaefer, Dan
Schaffer, Bob
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shadegg
Shays
Shimkus
Shuster
Skeen
Smith (MI)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (OR)
Smith (TX)
Smith, Linda
Snowbarger
Solomon
Souder
Spence
Stearns
Stump
Sununu
Talent
Tauzin
Taylor (MS)
Taylor (NC)
Thomas
Thornberry
Thune
Tiahrt
Traficant
Upton
Walsh
Wamp
Watkins
Weldon (FL)
Weller
White
Whitfield
Wicker
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—205

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Andrews
Baesler
Baldacci
Barcia
Barrett (WI)
Barton
Bentsen
Berman
Berry
Bishop
Blagojevich
Blumenauer
Bonilla
Bonior
Borski
Boswell
Boyd
Brown (CA)
Brown (FL)
Brown (OH)
Campbell
Capps
Cardin
Carson
Chenoweth
Clay
Clement
Clyburn
Combest
Condit
Conyers
Costello
Coyne
Cramer
Cummings
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dellums
Deutsch
Dicks
Dingell
Dixon
Doggett
Dooley
Doyle
Edwards
Engel
English
Ensign
Eshoo
Evans
Farr
Fattah
Fazio
Flake
Foglietta
Ford
Frank (MA)
Frost
Furse
Gejdenson
Gephardt
Gonzalez
Goode
Gordon
Green
Hall (OH)
Hamilton
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Hefley
Hefner
Hilliard
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Holden
Hooley
Hoyer
Hunter
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
John
Johnson (CT)
Johnson (WI)
Johnson, E. B.
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy (MA)
Kennedy (RI)
Kennelly
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind (WI)
King (NY)
Kleczka
Klink
Kucinich
LaFalce
Lampson
Lantos
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Lowey
Luther
Maloney (CT)
Maloney (NY)
Manton
Markey
Martinez
Mascara
Matsui
McCarthy (MO)
McCarthy (NY)
McDermott
McGovern
McHale
McNulty
Meehan
Meek
Menendez
Mica
Millender-McDonald
Miller (CA)
Minge
Mink
Moakley
Mollohan
Moran (VA)
Morella
Murtha
Nadler
Neal
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Paul
Payne
Pelosi
Peterson (MN)
Pickett
Pomeroy
Poshard
Rahall
Rangel
Reyes
Rivers
Roemer
Rothman
Roukema
Rush
Sabo
Sanders
Sandlin
Sawyer
Scarborough
Schiff
Schumer
Scott
Serrano
Shaw
Sherman
Sisisky
Skaggs
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith, Adam
Snyder
Spratt
Stabenow
Stark
Stenholm
Stokes
Strickland
Stupak
Tanner
Tauscher
Thompson
Thurman
Tierney
Towns
Turner
Vento
Visclosky
Waters
Watt (NC)
Waxman
Weldon (PA)
Wexler
Weygand
Wise
Woolsey
Wynn
Yates

ANSWERED ''PRESENT''—9

Becerra
Filner
Gutierrez
Lofgren
Ortiz
Roybal-Allard
Sanchez
Torres
Velazquez

NOT VOTING—7

Clayton
Etheridge
Kingston
McHugh
McIntyre
Price (NC)
Watts (OK)

□ 1507

Messrs, KIND, CLEMENT, and MORAN of Virginia changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Messrs. SHUSTER, GILLMOR, PARKER, BILBRAY, and DAN SCHAEFER of Colorado changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD changed her vote from ''nay'' to ''present.''

So the amendment was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 46, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted ''nay.''

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The question is on the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

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

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 229, noes 195, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 47]

AYES—229

Aderholt
Archer
Armey
Bachus
Baesler
Baker
Ballenger
Barr
Barrett (NE)
Bartlett
Bass
Bateman
Bereuter
Bilirakis
Bliley
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bono
Brady
Bryant
Bunning
Burr
Burton
Buyer
Callahan
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canady
Castle
Chabot
Chambliss
Chenoweth
Christensen
Clement
Coble
Coburn
Collins
Combest
Cook
Cooksey
Cox
Cramer
Crane
Crapo
Cubin
Cunningham
Danner
Davis (FL)
Davis (VA)
Deal
DeFazio
Delahunt
DeLay
Diaz-Balart
Dickey
Doolittle
Dreier
Duncan
Dunn
Ehlers
Ehrlich
Emerson
English
Everett
Ewing
Fawell
Foley
Forbes
Fowler
Fox
Franks (NJ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Ganske
Gekas
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gilman
Gingrich
Goode
Goodlatte
Goodling
Gordon
Goss
Graham
Granger
Greenwood
Gutknecht
Hansen
Hastert
Hastings (WA)
Hayworth
Herger
Hill
Hilleary
Hobson
Hoekstra
Holden
Horn
Hostettler
Houghton
Hulshof
Hutchinson
Hyde
Inglis
Istook
Jenkins
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Kaptur
Kasich
Kelly
Kim
Klug
Knollenberg
Kolbe
Kucinich
LaHood
Largent
Latham
LaTourette
Lazio
Leach
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
Livingston
LoBiondo
Lucas
Manzullo
McCollum
McCrery
McDade
McHale
McInnis
McKeon
McKinney
Metcalf
Mica
Miller (FL)
Molinari
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Myrick
Nethercutt
Neumann
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nussle
Packard
Pappas
Pastor
Paxon
Pease
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Pombo
Porter
Portman
Poshard
Pryce (OH)
Quinn
Radanovich
Ramstad
Regula
Riggs
Riley
Roemer
Rogan
Rogers
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roukema
Royce
Ryun
Salmon
Sanders
Sanford
Saxton
Schiff
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shimkus
Shuster
Sisisky
Skeen
Smith (MI)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (OR)
Smith (TX)
Smith, Adam
Smith, Linda
Snowbarger
Solomon
Souder
Spence
Stearns
Stump
Sununu
Talent
Tanner
Tauzin
Taylor (MS)
Taylor (NC)
Thomas
Thune
Tiahrt
Traficant
Upton
Walsh
Wamp
Watkins
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
White
Whitfield
Wicker
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOES—195

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Andrews
Baldacci
Barcia
Barrett (WI)
Barton
Becerra
Bentsen
Berman
Berry
Bilbray
Bishop
Blagojevich
Blumenauer
Bonilla
Bonior
Borski
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd
Brown (CA)
Brown (FL)
Brown (OH)
Cannon
Capps
Cardin
Carson
Clay
Clyburn
Condit
Conyers
Costello
Coyne
Cummings

Davis (IL)
DeGette
DeLauro
Deutsch
Dicks
Dingell
Dixon
Doggett
Dooley
Doyle
Edwards
Engel
Ensign
Eshoo
Evans
Farr
Fattah
Fazio
Filner
Flake
Foglietta
Ford
Frank (MA)
Frost
Furse
Gejdenson
Gephardt
Gillmor
Gonzalez
Green
Gutierrez
Hall (OH)
Hall (TX)
Hamilton
Hastings (FL)
Hefley
Hefner
Hilliard
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hooley
Hoyer
Hunter
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
John
Johnson (CT)
Johnson (WI)
Johnson, E. B.
Kanjorski
Kennedy (MA)
Kennedy (RI)
Kennelly
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind (WI)
King (NY)
Kleczka
Klink
LaFalce
Lampson
Lantos
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lofgren
Lowey
Luther
Maloney (CT)
Maloney (NY)
Manton
Markey
Martinez
Mascara
Matsui
McCarthy (MO)
McCarthy (NY)
McDermott
McGovern
McIntosh
McNulty
Meehan
Meek
Menendez
Millender-McDonald
Miller (CA)
Minge
Mink
Moakley
Mollohan
Morella
Murtha
Nadler
Neal
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Owens
Oxley
Pallone
Parker
Pascrell
Paul
Pelosi
Peterson (MN)
Pickett
Pomeroy
Rahall
Rangel
Reyes
Rivers
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Rush
Sabo
Sanchez
Sandlin
Sawyer
Scarborough
Schaefer, Dan
Schaffer, Bob
Schumer
Scott
Serrano
Shays
Sherman
Skaggs
Skelton
Slaughter
Snyder
Spratt
Stabenow
Stark
Stenholm
Stokes
Strickland
Stupak
Tauscher
Thompson
Thornberry
Thurman
Tierney
Torres
Towns
Turner
Velazquez
Vento
Visclosky
Waters
Watt (NC)
Watts (OK)
Waxman
Wexler
Weygand
Wise
Woolsey
Wynn
Yates

NOT VOTING—9

Clayton
Dellums
Etheridge
Harman
Kingston
McHugh
McIntyre
Payne
Price (NC)

☐ 1525

Mrs. MEEK of Florida changed her vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

Mr. KUCINICH changed his vote from ''no'' to ''aye.''

So the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended, was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the joint resolution.

The joint resolution was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the joint resolution?

Mr. HAMILTON. I am, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. HAMILTON moves to recommit the joint resolution, House Joint Resolution 58, to the Committee on International Relations.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

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

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 251, noes 175, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 48]

AYES—251

Aderholt
Archer
Armey
Bachus
Baesler
Baker
Ballenger
Barcia
Barr
Barrett (NE)
Bartlett
Bass
Bateman
Bereuter
Bilirakis
Bliley
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bono
Boyd
Brown (FL)
Bryant
Bunning
Burr
Burton
Buyer
Callahan
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canady
Castle
Chabot
Chambliss
Chenoweth
Christensen
Clement
Coble
Collins
Combest
Condit
Cook
Cooksey
Costello
Cox
Cramer
Crane
Crapo
Cubin
Cunningham
Danner
Davis (FL)
Davis (VA)
Deal
DeFazio
Delahunt
DeLay
Diaz-Balart
Dickey
Doolittle
Duncan
Dunn
Ehrlich
Emerson
English
Ensign
Evans
Everett
Ewing
Fawell
Foley
Forbes
Fowler
Fox
Franks (NJ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Ganske
Gekas
Gibbons
Gilman
Gingrich
Goode
Goodlatte
Goodling
Gordon
Goss
Graham
Granger
Greenwood
Gutknecht
Hall (TX)
Hansen
Harman
Hastert
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayworth
Hefley
Hefner
Herger
Hill
Hilleary
Hobson
Hoekstra
Holden
Horn
Hostettler
Hulshof
Hunter
Hutchinson
Hyde
Inglis
Istook
Jenkins
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Kaptur
Kasich
Kelly
Kildee
Kim
King (NY)
Klug
Knollenberg
Kucinich
LaHood
Largent
Latham
LaTourette
Lazio
Leach
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
Livingston
LoBiondo
Lucas
Manzullo
Markey
McCollum
McCrery
McDade
McHale
McInnis
McIntosh
McKeon
McKinney
McNulty
Meek
Metcalf
Mica
Miller (FL)
Molinari
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Myrick
Neal
Nethercutt
Neumann
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nussle
Packard
Pappas
Pascrell
Paxon
Pease
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Pombo
Porter
Portman
Poshard
Pryce (OH)
Quinn
Radanovich
Ramstad
Regula
Riggs
Riley
Roemer
Rogan
Rogers
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roukema
Royce
Ryun
Salmon
Sanders
Sanford
Saxton
Scarborough
Schaefer, Dan
Schaffer, Bob
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shaw
Shimkus
Shuster
Sisisky
Skeen
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (MI)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (OR)
Smith (TX)
Smith, Adam
Smith, Linda
Snowbarger
Solomon
Souder
Spence
Spratt
Stark
Stearns
Stump
Sununu
Talent
Tanner
Tauzin
Taylor (MS)
Taylor (NC)
Thomas
Thune
Thurman
Tiahrt
Traficant
Upton
Visclosky
Walsh
Wamp
Watkins
Watts (OK)
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
White
Whitfield
Wicker
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOES—175

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Andrews
Baldacci
Barrett (WI)
Barton
Becerra
Bentsen
Berman
Berry
Bilbray
Bishop
Blagojevich
Blumenauer
Bonilla
Bonior
Borski
Boswell
Boucher
Brady
Brown (CA)
Brown (OH)
Cannon
Capps
Cardin
Carson
Clay
Clyburn
Coburn
Coyne
Cummings
Davis (IL)
DeGette
DeLauro
Dellums
Deutsch
Dicks
Dingell
Dixon
Doggett
Dooley
Doyle
Dreier
Edwards
Ehlers
Engel
Eshoo
Farr
Fattah
Fazio
Filner
Flake
Foglietta
Ford
Frank (MA)
Frost
Furse
Gejdenson
Gephardt
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gonzalez
Green
Gutierrez
Hall (OH)
Hamilton
Hilliard
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hooley
Houghton
Hoyer
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
John
Johnson (CT)
Johnson (WI)
Johnson, E. B.
Kanjorski
Kennedy (MA)
Kennedy (RI)
Kennelly
Kilpatrick
Kind (WI)
Kleczka
Klink
Kolbe
LaFalce
Lampson
Lantos
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lofgren
Lowey
Luther
Maloney (CT)
Maloney (NY)
Manton
Martinez
Mascara
Matsui
McCarthy (MO)
McCarthy (NY)
McDermott
McGovern
Meehan
Menendez
Millender-McDonald
Miller (CA)
Minge
Mink
Moakley
Mollohan
Morella
Murtha
Nadler
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Owens
Oxley
Pallone
Parker
Pastor
Paul
Payne
Pelosi
Pickett
Pomeroy
Rahall
Rangel
Reyes
Rivers
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Rush
Sabo
Sanchez
Sandlin
Sawyer
Schiff
Schumer
Scott
Serrano
Shadegg
Shays
Sherman
Skaggs
Snyder
Stabenow
Stenholm
Stokes
Strickland
Stupak
Tauscher
Thompson
Thornberry
Tierney
Torres
Towns
Turner
Velazquez
Vento
Waters
Watt (NC)
Waxman
Wexler
Weygand
Wise
Woolsey
Wynn
Yates

NOT VOTING—7

Clayton
Conyers
Etheridge
Kingston
McHugh
McIntyre
Price (NC)

☐ 1546

Mr. DICKS, and Mr. STRICKLAND changed their vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

So the joint resolution was passed.

The result of vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PAPERWORK ELIMINATION ACT OF 1997

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 88 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 88

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. 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. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. 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 Small Business. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. Each section shall be considered as read. During consideration of the bill for amendment, the Chairman of the Committee of the Whole may accord priority in recognition on the basis of whether the Member offering an amendment has caused it to be printed in the portion of the Congressional Record designated for that purpose in clause 6 of rule XXIII. Amendments so printed shall be considered as read. 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. 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.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The gentlewoman from North Carolina [Mrs. MYRICK] is recognized for 1 hour.

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. HALL], pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, the resolution provides for consideration of H.R. 852, the Paperwork Elimination Act of 1997, under an open rule. The rule provides for 1 hour of general debate, equally divided between the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Small Business.

Members who have preprinted their amendments in the RECORD prior to their consideration will be given priority in recognition to offer their amendments, if otherwise consistent with House rules. Finally, the rule provides for one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

I am pleased that this bill will be considered under an open rule which was unanimously approved by the Committee on Rules. While the chairman of the Committee on Small Business testified to the Committee on Rules that he did not expect any amendments, this rule will provide the entire House with sufficient time to offer amendments.

The Paperwork Elimination Act will decrease the burden of Federal paperwork by requiring all Federal agencies to give small businesses, educational and nonprofit organizations, State and local governments the option of filing required information by means of electronic submission, such as e-mail, fax, and other means. This new ability will enable all of these organizations to save time and money, help ease the paperwork and regulatory burden on them and other taxpayers, and improve the efficiency and accuracy of Federal information collection.

My colleagues may remember that we unanimously passed identical legislation in the 104th Congress. Unfortunately, it was never considered by the other body.

I am glad we are again going to have the opportunity to free small businesses and other organizations from the shackles of oppressive, excessive Federal regulations. As a small business owner myself, I can say that too much time is spent filling out forms in order to comply with endless Federal regulation. Decreasing this burden will be very beneficial to all small business owners, as they will now be able spend their time and money on productive activities that will lead to the expansion of their business.

Finally, the Paperwork Elimination Act is a much-needed continuation of the popular Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, which the President signed into law on May 22, 1995. I was very supportive of the Paperwork Reduction Act, which reduced the information collection burdens on the public and ensured a more efficient and productive administration of information resources.

The legislation we will consider today builds upon that progress and paperwork reduction.

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

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. HALL of Ohio asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from North Carolina [Mrs. MYRICK] for yielding me the time.

This is an open rule. It will allow for full and fair debate on H.R. 852. It is a bill to reduce the burden of Federal paperwork requirements for small businesses, educational and nonprofit institutions, Federal contractors, State and local governments and others. The bill is virtually identical to the one, H.R. 2715, that was passed unanimously by the House last year. This measure is a continuation of Congress's effort to reduce the demands made on our citizens as a result of Federal regulation.

As my colleague from North Carolina has described, this rule provides 1 hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Small Business. Under this rule, amendments will be allowed under the 5-minute rule, the normal amending process in the House. All Members on both sides of the aisle will have the opportunity to offer amendments. No hearings were conducted on this bill during the 105th Congress. However, eliminating this step is appropriate because of the extensive legislative history of H.R. 2715 from the 104th Congress, and the agreement was worked out between the chairman and the ranking minority member of the Committee on Small Business.

Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of this open rule and the bill.

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

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Ohio [Ms. PRYCE].

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from North Carolina [Mrs. MYRICK], a valuable new member of our Committee on Rules, for yielding me this time. I rise in full support of this rule and this bill. As my colleague has described, this is a very open rule. Any Member can be heard on any germane amendment to the bill at the appropriate time as long as it is consistent with the normal rules of the House.

Bills reported from the Committee on Small Business have traditionally been considered under open rules and this is no exception. The Paperwork Elimination Act is a timely, straightforward effort to bring the Federal Government further into the information age while at the same time reducing the public cost of meeting government's information needs. Unfortunately, but not surprisingly, the Federal Government is lagging behind the rest of the Nation in using new technology.

As the report on H.R. 852 points out, many individuals today can send and receive mail, take care of their personal finances or even read a newspaper, all from a personal computer. Those same individuals should be able to conduct much of their business with the Federal Government electronically as well.

That is what this legislation sets out to do. H.R. 852 will help minimize the burden of Federal paperwork demands on small businesses and other entities by requiring executive branch agencies to provide for optional use of electronic technology to meet the information needs of the Federal Government.

The winners will not only be America's small businesses but also educational and nonprofit institutions, Federal contractors, State, and local governments and others who face a disproportionate share of the burden of complying with the myriad of Federal regulations.

Mr. Speaker, I knew the regulatory burden on small business was heavy to begin with, but I was amazed to learn that the amount of time and effort spent in meeting the Government's paperwork demands has a dollar value roughly equivalent to 9 percent of the Nation's gross domestic product. Congress must lighten this load. By enabling the Federal Government to take

advantage of the information age, this legislation will enable small business owners across America to utilize smart technology available today to reduce those costs and to eliminate barriers to job creation and economic productivity. That means less time spent filing forms and more time innovating, expanding, and providing goods and services to our economy.

□ 1600

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. TALENT], the chairman of the committee, for bringing this important legislation forward and for crafting a commonsense solution to what has become a serious regulatory headache for many of our small businesses.

I urge adoption of this very fair and reasonable rule and this commonsense legislation.

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. BONIOR].

Mr. BONIOR. I thank my colleague for yielding the time.

Mr. Speaker, let me begin by complimenting the committee, the gentlewoman from North Carolina [Mrs. MYRICK] and my Republican colleagues for bringing out this open rule and for bringing out this important piece of legislation which would reduce the paperwork that our constituents are burdened with in today's society.

I come to the floor this afternoon in support of the substance of this bill, but I want to raise another issue. The issue I want to raise is the question of campaign finance reform. We set our priorities in this institution by press conference, by meetings, by bipartisan meetings, and what is painfully missing from our set of priorities is a scheduled time in which this institution, all of us participating, under an open rule, similar to what we will be debating this bill under, can discuss an issue that is burning within the country. That issue is how do we solve this crisis that we have with campaign finance reform?

I do not believe, Mr. Speaker, that there is much disagreement on either side of the aisle that the way we finance our political campaigns in this country is broken. We all know that. The American people are increasingly becoming aware that it is broken. Each and every election demonstrates that it is broken.

In 1996 an estimated $2.7 billion, with a B, was spent on political campaigns. Now with recent court rulings, we know that the rules are wide open. We can spend what we want the way we want to spend it, virtually. We have got to do something to limit the influence of money in our campaigns. We need to fix the system. We need to limit the amount of money. We need to stop the negative advertising. We need to get on with voting again.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BONIOR. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, my good friend has been a Member of this body for 20 years, longer than I have. He knows that rule XIV requires us to speak to the subject matter before us. His statement does not.

I am not going to interfere if the gentleman is going to finish his statement in his allotted time, but if I see other people doing this, we are going to have to abide by the rules of the House. I would say that out of respect to the gentleman as the minority whip that he certainly could continue, but I would hope that he would use his influence to make sure that we do abide by the rest of the rules.

I do thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. BONIOR. The gentleman is welcome.

Mr. Speaker, I am talking this afternoon about the priorities. While paperwork reduction is a priority, and it is a good one, it may not be Earth-shattering but it is important. As I listened carefully to what the gentlewoman from Ohio [Ms. PRYCE] had to say, it consumes 9 percent, as I understand from her remarks, of the GNP in the country. That is a very big burden on this country. But it is also a burden on this country to be spending $2.7 billion on a system that we know is broke, that is eroding the confidence of the American people that this institution works, and I think that ought to be a priority as well.

Let me just say to my friends and colleagues this afternoon, on the opening day of this Congress we on this side of the aisle offered a proposal that would bring campaign finance reform to the floor within the first 100 days of this Congress. That obviously does not look like it is going to happen.

A few weeks ago, we had a bipartisan discussion to agree on a common agenda for this Congress. We did it over in the Senate. We did it with the President, Republicans, and Democrats, and this issue was not raised again.

Last week the gentleman from California [Mr. MILLER] began a series of procedural votes to protest the failure to schedule a debate on campaign finance reform. Today, in conclusion, I might add to my friend from New York, we are going to be offering on the previous question a motion that will say basically we have to debate this issue in an open and full way by May 31, before the Memorial Day recess, so we can meet the goal of trying to finish this by the Fourth of July.

We need a full and a fair debate on this proposal, as we are having and will have on the Paperwork Reduction Act. Every day that passes, the country becomes more and more disgusted with our failure to act. We need to get our people involved in the political process once again.

I want, Mr. Speaker, the election day in this country to mean something. I want every citizen of this country to feel an urgency and a seriousness about voting. And, most important, I want our schoolchildren studying the Declaration of Independence or the Constitution today to feel the same excitement that the authors felt more than 200 years ago.

So I urge my colleagues, vote today. It is not about a particular bill or a solution. I am not calling for any particular solution to this. What I am calling for is we set a time in which we can debate this. This is about setting up a process to debate the campaign finance reform bill, and I urge my colleagues, vote no on the previous question so that we can debate real campaign finance reform on the House floor before Memorial Day.

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

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from California [Mr. MILLER].

Mr. MILLER of California. I thank the gentleman for yielding time.

Mr. Speaker, I too agree with the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. BONIOR], the minority whip, who was just in the well, that this is about our priorities and this rule is about our priorities and the previous question will be about our priorities. One hundred and eleven Members of this Congress at the beginning of this year or even before the first of this year, on a bipartisan basis, wrote to the Speaker of the House and asked that we have campaign finance reform in the first 100 days of this session of Congress. We are awaiting an answer from the Speaker on that issue. The silence is deafening.

At the same time, we see the minority leader in the Senate, [Mr. DASCHLE], has made campaign finance reform the top issue in their agenda and has asked the majority leader to do the same. The gentleman from Missouri [Mr. GEPHARDT], minority leader in this House, has asked that we consider this within the first 100 days. President Clinton has called for action by July 4. Yet we hear nothing from the Republican leadership about campaign finance reform. Again, the silence is not only deafening, it is paralyzing us and an ability to deal with a system that the American public has come to disrespect, to understand is corrosive, to understand is corrupting, and yet we see nothing from the Republican side of the aisle to deal with campaign finance reform.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Will the gentleman yield for an inquiry?

Mr. MILLER of California. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state it.

Mr. SOLOMON. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, in order for us to determine whether debate being engaged in by the minority as an attempt to defeat the previous question is relevant to the pending rule and the legislation

it makes in order, it is necessary for us to have a copy of the minority's proposed amendment to the rule, and I would just ask if the Chair has been provided with the amendment and, if so, could the Chair provide us with a copy? The minority has not provided our side with it.

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, if I may continue——

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will suspend.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, is there a copy at the desk?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair is not aware of an amendment.

The gentleman from California [Mr. MILLER] may proceed.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. GEJDENSON. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from California yield for the parliamentary inquiry?

Mr. MILLER of California. I yield to the gentleman from Connecticut.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state it.

Mr. GEJDENSON. Is it not in order to simply oppose the rule?

Mr. SOLOMON. Sure. Absolutely.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California [Mr. MILLER] may proceed.

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I think if the gentleman wants to discuss paperwork reduction, we can think of all of those corporations and all of those small businesses that are getting hit with subpoenas and interrogatories about whether or not they are a small business, whether or not they exist, whether or not the person that gave the money and their name is really a real person, whether the business is real or not.

Mr. Speaker, the point is this: The top priority of this Congress ought to be to get its house in order, and the cancer that is spreading throughout this institution and is spreading throughout our Government is the lack of decent, open, and fair ways to finance our campaigns. The current system is broken, it is corrupting of this institution, it is corrosive of our democratic institutions.

The American people deserve something better, and we deserve an answer from the Republicans as to a date certain when they will bring campaign finance reform to the floor of the House of Representatives so this House can work its will. There is no question but there is a majority of people on this floor to reform the existing system. We should not be denied an opportunity to do that, and we ought to rearrange the priorities of this Congress. We have been here now 3 months and we have rarely been in session. Yet somehow we cannot find time to deal with this most urgent matter in terms of the preserve of the best of our democratic institutions, the integrity of this House and the freedom of the American people to have a fair election and a fair outcome.

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

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. DOGGETT].

Mr. DOGGETT. I thank the gentleman for yielding time.

Mr. Speaker, if the spirit of bipartisanship that we have heard much about over the course of the last few days is to be any more meaningful than ''I'll smile at you if you'll smile at me,'' then I think that a place to start with true bipartisanship is to allow the people, Republican and Democrat alike, who want to do something about the increasingly corrupting influence of money and politics at all levels of our Federal elections, to give them an opportunity to come forward and craft a bipartisan solution to this tremendous problem.

Thoughts of bipartisanship and of campaign finance reform are hardly new to this institution. Indeed, in 1995 in New Hampshire, in the summer, in front of a senior citizens' group, we had many smiles from President Clinton and Speaker GINGRICH looking at each other, shaking hands, being very bipartisan and collegial and friendly over the concept of campaign finance reform. And what happened after that? Absolutely nothing. It took from that summer until the next summer before we got something in this House called reform week, which ended up being a reform hour, which denied to us an opportunity to consider the bipartisan Clean Congress Act, a measure that by its very name had broad bipartisan support and was designed to do something about the influence of money in our campaigns.

I believe the American people want us to address this problem. And so this afternoon, in the course of this particular bill, it is appropriate to talk about two things: priorities and paper.

When it comes to paper, I would maintain that the type of paperwork reduction that the American people are most concerned about at this time, when they are hearing about the Lincoln bedroom, when they are hearing about Republicans down at Palm Beach meeting with people that gave $100,000 in soft money to the Republican Party, the kind of paper that we ought to be concerned about reducing is the kind that says pay to the order of, pay to the order of whichever candidate or political committee or whatever is involved. We ought to be concerned about reducing that.

The only reason that we did not get a chance to address that issue in the last Congress and were cut off from a bipartisan opportunity to consider this national scandal, the only reason is because instead of paperwork reduction, our Speaker has been very candid in saying that he favors paperwork expansion. He does not think there is enough paper in the political process. He thinks we need more paper, we need more checks, we need to spend even more special interest money than is being expended at the current time in our political system.

I believe we need to be concerned about real paperwork reduction, and that is to reduce the influence of special interest money in our campaigns.

□ 1615

Hundreds of millions of dollars of so-called soft money that gets outside of the course of the current campaign financing laws, as deficient as they are, are being expended by both parties. There is no one perfect solution to this problem, there is no one perfect Democratic or Republican solution. Rather, we ought to have the opportunity on the floor of this House to come together and offer our different ideas, to not be restricted to an hour, as we were 2 years ago, and denied the opportunity to consider the only bipartisan proposal that was advanced at that time. We ought to be able to come together, reason together, and work out a solution to this most critical paperwork problem.

As my colleagues know, it is not for want of time that we have not considered this issue. We spent a week here last week whereby all we did was commend the Nicaraguans and Guatemalans, and I know that was a hard load for some, but I believe we can take on the harder jobs.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. SOLOMON. Parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The gentleman from New York will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, there is nothing I would rather stand up here and talk about than what happened with the Lincoln bedroom, and what happened with economic espionage in this administration, what happened with the breaches of national security in this country by the administration. This is not the time to be discussing that, but I would be glad to take the well and discuss all of this at the appropriate time.

My parliamentary inquiry is this, Mr. Speaker: Under House Rule XIV, which requires that a Member must confine himself to the question under debate, is it relevant to the debate on either this rule or the bill it makes in order to engage in a discussion on the merits of campaign finance law?

Would the Speaker please rule on that?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would be happy to refer all Members to page 529 of the Rules of the House, which says that debate on a special order providing for the consideration of a bill may range, and ''range'' is the appropriate word here, to the merits of a measure to be considered under that special order, but may not range to the merits of a bill, but should not range to the merits of a measure not to be considered.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, what you have just said is that we must confine our statements to the merits of the legislation before us, and I would

just ask the Chair to please enforce the rules of the House.

I have been informed by my good friend over here, and he is a good friend and trying to be congenial, but he now tells me he has a number of speakers that are going to pursue this issue that is not germane to the issue before us, and we just cannot have that. We have to abide by the rules of the House, and I would ask the Speaker to enforce the rules of the House from here on out.

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

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut [Ms. DELAURO].

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the previous question, and let me tell my colleagues why.

As we rise today to take up another burning issue on the GOP agenda, the Paperwork Reduction Act, I ask my Republican colleagues to allow us to debate a more meaningful reduction of paper. Let us talk about how we reduce the amount of paper money that exists in political campaigns today.

Our system of financing political campaigns is broken, and it is time for us to fix it. We may not all agree on the best way to fix the problem, but surely we can all agree on one thing, that there is too much paper money in political campaigns, it costs too much money to run for public office, we spend too much time raising money for our campaigns, and at the end of the day it takes our time away from the more important duties we are engaged in.

I know it, my colleagues know it. Most importantly, the American people know it.

Republicans in the House and Senate have asked for several million dollars to investigate campaign financing in the last election. Those investigations are important, and they should move forward, and they should not be used as an excuse to delay action on campaign finance reform.

All the Democrats are asking is this: Give us an open, unrestricted debate on campaign finance reform by May 31, by Memorial Day. We can get money out of politics and pass meaningful campaign finance reform, but first we need an open and a fair debate. Only one person can schedule a vote on campaign finance reform, and that is the Speaker of this House.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to stop wasting time. Let us schedule a vote on campaign finance reform. Congress surely could stand a little paperwork reduction, but let us reduce the amount of money in politics.

Vote ''no'' on the previous question.

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MCGOVERN].

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I support the Paperwork Reduction Act, but I think it could be made better, and I think we can make it better and really reduce paperwork if we pass true, honest to goodness campaign finance reform. The American people want it, certainly my constituents want it, the President has asked for it. Why has the Republican leadership not made campaign finance reform a number one priority?

The Paperwork Reduction Act before us today is all fine and nice, and as I said, I do support it, but is this really our number one priority? Is this the number one priority of this Nation?

Mr. Speaker, I ask the majority leadership to bring campaign finance reform to the floor of this House by Memorial Day. Time is being lost, and the public disgust and skepticism is rising. We must act now on real campaign finance reform. I urge my colleagues to oppose the previous question, and I urge the Republican leadership to please make campaign finance reform a number one priority.

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California [Mr. FARR].

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, I rise on the debate on the rule on paperwork reduction. This is a debate that determines the procedures of the House, and this is the only way in which we can deal with the law that will come after this debate, the law on paperwork reduction. The only way we can get a debate on a new law is to schedule that debate on the floor, and I rise to the issue that this rule does not go far enough because it has not scheduled the real paperwork reduction in America, which is the reduction in the amount of money that flows into campaigns.

Mr. Speaker, we ought to be debating the law on campaign reform. It was asked for by the President, it was promised by the Speaker, and it is certainly in demand by Members who are here today on both sides of the aisle.

We have bills before Congress. The work has been done on writing that law. There are many versions of it. But that law cannot reach the floor until the Committee on Rules sets the date, and the date ought to be before this country's next national birthday on July 4.

If we did, indeed, deal with this rule, we would be talking about real reduction, we would be talking about reduction in the time it takes to raise money, time that could be better spent in managing this Nation's affairs. We would be spending less time, certainly less paperwork, because there would be less checks written to campaigns. There would be less money flowing into Washington. There would be less time fund-raising. There would be more time spent governing.

So, Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to oppose this rule because this rule does not go far enough, because this rule fails to bring what this Nation demands, and that is the real law of reform to this floor, which is campaign law reform.

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes 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, many of us worked very hard to bring to the American public the acknowledgment that we understood how hard they worked. The Paperwork Reduction Act simply says that we recognize that the business of America is to create jobs and not to be entangled with hostile paperwork and regulations, but yet we also recognize our responsibility in the U.S. Congress.

I think it is disappointing that this rule has not had or given us the opportunity to confront the real question that the American people are asking us: Can we clean up our own House? Can we reduce the entanglement and regulations of a misdirected campaign finance structure that really does not allow those who come here to work to work without the shackles of confusion and the shackles of debate on how we raise money to make sure that the voices of all Americans are heard?

I truly believe in the integrity of the Members of this House, that they come here, most of all, to represent their constituents and represent America, but until we get out in front and deal with the question of how we finance these elections, how we reemphasize the importance of making sure the average person has access to this U.S. Congress, I happen to be a supporter of the Farr bill. But what I think most of all is important in terms of campaign finance reform is that this House shows it means business and that it gets down to the business of both raising the question of campaign finance reform, debating the question of finance reform, and not hiding the ball.

It is crucial that we, as Members of this House, acknowledge to the American people that we are not tied up by the interests of others other than the interests of them that bring us to this body.

Mr. Speaker, it is so very important that this rule include campaign finance reform.

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York [Mr. SOLOMON].

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I was taken earlier by Speaker GINGRICH and by Minority Leader GEPHARDT when they came to the floor and they talked about the need for comity in this body. But we are really being hard pressed here today. I know that this is Thursday, there is no session tomorrow, and Members do want to go home, but I feel moved to bring a point of order against the Members that are standing up talking about issues that are not germane to this issue, and certainly that would be upheld by the Chair because they are not germane. That of course would be subject to an appeal, if the minority saw fit to do. That would drag Members over here. That would prolong the

measures again. It would probably cause all kinds of problems.

So I am not going to press a point of order today. I am going to let my colleagues use up the balance of their time, but we just have to say out of courtesy to Members on both sides that we have to stick to the rules of the House. Rule 14 says that we must speak to the germaneness of the issues before us.

So I just wanted Members to do that, and I hope Members have a nice weekend.

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. GEJDENSON].

Mr. GEJDENSON. Mr. Speaker, I want to express my appreciation to the gentleman from New York [Mr. SOLOMON] for his gentleness today. We are in the minority. We do not have a lot of control over the process here.

This is really a fight over control. When we were in control in 1975–76, we passed campaign finance reform. When I led the effort, we passed it twice, once vetoed by President Bush, and under our rules I am not allowed to name the Senator from Kentucky, but I can reference the gentleman from the other body in the majority party who has filibustered campaign reform to death in the past and threatens to do it again. I commend the committee for bringing this Paperwork Reduction Act before us. It is something we ought to do. But as we weigh our responsibilities as Members of Congress, one of the things happening is all our credibility is diminished by the present situation.

As my colleagues know, I think we ought to do something simple now. We ought to put a limit of $100, we ought to tax advertising so we have the resources to make a public match so every American can feel empowered to be part of this process.

Now I know that if we brought that bill and four or five others—I do not know that mine would win, but in that debate I know we would help build confidence in this system, we would at the end of the day take a step forward, and that is what this debate is really all about.

There are lots of vehicles that we will try to use, as the minority. Those guys have the majority; I recognize that. They make the rules; they make the decision as to what bills come to the floor and what bills do not come to the floor.

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. GEJDENSON. I yield to the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Connecticut is talking about how he is in the minority now. I am relatively new to the institution.

Mr. GEJDENSON. But the gentleman from Florida is doing real well for a new guy.

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. The gentleman is, too, and I like his hair in the spirit of Hershey and comity.

Mr. GEJDENSON. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. But, as my colleagues know, if the gentleman could give me a little historical perspective as a relatively new Member here, I believe that they were all in the majority in 1993 and 1994, and I also believe that they had somebody in the White House who was also a Democrat. Could the gentleman tell me if they all passed campaign finance in 1993 or 1994 or if the gentleman's selective memory prevents him from doing this?

□ 1630

Mr. GEJDENSON. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I would just say to the gentleman's question, we passed campaign finance reform and President George Bush vetoed it. We passed it through this House. It got to the Senate, and I can only reference the gentleman in the other body in the Republican Party from Kentucky who filibustered it to death, and in the opening days of this Congress he threatened to filibuster any new campaign reform bill to death.

We passed it, it got vetoed by President Bush. We passed it through the House, it was filibustered to death in the Senate.

What we are saying is, let us join together and pass a limit on spending. Let us limit the amount of money. Let us rebuild confidence in this system so we can work to reduce paperwork, so we can reduce the amount of time we spend raising money, and put our attention back on the people's business to take care of children, to make sure they have health care, to make sure the people losing their benefits have jobs and not street corners to hang out on.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. (Mr. LAHOOD). The Chair would advise Members to avoid making references to Members of the other body.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state it.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, how much time is left on either side, and was the clock running when the gentleman used up all his time?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would advise the gentleman from New York the Chair is keeping very good time.

The gentleman from Ohio [Mr. HALL] has 4½ minutes remaining, and the gentlewoman from North Carolina [Mrs. MYRICK] has 23 minutes remaining.

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida [Mr. SCARBOROUGH].

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me time, and I certainly hope I have the same timekeeper on my two minutes as the previous speaker had on his one.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say to the previous speaker that the question that was asked was what happened while the Democrats had control in 1993 and 1994 and when they had control in the White House in 1993 and 1994.

The previous speaker almost moved me to tears in his very self-righteous indignation, and then blamed George Bush for killing it.

I may be a dumb country lawyer, I may have graduated from the University of Alabama, but my recollection was that George Bush was not President in 1993 or in 1994, that that was in fact William Jefferson Clinton.

I see some people shaking their heads, so maybe, maybe I am incorrect in this. But they can be self-righteous all they want. They had control over this Chamber over the two-year period in 1993 and 1994, they had the President of the United States, and they did not want to do anything on campaign finance reform.

Now they come to this well in self-righteous indignation trying to distract people. . . . And if they want to be self-righteous, if they want to get on the well of the floor and debate this, we will gladly do it for as long as you want to do it, because you do not have the moral high ground. And when you had a chance to change things, you did not do it, and you cannot rewrite history, as much as you would like to try.

So beat your chest in self-righteous indignation, but pray for the children tonight, pray for America and whatever you want to do, but the fact of the matter is, that you are being hypocrites.

Mr. HEFNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask that the gentleman's words be taken down when he said that the White House had sold influence to Communist China and other things. There is no proof of that, and that is absolutely ridiculous, to come into this body and accuse the President of the United States of selling influence to a Communist nation.

I ask that the gentleman's words be taken down.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida will suspend.

The Clerk will report the words objected to.

□ 1636

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Does the gentleman from Florida [Mr. SCARBOROUGH] seek recognition?

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Yes, Mr. Speaker, I do.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw my words about specifically mentioning the President . . . since while Newsweek has written an article about that those have not been proven yet, so I will specifically withdraw the statement regarding the President . . . .

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HEFNER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for making the correction, and that saves us a trip back to Hershey.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman from Florida [Mr. SCARBOROUGH] has expired.

The gentleman from Ohio [Mr. HALL] is recognized. The gentleman from Ohio has 4½ minutes remaining.

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. BONIOR].

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the amendment I intend to offer, if the previous question is defeated, be printed in the RECORD immediately preceding the vote.

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

There was no objection.

The amendment referred to is as follows:

At the end of the resolution, add the following new section:

''Section 2. No later than May 31, 1997, the House shall consider comprehensive campaign finance reform legislation under an open amendment process.''

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

Let me conclude my remarks by reminding my colleagues that defeating the previous question is an exercise in futility, because the minority wants to offer an amendment that will be ruled out of order as nongermane to this rule. So the vote is without substance.

The previous question vote itself is simply a procedural motion to close debate on this rule and proceed to a vote on its adoption. The vote has no substantive or policy implications whatsoever.

Mr. Speaker, at this point in the RECORD, I ask unanimous consent to insert an explanation of the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

The explanation follows:

THE PREVIOUS QUESTION VOTE: WHAT IT MEANS

House Rule XVII (''Previous Question'') provides in part that:

There shall be a motion for the previous question, which, being ordered by a majority of the Members voting, if a quorum is present, shall have the effect to cut off all debate and bring the House to a direct vote upon the immediate question or questions on which it has been asked or ordered.

In the case of a special rule or order of business resolution reported from the House Rules Committee, providing for the consideration of a specified legislative measure, the previous question is moved following the one hour of debate allowed for under House Rules.

The vote on the previous question is simply a procedural vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution that sets the ground rules for debate and amendment on the legislation it would make in order. Therefore, the vote on the previous question has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

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

Mr. SOLOMON. 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.

Pursuant to clause 5 of rule XV, the Chair will reduce to a minimum of 5 minutes the period of time within which a vote by electronic device, if ordered, will be taken on the question of agreeing to the resolution.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 219, nays 187, not voting 26, as follows:

[Roll No. 49]

YEAS—219

Aderholt
Archer
Armey
Bachus
Ballenger
Barr
Barrett (NE)
Bartlett
Bass
Bateman
Bereuter
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bliley
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bono
Boucher
Brady
Bryant
Bunning
Burr
Burton
Buyer
Callahan
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canady
Cannon
Castle
Chabot
Chambliss
Chenoweth
Christensen
Coble
Coburn
Collins
Combest
Cook
Cooksey
Cox
Crane
Crapo
Cubin
Cunningham
Davis (VA)
Deal
DeLay
Diaz-Balart
Dickey
Doolittle
Dreier
Duncan
Dunn
Ehlers
Ehrlich
Emerson
English
Ensign
Everett
Ewing
Fawell
Foley
Forbes
Fowler
Fox
Franks (NJ)
Frelinghuysen
Ganske
Gekas
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gilman
Goodlatte
Goodling
Goss
Graham
Granger
Greenwood
Gutknecht
Hall (TX)
Hansen
Hastert
Hastings (WA)
Hayworth
Hefley
Herger
Hill
Hilleary
Hobson
Hoekstra
Horn
Hostettler
Houghton
Hulshof
Hunter
Hutchinson
Hyde
Inglis
Istook
Jenkins
Johnson (CT)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Kasich
Kelly
Kim
King (NY)
Klug
Knollenberg
Kolbe
LaHood
Largent
Latham
LaTourette
Lazio
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Livingston
LoBiondo
Lucas
Manzullo
McCollum
McCrery
McDade
McInnis
McIntosh
McKeon
Metcalf
Mica
Miller (FL)
Molinari
Moran (KS)
Morella
Myrick
Nethercutt
Neumann
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nussle
Oxley
Packard
Pappas
Parker
Paul
Paxon
Pease
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Pombo
Porter
Portman
Pryce (OH)
Quinn
Radanovich
Ramstad
Regula
Riggs
Riley
Rogan
Rogers
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Royce
Ryun
Salmon
Sanford
Saxton
Scarborough
Schaffer, Bob
Schiff
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Shimkus
Shuster
Skeen
Smith (MI)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (OR)
Smith, Linda
Snowbarger
Solomon
Souder
Spence
Stearns
Stump
Sununu
Talent
Tauzin
Taylor (NC)
Thomas
Thornberry
Thune
Tiahrt
Upton
Walsh
Wamp
Watkins
Watts (OK)
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
White
Whitfield
Wicker
Wolf
Young (AK)

NAYS—187

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Andrews
Baesler
Baldacci
Barcia
Barrett (WI)
Becerra
Bentsen
Berry
Bishop
Blagojevich
Bonior
Borski
Boswell
Boyd
Brown (CA)
Brown (FL)
Brown (OH)
Capps
Cardin
Clement
Clyburn
Condit
Conyers
Coyne
Cramer
Cummings
Danner
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dellums
Deutsch
Dingell
Dixon
Doggett
Dooley
Doyle
Edwards
Engel
Eshoo
Evans
Farr
Fattah
Fazio
Filner
Flake
Ford
Frank (MA)
Frost
Furse
Gejdenson
Gephardt
Gonzalez
Goode
Gordon
Green
Hall (OH)
Hamilton
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Hefner
Hilliard
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Holden
Hooley
Hoyer
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Johnson (WI)
Johnson, E. B.
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy (MA)
Kennedy (RI)
Kennelly
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind (WI)
Kleczka
Klink
Kucinich
LaFalce
Lampson
Lantos
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Lofgren
Lowey
Luther
Maloney (CT)
Maloney (NY)
Markey
Martinez
Mascara
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McDermott
McGovern
McHale
McKinney
McNulty
Meek
Menendez
Millender-McDonald
Miller (CA)
Minge
Mink
Moakley
Mollohan
Moran (VA)
Murtha
Nadler
Neal
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pelosi
Peterson (MN)
Pickett
Pomeroy
Poshard
Rahall
Rangel
Reyes
Rivers
Roemer
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Rush
Sabo
Sanchez
Sanders
Sandlin
Sawyer
Schumer
Scott
Serrano
Sherman
Sisisky
Skaggs
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith, Adam
Snyder
Spratt
Stabenow
Stark
Stenholm
Stokes
Strickland
Stupak
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor (MS)
Thompson
Thurman
Tierney
Torres
Towns
Traficant
Turner
Velazquez
Vento
Visclosky
Waters
Watt (NC)
Waxman
Wexler
Weygand
Wise
Woolsey
Wynn
Yates

NOT VOTING—26

Baker
Barton
Berman
Carson
Clay
Clayton
Costello
Dicks
Etheridge
Foglietta
Gallegly
Gutierrez
John
Kingston
Leach
Manton
McCarthy (MO)
McHugh
McIntyre
Meehan
Ortiz
Price (NC)
Roukema
Schaefer, Dan
Smith (TX)
Young (FL)

□ 1659

Messrs. MATSUI, PASTOR, and SPRATT changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Mr. FOLEY changed his vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. McCARTHY of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, on rollcalls No. 48 and 49 I was unavoidably detained in transit. Had I been present, I would have voted ''no'' on rollcall No. 48 and ''yes'' on rollcall No. 49.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The question is on the resolution.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 88 and rule XXIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for consideration of the bill, H.R. 852.

The Chair designates the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BARRETT] as Chairman of the Committee of the Whole, and requests the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. SENSENBRENNER] to assume the chair temporarily.

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. 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 with Mr. SENSENBRENNER (chairman pro tempore) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

Under the rule, the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. TALENT] will be recognized for 30 minutes, and the gentlewoman from New York [Mrs. McCARTHY] will be recognized for 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. TALENT].

Mr. TALENT. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that debate on this bill be limited to 20 minutes, 10 minutes on each side, which I understand the gentlewoman has no objection to.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Missouri?

There was no objection.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. The gentleman from Missouri [Mr. TALENT] will be recognized for 10 minutes, and the gentlewoman from New York [Mrs. McCARTHY] will be recognized for 10 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. TALENT].

Mr. TALENT. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, This is a noncontroversial but very significant bill, Mr. Chairman. It is a supplement to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1996. We call it the Paperwork Elimination Act. What the bill does, in fine, is require that regulatory agencies give the people that they regulate, not just small businesses but everybody, the option to store and supply the information they have to supply by electronic means: modems, computers, faxes, where that is appropriate. This is done within the framework of the Paperwork Reduction Act, which we passed unanimously last year.

This bill itself passed the House last year unanimously, moved over to the Senate, was discharged from committee, but never reached the Senate floor. It came out of the Committee on Small Business unanimously. It is supported by the ranking member, the gentleman from New York [Mr. LAFALCE], and myself. It is a good bill and a good step forward in trying to provide some additional options to people who are trying to supply information to the government in an efficient way at as little cost as possible.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today to encourage quick passage of H.R. 852, entitled the ''Paperwork Elimination Act of 1997.''

Paperwork demands of the Federal Government place a tremendous burden upon all Americans. Some estimates place the total burden at more than 6 billion hours a year. To place this staggering number in perspective, 6 billion hours of labor is equivalent to 3 million employees working full-time to satisfy the often repetitive and duplicative requests of various Federal agencies. This is a expense which small business can ill afford.

According to a 1995 study by Thomas Hopkins of the Rochester Institute of Technology, small businesses with less than 20 employees pay an average of $5,106 per employee annually in regulatory costs. This is in strong contrast to the average of $3,404 in regulatory costs per employer which businesses with more than 500 employees pay. Much of this regulatory cost stems from paperwork—paperwork which this legislation intends to eliminate.

The Paperwork Elimination Act builds upon the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 to further minimize the burden of Federal paperwork demands upon small businesses and others. H.R. 852 would accomplish this by advancing the use of alternative information technologies including electronic maintenance, submission, and disclosure of information. Essentially, this would mean that anyone with access to a personal computer or even a phone would be able to meet the Federal Government's information requests in an easier and less timely fashion.

It is important to note that the Paperwork Elimination Act requires Federal agencies to provide for only the optical use of alternative technologies in complying with informational demands. This legislation should not in any way be construed as a mandate on individuals. Those without the ability or desire to comply with Federal regulatory demands electronically would not be required to do so against their will.

H.R. 852 is identical to legislation passed by the House in the 104th Congress. In the last Congress, after a thorough hearing by the Small Business Subcommittee on Government Programs, our committee adopted this measure by voice vote and the House went on to pass it unanimously. Unfortunately, even though this measure was discharged by the Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs, the Senate was not able to take final action before the close of the 104th Congress. After consulting with Mr. LAFALCE, our ranking member, we decided that we could move this legislation through committee without the need for an additional hearing. The committee held a mark-up on this legislation last Thursday, March 6. We reported this measure out unanimously by voice vote without amendment, and filed our report later that day.

In conclusion, let me commend many out there for moving into the information age with such great speed and enthusiasm. I have observed businesses of all sizes eagerly accepting and embracing all forms of new technology. No office seems complete these days without a computer and fax machine. Products are being advertised, orders being taken, bills being paid, all by electronic means. Why should the Federal Government be any different?

I urge my colleagues to vote yes on H.R. 852, the Paperwork Elimination Act.

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

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair notes that control and duration of time for general debate was set by order of the House, meaning essentially 30 minutes per side. While the previous request in the Committee of the Whole is not controlling, under the circumstances, however, the Chair notes that each side may yield back any time that they may desire.

Mrs. McCARTHY of New York. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mrs. McCARTHY of New York asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mrs. McCARTHY of New York. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of H.R. 852, the Paperwork Elimination Act of 1997, which the Committee on Small Business reported out unanimously last week. I commend the chairman and the ranking member for bringing this bipartisan legislation to the floor.

In approving this legislation, the Committee on Small Business, which has long been a forum for and a voice of the small business community, took another step forward, responding to one of the principal ongoing concerns of small business owners: the paperwork burdens imposed on them by the Federal Government.

Mr. Chairman, the ambitious title of the legislation notwithstanding, I do not foresee a day in my lifetime when we will eliminate paperwork. Nor do I foresee the day when we will altogether eliminate regulations. What we can do, however, and what this bill does, is take advantage of existing technology capabilities and ease the regulatory burden on small businesses by reducing the amount of paper they must fill out, mail, and file.

This legislation itself imposes no burden. It has no mandates. It allows those small business owners, educators, State and local governments and others the option of communicating with the Federal Government via computer.

Mr. Chairman, I see much progress and no problems accompanying this bill, and therefore I urge all of my distinguished colleagues to support it.

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

Mr. TALENT. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to my friend, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. LOBIONDO.]

Mr. LOBIONDO. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of this legislation. I would like to point out that according to the Small Business Administration, small business owners spend at least 1 billion, that is right, 1 billion hours a year in filling out government forms, at an annual cost of $100 billion.

As someone who has spent more than 25 years in a small business, I can testify to the accuracy of this statistic. I spent more than my fair share of time filling out form after form after form. The paperwork required by the Government was seemingly endless. The Paperwork Elimination Act will alleviate the paper burden by giving small business owners and employees the option to submit information by electronic means.

Over the last several years, we have seen historic changes in the field of telecommunications. This bill will bring the Government into the information age. Many small businesses already take advantage of various technologies used for communication. This initiative would give businesses the option to use this technology to submit information to the Government. If it does not have the capability or the desire to exchange information electronically, if a business does not want to do that, they will not be penalized under this bill.

I hope the days of filling out forms in triplicates will be behind us. Passing this bill will be a giant step closer to that end.

In the last Congress, this legislation passed the House of Representatives with unanimous support but it never saw action on the Senate floor. In this session I hope we can put this bill on the President's desk, and I urge all of my colleagues to strongly support the legislation.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York [Mr. LAFALCE], the distinguished ranking member of the committee.

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

Mr. LAFALCE. Mr. Chairman, I want to praise the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. TALENT], the new chairman of the Committee on Small Business, and all the members of the Committee on Small Business, especially the freshman members on both sides, for the great work they have done so far.

I call upon everyone to support this bill.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in support and as a cosponsor of the Paperwork Elimination Act of 1997, introduced by my good friend and the chairman of the Small Business Committee, Congressman JIM TALENT.

Last year the Congress passed and the President signed the Paperwork Reduction Act, which mandates fixed percentage cuts in paperwork burdens over the next few years. The Paperwork Elimination Act builds on that law by encouraging the electronic submission and disclosure of regulations and submission of information for regulatory compliance.

This legislation is easy to extol as all affected parties are a winner. It urges the Federal Government to disseminate and receive information by computer where appropriate. As this involves putting already existing technology to better use, the Government will incur little, if any, additional administrative or financial cost to comply with the provisions of this legislation.

Small businesses, nonprofits, and State and local governments stand to gain because they may, if they choose, comply with Federal requirements for information by furnishing it electronically rather than on paper. If this serves to reduce paperwork storage and compliance time, then the burden of the small business owner and others becomes a bit lighter.

In the last several years on the Hill we have seen in our own offices an amazing increase in our reliance on computers and other forms of information transmission and storage. We have seen our ability to communicate become faster and more efficient. It is time we take the next logical step and prod Federal agencies to open the door to electronic communication with the businesses, States and towns of America. The Paperwork Elimination Act is the next logical step.

Mr. Chairman, I urge all my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. TALENT. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PAPPAS].

Mr. PAPPAS. Mr. Chairman, in my office and in offices throughout our country, e-mail has become an alternative and efficient way for people in one office and different offices to transfer information. Within minutes of sending a message, memo, or document, a recipient in the next office, or someone who is five States away, receives information. It is quick, easy, and it saves paper.

The technological advances of our Nation have changed the face of doing business, whether it is using e-mail, having a WEB site, or even teleconferencing businesses are taking advantages of these technological advances in order to speed up the transfer of information.

By passing the Paperwork Elimination Act, the Federal Government can use these new advances in technology to reduce the burden on many small businesses. The Government can receive, disseminate, and respond to inquiries, input information, and save thousands of pieces of paper by implementing these new advances. The 104th Congress took a giant step forward in reducing the burdensome paperwork that consumes many businesses by passing the Paperwork Reduction Act. The 105th Congress has an opportunity to build on that and pass the Paperwork Elimination Act.

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Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PASCRELL].

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentlewoman from New York for yielding me this time. I commend her efforts in bringing this legislation to the floor.

The Paperwork Elimination Act is an excellent piece of legislation. I believe it will enjoy overwhelming bipartisan support. The importance of small businesses in New Jersey cannot be emphasized enough. They are the backbone of the State's economy. Of the 187,000 full-time business firms in New Jersey, 98 percent are small businesses, which are independent businesses with fewer than 500 workers. The aim of this act is to minimize the burden of Federal paperwork on small businesses through the use of electronic information technology.

To use an extreme example, some small businesses are required to file forms with up to 50 different Federal, State and local agencies. This is impossible. These bureaucratic demands can strangle a small business. This bill ameliorates this burden by requiring all Federal agencies to provide the option of electronic submission of information to all those who must comply with Federal regulations. I believe it will accomplish the goal that is set out in the summary of the bill.

Small businesses play too significant of a role in our economy. We need job creation. We need productivity, and we need expansion. I strongly urge my colleagues to support H.R. 852.

Mr. TALENT. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Kansas [Mr. SNOWBARGER].

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

Mr. SNOWBARGER. Mr. Chairman, with that provision let me make just two points in the interest of time. First of all, I am very much supportive of any efforts on the part of agencies to allow electronic submission to take advantage of both efficiency and economy that is allowed by electronic submissions.

The second point I would like to make, however, is we must make sure that the legislative history is clear on this, that this is the option of the small business and governments that this is meant to provide some relief for and it is not at the option of the agency.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the Paperwork Elimination Act of 1997. This legislation provides an option to small businesses and others, who have the capacity to comply with regulations by computer and other means, to take advantage of electronic technology. This is an effort to make it easier and less costly to do business with the Government, and I would encourage Government agencies to improve their effectiveness in utilizing information technology. I would like to point out that OMB is required to oversee and promote the use of electronic information technology.

However, we should make it very clear that the use of electronic technology is optional on the part of those required to comply with Government paperwork mandates. I support this legislation that will enable small businesses to cut down the billion or so hours they spend each year filling out Government forms, and, hopefully, lower their costs of $100 billion.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Rhode Island [Mr. WEYGAND].

Mr. WEYGAND. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentlewoman from New York for yielding me the time.

I would first of all like to compliment our ranking member, from New York [Mr. LAFALCE] and our chairman, the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. TALENT]. If there is anything that we have been talking about over the last couple months, it is bipartisanship. This bill is probably the best example of what anybody could call bipartisan legislation. It is here today. It may be small. But it is indeed the first effort that we have seen in this Congress of a bipartisan piece of legislation, so I compliment them both.

As a former small business owner, Mr. Chairman, I, like many of our colleagues, was besieged with Federal paperwork, working nights and weekends, taking time away from my family and my clients to be able to fill in those forms. This act will help change that.

More importantly, one of the things that we have heard in this Congress time and time again is that we must teach our children about computers and being more literate in that electronic field. This now forces us to also recognize the Federal Government must be literate in that area. It forces them to be on the state of the art in terms of technology. It forces us to finally get into the 21st century. It is a great piece of legislation. It may be small, but it moves us in the right direction, not only for businesses but for a bipartisan Congress. I hope Members will all support it.

Mr. TALENT. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. DAVIS].

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Chairman, I first of all would like to commend and congratulate Chairman TALENT AND THE GENTLEMAN FROM NEW YORK [MR. LAFALCE], the ranking member, for the exemplary leadership that they provided in bringing this legislation to the floor.

I want to concur and agree with the words that have already been spoken by most of my colleagues and would simply echo their sentiments. But I would like to add that I hope that in the implementation of this act that even those businesses that we call micro businesses, the ma and pa shops, the cleaners, the beauty shops, the barber shops, those that do not even have computers, I would hope that the legislation would be implemented in such a way that there would be a facility someplace that they could go and receive assistance so that they, too, could benefit from this legislation.

I think it is an excellent display of bipartisanship, and I hope that we can display in the near future the same kind of bipartisanship, the same kind of concern for campaign finance reform so that the people of this country can have the same assurances that small businesses will have, that they will get the most from their government.

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

Mr. TALENT. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to thank all the speakers for their kind words about the bill and about the process. I do need to thank some other people, Mr. Chairman, very briefly. The Committee on Small Business shares jurisdiction over issues involving paperwork reduction with the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight. I want to thank the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. BURTON], the chairman, and his staff for agreeing to waive their primary jurisdiction over the legislation. I also want to thank the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. MCINTOSH], a member of the Committee on Small Business who in his role as chairman of the Subcommittee on National Economic Growth, Natural Resources, and Regulatory Affairs of the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight, has along with his staff also assisted greatly in helping us move this measure forward in a speedy fashion.

I would also like to thank our ranking member, the gentleman from New York [Mr. LAFALCE], for his help in moving the bill through the committee at information age speed. It could not have been done without him. I would also like to thank the Committee on Small Business staff who worked on the legislation: Jeff Polich, Emily Murphy, Laurie Rains, and Harry Katrichis for the majority, and Patricia Hennessey and Tom Powers for the minority.

With that, I urge my colleagues to vote yes on this important bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 852, the Paperwork Reduction Act. This bill is an important step into the technological age.

H.R. 852 will allow businesses to choose to submit required information to the Government by electronic filing. It will benefit businesses by allowing them to use the most efficient means available to communicate with the Government.

H.R. 852 brings both business and government into the modern age where information is transferred quickly and efficiently through the electronic medium. In so doing, it has the important effect of conserving resources—both human and material—and eliminating waste.

In the 104th Congress, we recognized the merits of H.R. 852 and voted unanimously in favor of similar legislation. Our colleagues in the Senate, however, did not act. I hope that in this new session, the House and Senate will stand together in support of this important legislation. However, as we work to reduce paperwork—a real discussion on campaign finance reform, should become a part of the House agenda. That is a necessary part of this body's work.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong and enthusiastic support of H.R. 852, the Paperwork Elimination Act of 1997. This is important legislation that will assist in the process of lowering the paperwork burden that the Federal Government places on small businesses throughout this country, and will facilitate Federal agencies' efforts to fulfill their requirements under the Paperwork Reduction Act.

We all know that the Federal Government places an enormous paperwork burden on small business owners. The amount of forms that it requires to be maintained or submitted is staggering.

One study that was conducted by the General Accounting Office estimates the Government-wide paperwork burden to be 7 billion hours per year.

Because of this burden that it creates, the Federal Government has an obligation to make compliance with these demands as easy and straightforward as possible. That is what the Paperwork Elimination Act is designed to address. It simply states that the Federal Government should recognize the advancements in information technology management that have been made in recent years, and allow small business owners to utilize them when meeting the demands that the Government makes.

As chair of the Small Business Committee's Regulatory Reform and Paperwork Reduction Subcommittee, I constantly hear from small business owners across the country who are desperate for additional paperwork relief. As a former small business owner, I know first hand and can testify to the demands that paperwork and recordkeeping can place on the busy schedule of those trying to successfully operate their own business. H.R. 852 simply provides an additional tool for these individuals to have at their disposal.

The one other important aspect of this legislation that I would like to highlight today is the flexibility it provides small business. While requiring that Federal agencies accommodate alternative information technologies, these amendments to the Paperwork Reduction Act leave the decision of employing such technologies squarely in the hands of the small business owner. We did not need another mandate from the Government telling small businessmen and women how they must comply. Rather, we need to give them the option of deciding the best way in which they can meet the requirements placed upon them.

I would like to commend the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. TALENT] for introducing this legislation. As we all know, this bill overwhelmingly passed this Chamber during the 104th Congress. I would like to urge all Members

to support H.R. 852 and help make this important legislation become law.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered under the 5-minute rule by section. Each section shall be considered as having been read.

During consideration of the bill for amendment, the Chair may accord priority in recognition to a Member offering an amendment that he has printed in the designated place in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. Those amendments will be considered as having been read.

The Clerk will designate section 1.

The text of section 1 is as follows:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Paperwork Elimination Act of 1997''.

The CHAIRMAN. Are there any amendments to section 1?

If not, the Clerk will designate section 2.

The text of section 2 is as follows:

SEC. 2. PURPOSES.

The purpose of this Act is to—

(1) 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, including the use of electronic maintenance, submission, or disclosure of information to substitute for paper; and

(2) more effectively enable Federal agencies to achieve the purposes of chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code, popularly known as the ''Paperwork Reduction Act''.

The CHAIRMAN. Are there any amendments to section 2?

If not, the Clerk will designate section 3.

The text of section 3 is as follows:

SEC. 3. AUTHORITY AND FUNCTIONS OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET.

(a) DIRECTION AND OVERSIGHT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY.—Section 3504(a)(1)(B)(vi) of title 44, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''(vi) the acquisition and use of information technology, including the use of alternative information technologies, such as the use of electronic submission, maintenance, or disclosure of information to substitute for paper.''.

(b) PROMOTION OF USE OF ELECTRONIC INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY.—Section 3504(h) of title 44, United States Code, is amended by striking ''and'' after the semicolon at the end of paragraph (4), by striking the period at the end of paragraph (5) and inserting ''; and'', and by adding at the end the following:

''(6) specifically promote the optional use of electronic maintenance, submission, or disclosure of information where appropriate, as an alternative information technology to substitute for paper.''.

The CHAIRMAN. Are there any amendments to section 3?

If not, the Clerk will designate section 4.

The text of section 4 is as follows:

SEC. 4. ASSIGNMENT OF TASKS AND DEADLINES.

Section 3505(a)(3) of title 44, United States Code, is amended by striking ''and'' after the semicolon at the end of subparagraph (B), by striking the period at the end of subparagraph (C) and inserting ''; and'', and by adding at the end the following:

''(D) a description of progress in providing for the use of electronic submission, maintenance, or disclosure of information to substitute for paper, including the extent to which such progress accomplishes reduction of burden on small businesses or other persons.''.

The CHAIRMAN. Are there any amendments to section 4?

If not, the Clerk will designate section 5.

The text of section 5 is as follows:

SEC. 5. FEDERAL AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES.

(a) PROVIDING FOR USE OF ELECTRONIC INFORMATION MANAGEMENT.—Section 3506(c)(1)(B) of title 44, United States Code, is amended by striking ''and'' after the semicolon at the end of clause (ii) and by adding at the end the following:

''(iv) provides for the optional use, where appropriate, of electronic maintenance, submission, or disclosure of information; and''.

(b) PROMOTION OF ELECTRONIC INFORMATION MANAGEMENT.—Section 3506(c)(3)(C) of title 44, United States Code, is amended by striking ''or'' after the semicolon at the end of clause (ii), by adding ''or'' after the semicolon at the end of clause (iii), and by adding at the end the following:

''(iv) the promotion and optional use, where appropriate, of electronic maintenance, submission, or disclosure of information.''.

(c) USE OF ALTERNATIVE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES.—Section 3506(c)(3)(J) of title 44, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''(J) to the maximum extent practicable, uses alternative information technologies, including the use of electronic maintenance, submission, or disclosure of information, to reduce burden and improve data quality, agency efficiency and responsiveness to the public.''.

The CHAIRMAN. Are there amendments to section 5?

If not, the Clerk will designate section 6.

The text of section 6 is as follows:

SEC. 6. PUBLIC INFORMATION COLLECTION ACTIVITIES; SUBMISSION TO DIRECTOR; APPROVAL AND DELEGATION.

Section 3507(a)(1)(D)(ii) of title 44, United States Code, is amended by striking ''and'' after the semicolon at the end of subclause (V), by adding ''and'' after the semicolon at the end of subclause (VI), and by adding at the end the following:

''(VII) a description of how respondents may, if appropriate, electronically maintain, submit, or disclose information under the collection of information.''.

The CHAIRMAN. Are there any amendments to section 6?

If not, the Clerk will designate section 7.

The text of section 7 is as follows:

SEC. 7. RESPONSIVENESS TO CONGRESS.

Section 3514(a)(2) of title 44, United States Code, is amended by striking ''and'' after the semicolon at the end of subparagraph (C), by striking the period at the end of subparagraph (D) and inserting ''; and'', and by adding at the end the following:

''(E) reduced the collection of information burden on small businesses and other persons through the use of electronic maintenance, submission, or disclosure of information to substitute for paper maintenance, submission, or disclosure of information, including—

''(i) a description of instances where such substitution has added to burden; and

''(ii) specific identification of such instances relating to the Internal Revenue Service.''.

The CHAIRMAN. Are there any amendments to section 7?

If not, the Clerk will designate section 8.

The text of section 8 is as follows:

SEC. 8. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act shall take effect October 1, 1998.

The CHAIRMAN. Are there any amendments to section 8 or to the bill?

If not, under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. THORNBERRY) having assumed the chair, Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska, Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 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, pursuant to House Resolution 88, he reported the bill back to the House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

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

Mr. LAFALCE. 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 395, nays 0, not voting 37, as follows:

[Roll No. 50]

YEAS—395

Abercrombie	Bishop	Canady
Ackerman	Blagojevich	Cannon
Aderholt	Bliley	Capps
Allen	Blunt	Cardin
Andrews	Boehlert	Carson
Archer	Boehner	Castle
Armey	Bonilla	Chabot
Bachus	Bonior	Chambliss
Baesler	Bono	Chenoweth
Baldacci	Borski	Christensen
Ballenger	Boswell	Clement
Barcia	Boyd	Clyburn
Barr	Brady	Coble
Barrett (NE)	Brown (FL)	Coburn
Barrett (WI)	Brown (OH)	Collins
Bartlett	Bryant	Combest
Bass	Bunning	Condit
Bateman	Burr	Conyers
Bentsen	Burton	Cook
Bereuter	Buyer	Cooksey
Berry	Calvert	Costello
Bilbray	Camp	Cox
Bilirakis	Campbell	Coyne

Cramer
Crane
Crapo
Cubin
Cummings
Cunningham
Danner
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
Davis (VA)
Deal
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
DeLay
Dellums
Deutsch
Diaz-Balart
Dickey
Dingell
Dixon
Doggett
Dooley
Doolittle
Doyle
Dreier
Duncan
Dunn
Edwards
Ehlers
Ehrlich
Emerson
Engel
English
Ensign
Eshoo
Evans
Ewing
Farr
Fattah
Fawell
Fazio
Filner
Flake
Foglietta
Foley
Forbes
Ford
Fowler
Fox
Frank (MA)
Franks (NJ)
Frelinghuysen
Frost
Furse
Ganske
Gejdenson
Gekas
Gephardt
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gilman
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Goodling
Gordon
Goss
Graham
Granger
Green
Greenwood
Gutierrez
Gutknecht
Hall (OH)
Hall (TX)
Hamilton
Hansen
Harman
Hastert
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayworth
Hefley
Hefner
Herger
Hill
Hilleary
Hilliard
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hobson
Hoekstra
Holden
Hooley
Horn
Hostettler
Houghton
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Hutchinson
Inglis
Istook
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Jenkins
Johnson (WI)
Johnson, E.B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kasich
Kelly
Kennedy (MA)
Kennedy (RI)
Kennelly
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kim
Kind (WI)
King (NY)
Kleczka
Klink
Knollenberg
Kolbe
Kucinich
LaFalce
LaHood
Lampson
Lantos
Latham
LaTourette
Lazio
Leach
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
Livingston
LoBiondo
Lofgren
Lowey
Lucas
Luther
Maloney (CT)
Maloney (NY)
Manzullo
Markey
Martinez
Mascara
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McDade
McDermott
McGovern
McHale
McInnis
McIntosh
McKeon
McKinney
McNulty
Meek
Menendez
Metcalf
Mica
Millender-McDonald
Miller (CA)
Miller (FL)
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Moakley
Molinari
Mollohan
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Morella
Murtha
Myrick
Nadler
Neal
Neumann
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Northup
Norwood
Nussle
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Owens
Oxley
Packard
Pallone
Pappas
Parker
Pascrell
Pastor
Paul
Paxon
Payne
Pease
Pelosi
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pickett
Pitts
Pombo
Pomeroy
Porter
Portman
Poshard
Pryce (OH)
Quinn
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Reyes
Riggs
Riley
Rivers
Roemer
Rogan
Rogers
Rohrabacher
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Rush
Sabo
Salmon
Sanders
Sandlin
Sanford
Sawyer
Saxton
Scarborough
Schaffer, Bob
Schiff
Schumer
Scott
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Sisisky
Skaggs
Skeen
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (MI)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (OR)
Smith, Linda
Snowbarger
Snyder
Solomon
Souder
Spence
Spratt
Stabenow
Stark
Stearns
Stenholm
Stokes
Strickland
Stump
Stupak
Sununu
Talent
Tanner
Tauscher
Tauzin
Taylor (MS)
Taylor (NC)
Thomas
Thompson
Thornberry
Thune
Thurman
Tiahrt
Tierney
Torres
Towns
Traficant
Turner
Upton
Velazquez
Vento
Visclosky
Walsh
Wamp
Waters
Watkins
Watt (NC)
Watts (OK)
Waxman
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Wexler
Weygand
White
Whitfield
Wicker
Wise
Wolf
Woolsey
Wynn
Yates
Young (AK)

NOT VOTING—37

Baker
Barton
Becerra
Berman
Blumenauer
Boucher
Brown (CA)
Callahan
Clay
Clayton
Dicks
Etheridge
Everett
Gallegly
Hyde
John
Johnson (CT)
Kingston
Klug
Largent
Manton
McCarthy (MO)
McCrery
McHugh
McIntyre
Meehan
Nethercutt
Ortiz
Price (NC)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roukema
Ryun
Sanchez
Schaefer, Dan
Smith (TX)
Smith, Adam
Young (FL)

□ 1743

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, please let the RECORD show that had I been present I would have voted ''aye'' on rollcall No. 50.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on the legislation just passed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THORNBERRY). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

(Mr. BONIOR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to engage in a colloquy with my friend from New York [Mr. SOLOMON] about the schedule for the remainder of the week and for next week.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BONIOR. I yield to my friend from New York.

Mr. SOLOMON. My good friend, the minority whip, I would say to him, Mr. Speaker, that we are pleased to announce the House has completed its work for the week and there will be no more votes today or for the rest of the week.

The House will next meet at 2 p.m. on the infamous day of Monday, March 17; I think some others than the Scotch that I am would refer to that as St. Patrick's Day; for a pro forma session. Of course there will be no legislative business and no votes on that day.

On Tuesday, March 18, we will meet at 12:30 p.m. for morning hour and 2 p.m. for legislative business. Members should note that any recorded votes will be postponed until 5 p.m. on Tuesday, March 18.

Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday we hope to consider the following five bills under suspension of the rules. They are:

H.R. 924, the Victim Allocution Clarification Act of 1997; H.R. 927, the U.S. Marshals Improvement Act; H.R. 672, a bill containing technical amendments to copyright laws; H.R. 908, a bill to establish a commission on structural alternatives for the Federal Court of Appeals, and H.R. 514, a bill to permit the waiver of D.C. residency requirements for certain employees of the office of the D.C. Inspector General.

Also on Tuesday, March 18, the House will consider under an open rule H.R. 412, the Oroville-Tonasket Claims Settlement Act; that is under an open rule.

The House will meet for legislative business at 11 a.m. on Wednesday, March 19, and at 10 a.m. on Thursday, March 20. We plan to take up the following measures, all of which will be subject to rules:

H.R. 1, the Working Families Flexibility Act of 1997; H.R. 929, a bill to ban partial-birth abortions, and H.Res. 91, a resolution providing amounts for the expenses of certain House committees for the 105th Congress.

We hope to conclude business and begin the spring district work period by 6 p.m. on Thursday, March 20, and I would thank the gentleman for yielding to me to explain this to the membership.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his explanation. I have just a couple of questions I would like to pose to him if he would indulge me for a second here.

On Tuesday H.R. 412, the bill that follows the suspension, the Oroville-Tonasket Claim Settlement Act; that is under an open rule on the floor. Does the gentleman from New York expect to complete that bill on Tuesday?

Mr. SOLOMON. Yes, we do.

Mr. BONIOR. So it could be into the evening on Tuesday?

Mr. SOLOMON. I do not expect we would go—that is not a very controversial bill, and I would expect we would be out sixish or even sooner perhaps.

Mr. BONIOR. Just so that the gentleman is aware, there is opposition to it on our side of the aisle, and I just want the gentleman——

Mr. SOLOMON. I know of one significant amendment that we discussed in the Committee on Rules.

Mr. BONIOR. So it may take a while and Members might be apprised that it may run a little bit beyond 6 o'clock. I just want the gentleman to know that.

And on Wednesday and Thursday, 19 and 20, my colleague mentioned the three bills. Does he know which day he is going to bring them up yet? H.R. 1?

Mr. SOLOMON. I say to the minority whip that he is a former member of the Committee on Rules and served there with me for many years. We expect to take up on the floor the Working Families Flexibility Act. It will be under a

fair structured rule. That will certainly be the first taken up.

Mr. BONIOR. Wednesday maybe for that bill?

Mr. SOLOMON. Excuse me?

Mr. BONIOR. Is the gentleman from New York anticipating maybe Wednesday for that particular bill?

Mr. SOLOMON. Yes.

Mr. BONIOR. OK.

Mr. SOLOMON. And we are uncertain as to which of the next two would be brought up first, the ban on partial-birth abortions and the resolution providing amounts for the expenses of certain House committees for the 105th Congress. They both will most likely be brought up on Thursday.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman from Michigan yield to me.

Mr. BONIOR. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. I was delighted to hear my friend from New York say that the flexibility bill would be brought up under a fair structured rule, obviously meaning amendments would be allowed.

May I safely assume that the other two important bills would also be brought up under fair structured rules and allowing amendments that week?

Mr. SOLOMON. I can assure the gentleman. He knows that I made a personal commitment, as did Speaker GINGRICH, that we would be at least as fair as the Democrats were always to us and probably much fairer.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. If the gentleman would yield again, I am glad to know he is flexible. May I ask my question again? The gentleman said there would be a fair structured rule. Does that mean that there would also be a fair structured rule of the same sort to the other bills?

Mr. SOLOMON. I would think so, although we have a fair Committee on Rules and we always take the minority in consultation, and we will have to make that decision. I certainly do not want to speak for all nine of them.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. We will settle for the gentleman's commitment.

Mr. SOLOMON. My commitment is always to be fair.

Mr. BONIOR. I just want the gentleman to understand on the committee funding bill there is an immense amount of controversy on that bill and concern on our side with respect to the division of funding, and I hope it is not the last thing we do before we break for spring because I just want the gentleman to be aware that there are very strong feelings by our ranking and senior Members with respect to the funding of that bill.

So I hope we can work some things out next week on it, but if we cannot, I do not think it would be wise to make that the last order of business.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, let me just mention that the gentleman was patient in the debate we had this afternoon with respect to the paperwork reduction bill, specifically the previous question that dealt with campaign finance reform. I just want the gentleman to know with the deepest amount of respect how strongly we feel on our side of the aisle about that bill, about having—not that bill, that process, and having something coming to the floor. We can discuss a variety of bills and approaches, and we will be pressing that—as the gentleman probably was able to ascertain from our efforts today, we will be pressing that on a regular basis, and we are hopeful that in a fair, bipartisan manner we can have this out on the floor where we get a full debate and we can do it in a timely fashion.

Now we do not expect it to be done next week or perhaps within the next month. We expect some idea of when we as a body can address this issue, which is a growing cancer on the Democratic institution that we love so much here.

So I just want the gentleman to know up front where we are coming from, if he has not figured it out, and I am sure he has by now, about how strongly we feel about this, and I thank him so much.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, first of all I want to thank him for thanking me for being patient this afternoon. Sometimes that is hard to do, but we certainly are trying to have some comity in the House that will allow us to have meaningful work produced, and, as the gentleman knows, campaign finance reform is a very complex and important issue.

Unfortunately, or fortunately, whichever way one looks at it, we are bound by the U.S. Constitution. There are people like me that would like to bring a bill to the floor yesterday for full financial disclosure on everything, and I feel very strongly about that, just as strongly as the gentleman does on other aspects. But because it is complex, because we are bound by the Constitution, we have to make sure that what we do is going to stand the constitutional test, and that is going to take some time, but I do believe that this issue is going to be dealt with, and the gentleman has my assurances to help him make sure that we bring a meaningful bill to the floor that can be enforced, not like the present laws, which have been broken, as the gentleman knows, and which need to be enforced.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, and I would say in just brief response that it is just not a bill that we are interested in. We are interested in having their idea come to the floor as well as the myriad of ideas that we have out here to resolve this. The Senate is already moving on dealing with a constitutional amendment, and it seems to me that we ought to be at least discussing when, in fact, we will have our day. I frankly think this needs a week, a full week at least, of discussion on the floor because of its importance to the Democratic process and our lives, and our lives, which in many ways are out of control because of what we have got to go through, the hurdles that all of us have to go through, to compete in this insane system that we are living in.

So I thank my colleague, and I want to make sure that his disclosure bill has an opportunity, and I may indeed support it, but I think other opportunities ought to be available as well, and we wish the gentleman from New York a good weekend.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would yield, I also want to say this is my day to be delighted at the resolution of my friend from New York. I was particularly pleased to hear him pledge absolute fealty to the Supreme Court's interpretation of the Constitution as governing what we do, and I look forward to our being very closely governed by what the Supreme Court says we can and cannot do for the rest of the year.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will just yield further, I know Members probably want to go home for the evening, but I am just sure that no American expects a doctor to prescribe surgery until he has done a thorough examination, and I am going to tell the gentleman my colleagues all know I have been very much involved in what has been going on with what I consider scandals on not only breaking campaign laws. Those are very important laws. As my colleague knows, one single little violation is subject to a $5,000 fine and/or 5 years in jail and, lord knows, there have been so many violations, and we really need to get to the bottom of those, see what it is, and I think that will lead us into maybe some meaningful legislation to perhaps correct some of those illegal activities that have been going on.

And I thank the gentleman, and I wish him a very happy weekend as well.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, MARCH 17, 1997

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today it adjourn to meet at 2 p.m. on Monday next.

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

There was no objection.

HOUR OF MEETING ON TUESDAY, MARCH 18, 1997

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns on Monday, March 17, 1997, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 18, 1997, for morning hour debates.

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

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

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

There was no objection.

□ 1800

PEACE AND STABILITY SOUGHT IN MIDDLE EAST

(Mr. BARCIA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARCIA. Mr. Speaker, the people of Israel have endured a history of military threat that would have crushed a lesser nation. They have fought for and earned freedom and the right to be recognized as a nation of resolve.

The Palestinian people have also faced many challenges and difficult trials. The peace process has been as much a blessing to them as it has to the people of Israel. It was a major success for our Nation to have helped facilitate peace negotiations between the leaders of Israel and Palestine, and it is a delicate balance to maintain this most promising dialog. But recent reports that Yasser Arafat has invited diplomatic officials from several nations, including the United States, to criticize Israel for building in Jerusalem and redeployment from the West Bank can be a major impediment to the peace process.

I am deeply troubled by the fact that Israel has not been invited to participate in this meeting. I am even more troubled that the United States has apparently agreed to attend what would appear to be a one-sided meeting. Just as we cannot hear the sound of one hand clapping, we cannot expect to resolve conflicts by hearing only one side of the story.

Over the years our Nation, under several Presidents, has invested too much to blemish the wonderful image that we all have of Yasser Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin shaking hands in front of President Clinton at the White House, signifying that an era of mutual respect was replacing one of hostility.

I implore President Clinton and Secretary Albright to reconsider our participation in the meeting in Gaza. Please do not allow the news of the moment to overwhelm the work of a generation of leaders. Do not attend this meeting unless both parties to the negotiations agree that it will contribute to stability and our ultimate goal of peace in the Middle East.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER TO MEXICO-UNITED STATES INTERPARLIAMENTARY GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THORNBERRY). Without objection, and pursuant to the provisions of 22 U.S.C. 276h, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Member of the House to the Mexico-United States Interparliamentary Group:

Mr. KOLBE of Arizona, Chairman.

There was no objection.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER TO CANADA-UNITED STATES INTERPARLIAMENTARY GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, and pursuant to the provision of 22 U.S.C. 276d, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Member of the House to the Canada-United States Interparliamentary Group:

Mr. HOUGHTON of New York, Chairman.

There was no objection.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, and pursuant to the provisions of Section 3 of Public Law 93–304, as amended by Section 1 of Public Law 99–7, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Members of the House to the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe:

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, co-chairman; and Messrs. PORTER, WOLF, SALMON, and CHRISTENSEN.

There was no objection.

APPOINTMENT TO NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON VITAL AND HEALTH STATISTICS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, and pursuant to the provisions of section 306(k)(3)(a) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 242k(k)), as amended by section 263 of Public Law 104–191, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of Mr. Jeffrey S. Blair of Atlanta, Georgia to the National Committee on Vital and Health Statistics on the part of the House.

There was no objection.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GOSS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the outstanding work of Lou Hinds, who has managed the J.N. ''Ding'' Darling National Wildlife Refuge on my home Island of Sanibel for the last 7 years. It came as no surprise when I heard that Lou was recently named ''Refuge Manager of the Year'' by the National Wildlife Refuge Association. He will receive his award in Washington on Monday, March 17. Throughout his service, Lou has taken a partnership approach to managing the refuge, involving local students, residents, tourists and community leaders. The community outreach program under Lou's direction is one of the most innovative in the country and many other refuges are working to replicate it.

The involvement of the community has been crucial to the success of the refuge. Realizing that the current visitor's center cannot adequately meet demand, refuge volunteers are spearheading a drive to improve the visitor's center through the use of private funds.

The refuge also works extensively with local students. Most notably, the Junior Naturalist Program, an educational partnership with an elementary school adjacent to the refuge, has been a terrific success.

This community-oriented approach has benefitted the refuge in terms of more space, equipment, and volunteers, but more important, it has allowed the refuge to serve as an educational resource for residents of southwest Florida and our many visitors from around the world. As a result, many have learned firsthand that by pursuing a sensible approach to safeguarding our resources, we can maintain a reasonable balance between growth and environmental protection.

Lou's work has made ''Ding'' Darling one of the finest refuges in the Nation, and I know that I speak for southwest Florida in expressing gratitude for the time and energy he has given so enthusiastically over the years. I want to extend sincere congratulations for a well-deserved honor.

EXPORT PROMOTION PROGRAMS KEEP JOBS IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. MANZULLO] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, we are engaged in a massive war, not with communist enemies or terrorist states, but with our friends and allies. This is not a military conflict, but a global economic war, competing for billions and billions' worth of export opportunities.

The battlefields are the towns and the factories spread throughout this great land of ours, and the foot soldiers in this war are the hard-working individuals whose efforts receive little recognition, but who drive the economy. They get up every morning, pack their lunch, get their kids off to school, go to their jobs and put a meaningful day's work in, and return home to their families, often unaware that a global economic war swirls around them.

This year Congress will reexamine several export promotion programs, including the Export-Import Bank of the United States, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, the Trade and Development Agency, the International Trade Administration, and the Commerce Department.

All of these programs are vital strategic arms, helping these forgotten

Americans keep their jobs in this global battle for market share. Yet some in Congress would ignore this reality and abolish some or all of these programs. They think these programs are unnecessary or corporate welfare. But just as unilateral disarmament did not work against the Soviet Union during the cold war, efforts to cut or eliminate U.S. government export promotion programs will not stop foreign government subsidies of exports.

Who do you think would win if the U.S. withdraws support for the Export-Import Bank or OPIC? Only our vigorous competitors in Europe, Japan, and Canada would be the winners.

Japan supports more than 32 percent of its exports with some form of export credit. France finances 18.6 percent. Yet the U.S. supports only 2 percent of its own exports, and some in Congress would do away even with this.

No one particularly likes Government support for exports. I wish I could waive a magic wand and everyone, completely based solely on quality and price, would be able to compete. But, unfortunately, that is not reality in the global arena.

Let me give you one specific example that impacted the district I am privileged to represent. Beloit Corp., with operations in Beloit, WI and Rockton, IL is a manufacturer of paper-making machines. There are only two other companies in the world that make similar equipment, one located in Finland, the other in Germany. Beloit wished to sell two machines to Asia Pulp and Pacific worth $330 million. This sale represents 40 percent of total sales for Beloit, translating into 2 years of steady work for 2,000 high wage, highly skilled union employees.

Obviously a sale of this magnitude takes several months and lots of hard work to compete. At every step of the way, Beloit's competitors from Finland and Germany were waiting outside the door of Asia Pulp and Pacific to take advantage of any opportunity. These foreign companies had already lined up support of their home government's export credit finance agency for their machines. Recently Ex-Im Bank came through with a $270 million loan that provided the winning edge for Beloit to finalize the contract.

If Ex-Im was not there, Finland or Germany certainly would have filled the gap, and hundreds of forgotten Americans in Beloit, WI, and Rockton, IL would have been out of work. Ex-Im's actions were vital in solidifying America's position and in the global marketplace in the paper-making industry.

It is because of examples like Beloit Corp. that inspire me to fight for these export promotion programs. They are vital strategic weapons, not frivolous. In 1995, Ex-Im helped generate $13.5 billion in exports for the U.S. economy, which directly supported about 200,000 high-wage U.S. jobs. Last year OPIC backed projects generated nearly $10 billion in U.S. exports. The Trade Development Agency has helped generate $9 billion in exports since its creation in 1981.

These are not faceless statistics; they are backed by hundreds of examples all across America, like Beloit, where a little help from these U.S. agencies and the Commerce Department proved to be the winning edge in securing a foreign contract.

Until all countries do away with all government export subsidies in a multilateral framework, these programs deserve our full support.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. SMITH] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. SMITH of Michigan addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

MARCH 1997 NATIONAL EYE DONOR MONTH PROCLAMATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. Bilirakis] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, since 1983, Congress has joined with the Eye Bank Association of America in proclaiming March as National Eye Donor Month. March is a time to encourage all Americans to register their eyes for donation. Throughout the country, the miracle of transplant surgery is drastically improving people's lives.

Today I rise to request that my colleagues take a few minutes to focus on eye donations. Some of you may not realize that a person's vision can be restored through corneal transplantation. Every year, thousands of corneal transplants are performed across the country, restoring precious sight to both the young and old. In 1995, over 44,000 corneas were made available by our Nation's eye banks for transplantation procedures.

While figures for 1996 are still being tallied, even greater totals are expected.

In fact, just outside my district, the Lions Club of Tampa, FL, operates one of the largest eye banks in the world. The Central Florida Eye and Tissue Bank restores sight to over 2,000 people every year. Nevertheless, the need for corneal transplants continues.

The benefits of sight-restoring transplant surgeries extend well beyond the people who receive the transplants. The benefits also extend to the transplant recipients' families, friends and communities.

In recent years, the public education campaigns launched by Congress, educators, and the media have had a positive impact on the success of eye donation programs.

Since 1961, when the Eye Bank Association of America was founded, member eye banks have made over a half million corneal transplants possible. The success rate of these transplants, Mr. Speaker, exceeds 95 percent.

Let me stress an important point. Anyone can be an eye donor. It does not matter if people have cataracts, poor eyesight, or other eye ailments. They can still contribute to improving the life of fellow human being, regardless of age or health status.

Another area that is somewhat confusing is how one becomes an organ donor. Many States have potential organ donors declare their intentions on their driving licenses. However, in order to guarantee that an organ donation will occur, a person must share, and I repeat, must share these intentions with his or her next of kin and other family members.

In some cases, the deceased person's next of kin may object to their loved one becoming an organ donor because the matter was never discussed. If an individual's next of kin objects to their loved one becoming an organ donor, those wishes are usually respected. It is extremely important that potential organ donors make their intentions clear with family members before it is too late.

Today, Mr. Speaker, we have a tremendous opportunity to educate our fellow Americans about eye donations. We must take this occasion to encourage all Americans to give the gift of sight.

What better legacy to leave than to have our eyes become someone else's miracle?

□ 1815

CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM

THE SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BEREUTER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member comes to the floor to raise concerns about the Conservation Reserve Program signup which began on March 3.

Over the past decade, the Conservation Reserve Program, the CRP, has proven to be enormously successful. It is a national investment which provides dividends to farmers, environmentalists, sportsmen, conservationists, the general public, and wildlife. The CRP is a voluntary program established by Congress in 1985 that provides incentives for farmers to convert land poorly suited for row crops into grasslands and tree cover. Grasslands and trees in turn prevent topsoil erosion, improve water quality, and provide critical wildlife habitat.

The CRP has now reached a critical point as previous contracts expire and new land is enrolled in the program. This September, the contracts on more than 60 percent of existing CRP acres will expire. That is 60 percent. Last month, the U.S. Department of Agriculture issued its long-delayed rules to govern the enrollment of new land into the program. The new rules make two-thirds of all existing U.S. farmland eligible for the program. It is possible

that half the program's acres could be enrolled during this upcoming signup period.

These facts make it clear that a careful, thoughtful approach is needed to ensure that the benefits of this successful program are not lost. Unfortunately, this Member must be concerned that the complex new rules combined with the short time frame in place to implement them could lead to an unmitigated disaster which could tarnish this program for many years to come.

By taking so long to issue the rules, the USDA left a ridiculously short amount of time to inform producers and employees about the changes, conduct the signup and reach decisions about which bids to accept. Mr. Speaker, this is clearly a recipe for a bureaucratic disaster. While the intent of the new rules to focus on more environmentally sensitive land is, indeed, laudable, and supported by this Member, this Member is also concerned that the rushed and haphazard signup process will make this goal much more difficult to reach.

Although local USDA employees are doing their best to implement these new rules, they have clearly been given a demanding task which has been made even more difficult by shifting instructions. Recent changes in the rating system during the signup process has only added to the frustration of producers.

Another concern about the signup is that the proposed rental rates announced by the Farm Service Agency office do not reflect the grassroots input that was solicited and furnished last fall. A related concern is that the resulting rates in many instances could significantly distort any signup efforts.

A local County Conservation Review Group recently reviewed the rental rates for counties in southeastern Nebraska which were announced by the USDA. In one instance, the same type of soil is projected for a rental value of $84 per acre in one county but only $58 per acre across the road in another county. Disparities such as this are simply too great.

Mr. Speaker, this Nation has invested too much in the CRP to risk it on a rushed signup process. This Member believes it would be wise, and yes, absolutely necessary to offer an extension for existing contracts which expire this year. Such action would allow sufficient time to carefully analyze the new guidelines and determine whether any corrections are needed before the majority of CRP signups take place.

I would like to start it now because so much is involved in the signup period, but simply, we have waited too long at the USDA. It would be extremely detrimental if irreversible damage is done to the CRP during this signup period. This Member believes that the new process should be tested to determine whether the new rules are feasible and beneficial. Action must be taken now before it is too late.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York [Mr. QUINN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. QUINN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ST. PATRICK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. SCARBOROUGH] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Mr. Speaker, I want to speak about something a little bit out of the ordinary of what has been discussed today. I want to talk about St. Patrick. We are coming up on St. Patrick's Day, and though many people celebrate it in this country, few in America understand or recognize the significance of St. Patrick in the history of western civilization.

In fact, I have been reading a book called ''How The Irish Saved Civilization,'' and it lays out wonderfully the story of St. Patrick who, at the age of 16, was a member of a British family in the fourth century and was also a member of the Roman Empire.

Late one night he was actually kidnapped by Irish barbarians and sold into the slave trade in the fourth century, and from the age of 16 to the age of 22 he stayed out in the cold and the rain as a shepherd. He was poorly clothed, he was not fed well at all, and in fact he spent his evenings nearly freezing to death in barns along with the other slaves.

In the middle of the night, of one of his nights in his 22d year, God came to him in a vision and told him to go south, a ship would be waiting for him. So Patrick journeyed south and sure enough, a ship was waiting for him that took him back to Great Britain.

The story of Patrick goes that he went back to Great Britain, once again was reunited with his family, was educated, and a few years later God came to him again in a dream and told Patrick that it was his duty to go back and spread the gospel to the people of Ireland.

This was a first, and in fact, I will be reading from ''How The Irish Saved Civilization.'' Thomas Cahill writes:

> However blind his British contemporaries in the 4th century may have been, the greatness of Patrick is beyond dispute. He was the first human being in the history of the world to speak out unequivocally against slavery. He was also a first as the first missionary to barbarians beyond the reach of the Roman law. The step he took was in a way as bold as Columbus', and a thousand times more humane, speaking out against slavery and going to barbarians to spread the Gospel. He himself was aware of its radical nature.

''The Gospel,'' he reminded his accusers later in life, ''has been preached to the point beyond which there is no one,'' nothing but the ocean. Nor was he blind to his dangers, for even in his last years, he said, ''Every day I am ready to be murdered, betrayed, enslaved, whatever may come my way.'' But in his last years, he could probably look out over an Ireland that was transformed by his teaching.

With the Irish, and even with the kings, Patrick succeeded beyond measure. Within his lifetime or soon after his death, the Irish slave trade which had once enslaved him came to a screeching halt, and other forms of violence, such as murder and intertribal warfare, decreased greatly.

However, Patrick's emotional grasp of Christian truth may have been his greatest success, and greater than Augustine's. Augustine looked into his own heart and found there the inexpressible anguish of each individual, which enabled him to articulate a theory of sin that has no equal, which is the dark side of Christianity.

Patrick prayed, made peace with God, and then looked not only into his own heart but into the hearts of others. What he saw convinced him of the bright side, that even slave traders can be turned into liberators, even murderers can act as peacemakers, and even barbarians can take their places among the nobility of heaven.

Hopefully, Mr. Speaker, on this St. Patrick's Day that is a lesson that all of us can learn.

HEALTH CARE FOR OUR NATION'S CHILDREN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, once again, today I rise to draw the attention of my colleagues to the problem of so many children in our country who do not have health insurance, and I am very pleased that I am going to be joined today by the gentlewoman from Oregon [Ms. HOOLEY], who is here also to talk about the same issue because of her concern about the fact that this Congress so far has not addressed the issue.

I have been talking over the last few weeks, and I guess a couple of months now, about various reports that have come out in various States; we had one in New York City, and we had another one in Massachusetts. We have had accounts in some of the Nation's major newspapers pointing to the problem of increasing numbers of children that do not have health insurance in this country.

Well, yesterday the Children's Defense Fund, which is certainly one of the leading organizations that is an advocate for children, and particularly on the issue of health care for children, released its annual report on the state of America's children. And like so many other reports congressional Democrats have been talking about here on the House floor in recent weeks, the Children's Defense Fund report is full of

disturbing information about the number of children that lack health insurance.

It is information, of course, that congressional Democrats have cited time and again in our ongoing effort to convince the Republicans that the issue of uninsured children is one of the most, if not the most important issue the 105th Congress should examine. I emphasize the word should, Mr. Speaker, because to date the Republicans have yet to incorporate a health insurance program for children into their agenda for Congress.

Well, among the all too familiar information contained in the Children's Defense Fund report is the total number of uninsured children in this country: some 10 million American kids lack health coverage. Since 1989, the number of children without private health insurance has risen by an average of 1.2 million per year. I stress that: 1.2 million per year. Nearly 90 percent of uninsured children have at least one working parent, and 64 percent have a parent who works full time, so we are talking about working parents here. Every day that goes by without congressional action, 3,300 more kids are added to the ranks of the uninsured, a trend that has been exacerbated in recent years by the growing number of working parents who do not qualify for Medicaid but remain unable to afford insurance for their kids. As I said, these numbers continue to grow.

I have to say, though, that we must be careful not to get too caught up in the practice of simply reading the numbers. I do that a lot, and I do not want to just emphasize that. The emphasis has to be placed on who exactly are the uninsured children, why they are uninsured, and what are the consequences. Perhaps if we can help our Republican colleagues understand the consequences, we will have greater success in convincing them that providing health insurance to children is of the utmost importance.

I just wanted to talk a little about this CDF report. It does an excellent job of explaining what really is the issue here. Just a quote from the report. It says:

> The human costs of children's lack of health coverage are high. Study after study have shown that children and adults lacking health insurance are more likely to see doctors less often, even when they are sick, or to go without preventive care and to emergency rooms when they need treatment.
>
> Seven of 10 uninsured children live in families with incomes below 200 percent of poverty. Many such families must choose between paying the full cost of prescriptions and doctor visits for uninsured children and paying for other basic family needs like the rent, utility bills or whatever. Care is sometimes delayed when children are sick, with parents hoping that no harm results.

Mr. Speaker, we are talking about families where one or both parents work. These hard-working parents, as the CDF report puts it, are playing by the rules, and more often than not their wishful thinking does not work.

The report notes, and I just want to mention this quote, because I think it is really true, that the report notes that ''perhaps less obvious, quote, perhaps less obvious, but no less damaging are the educational, social and economic costs to the children who lack health insurance and to the Nation.''

Children who are unnecessarily ill can miss days, weeks, or even months of school and their parents can miss significant periods of work. A child who cannot see the blackboard well and his parents cannot afford a visit to the eye doctor or eyeglasses cannot learn up to his or her potential. Uninsured pregnant women without adequate prenatal care are more likely to deliver babies with dangerously low birth weights, and the average hospital costs for a low-birth-weight baby are 10 times the cost of prenatal care.

Mr. Speaker, this is the yearbook that the Children's Defense Fund put out. It is called ''The State of America's Children,'' and I would suggest that every one of our colleagues take a look at this document.

This afternoon, actually this morning, I had a number of physicians from my district that were down to visit me from the New Jersey Medical Society, and some of them were on a cable TV show that I had earlier this afternoon. I asked about the issue of preventative care, and one of the physicians was an eye doctor. He specifically pointed out how in the case of eye disease, prevention and being able to see an eye doctor and getting help when problems start is so crucial and really prevents serious eye disorders down the road.

□ 1830

Also, I would note how very inexpensive it was to deal with preventative care to make sure children were seeing a doctor, as opposed to having to go to a hospital or having a very expensive operation later.

At some point during our special order, I would like to talk about some of the legislation that my Democratic colleagues have put forward to try to solve this problem, as well as the proposals that have been put forward by President Clinton.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Oregon [Ms. HOOLEY].

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, in some of these things I will be repeating the same as the gentleman from New Jersey, but I think they are worth repeating. It is alarming, the number of children in this country who do not have any health care. Again, it is over 10 million children with no health care. Every minute, every minute, three children lose their health care coverage. By the year 2000 if nothing changes, as many as 12.6 million kids will have to depend on an emergency room as opposed to a family physician.

Let me try to tell the Members what that means for our kids. Most of the uninsured children are at risk for preventable illnesses. For example, one in two uninsured children who have asthma do not visit the doctor during the year. As a consequence, these kids end up in the hospital with problems that could have been prevented with proper care. All we need to do is look at the kids that are uninsured who have ear infections, a very common problem for kids. One in three never see a doctor, and many end up with permanent hearing loss.

It is situations like these that make me think about the parents who lay awake each night wondering what they can do when their kids get sick. There is no instinct as basic as that instinct to protect one's children and care for one's children.

Today there are too many parents in America who cannot act on that instinct. The real tragedy of the situation is that these are parents who play by the rules. Nine out of ten uninsured children have parents who work. These are not deadbeat parents, these are parents who work, but their employers do not provide coverage for their employees' children.

We have Medicaid that helps the very poorest of the children, and we have families that are well off that can afford insurance, and we have some people that work for employers who provide that insurance; but we have millions of parents who work every day, who are trapped in the middle. They have just enough money to cover their food or their housing and clothing for their children, and they simply do not have the money to pay for health insurance. But we can help. I think it is time that we provide some kind of targeted tax credit that will help working families provide that health insurance that their kids so desperately need.

This is not a new government program. We can do it within our current structure. It is a way to make the current health system work for working families.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is a very practical, commonsense solution to a growing problem. It is a problem that every parent caught in the middle has to deal with, and we need to make sure that these parents can provide for their children. We cannot afford to do anything different.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, again I think the Children's Defense Fund report that both of us are making reference that really explains to us what the nature of the problem is.

Some people have said to me, why is it that the number of children who do not have insurance has gone up in recent years, because Congress has made an effort over the last 10 or 20 years to expand Medicaid, which of course is the program for those below a certain income, and many States have actually instituted programs to try to cover those children who were not eligible for Medicaid on their own. So we had this effort over the last 10 or 20 years to expand Medicaid on the Federal level and

to also have States address the problem.

I think the Children's Defense Fund report explains very well, the reason why those efforts have not been enough is because during that same period, the last 10 years or so, we have seen fewer and fewer employers that provide any health insurance coverage for children, and also they increasingly charge the employee either the full cost of a group plan or a significant portion of the cost, which makes it unaffordable.

We also have the phenomenon now increasingly where an employer will pay either all or part of the cost to the employee, but not for the family. That was not the case so much in the past.

Just to give some statistics again from the report, it says that more workers are on jobs that either provide no health insurance benefits or require employees to pay unaffordable amounts. In 1993, more than three-quarters of employees at medium and large companies had to pay some or all of the cost of family health insurance provided through their employers. In 1980 the proportion was less than half.

Then it gives some statistics from the Health Insurance Association of America that says the total cost of family health coverage in 1992 averaged $4,500 to $5,000 a year, but in 1993 employees of medium and large companies themselves paid an average of $1,300 a year for family coverages. Employees of small companies were even worse off. They paid an average of $1,900 a year.

So what we see is moderate-income working families who live from paycheck to paycheck who simply cannot afford, even if the employer offers a policy, they cannot afford that coverage. That is why all our efforts, and of course they were good efforts on the part of Congress and the State legislature, have helped, but we continue to slide back because of increasingly the situation with people not getting health benefits through their employer.

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. Last weekend I was at home, Mr. Speaker, in Oregon, and I was at a community health program. I talked to some of the people there. I think it is helpful to hear some real life stories. I can give a lot of them, but let me just repeat a couple.

I was talking to one woman who had three children, two smaller ones and a child that was 9. She had no health care coverage. She was working. She worked for $6.50 an hour. She was working about 26 hours a week. Her employer provided no health insurance for either her or her children. Her husband worked. He had a very low base pay. He worked on commissions. Some months he made better than others.

In Oregon we have what is called an Oregon Health Plan, but because you have to be consistently at a certain pay level, some months he made more so he was not eligible, and then the months that he made less, by the time he got eligible he was into a month where he made more. But the fact is, they never had enough money for insurance.

So they have three children, both parents are working, he is working full-time, she is working more than half-time, neither company provides insurance for their children. They are living really month to month, and in this instance, they were able to go to a community health program where they paid on a sliding scale and got some attention, but it is very difficult. It is a community health program that has too many patients, no more room to expand, so they are also restricting the number of people they can see.

Another person I talked to was a father of four kids, two sets of twins, and his youngest child got sick, one of the younger twins. He took that child, he said, all day long from clinic to clinic to clinic, and he was turned away. He was turned away at the emergency room, trying to find some place to take his child. Again, no health care.

He was a person that worked hard, worked full-time. He worked three different jobs, but he traveled, so he worked 3 months or 4 months or 5 months on one job, another 4 or 5 months on another job, and so again the employer did not cover the cost because he was not there full-time. But he was not a person that was not working very hard at what he was doing, but barely able to make ends meet. That is a very common story.

Mr. PALLONE. I think what the gentlewoman described is a very typical situation. I know in New Jersey I have people come into my office with very similar types of situations, either because maybe they are not working full time at the same job, or they have several jobs. It is just very common.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California [Ms. PELOSI], who has been out front on the issue of health care coverage for a long time.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his leadership on this and so many other issues of importance to the people of our country, and for calling this special order. I am pleased to join him and one of our new Members of Congress, the gentlewoman from Oregon, and I thank her for her leadership on all of these issues, as well.

Mr. Speaker, I serve on the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education of the Committee on Appropriations. On that committee we deal with the welfare of America's children in many ways: their health, their education and well-being, and the economic security of their families, which is related to their well-being, that is for sure.

What we see in that committee from the scientists who come in and tell us what the possibilities are now in science, and what we know about the development of children's brains, is how important it is for them to have the proper nutrition and care before they are born even, and how essential that is, and that investments in their good health are very good investments for our country indeed.

The opportunities are great. Knowledge that we have gives us plenty more opportunity to help our children not only reach their own personal fulfillment, not only strengthen the families from which they come, but also enrich our own country in terms of our family values and our economic strength. So we all have a responsibility to these children.

Every parent, of course, has a responsibility to his or her child, but on our committee we are trained to think of every child in America as our child, all the children as our children, because indeed they are our responsibility.

So in Congress, we have a responsibility, as well as State legislatures have a responsibility, to expand health care coverage to insure America's nearly 10 million—as has been referenced by my colleague—uninsured children. These are important efforts.

We also have responsibilities as a society, every segment of the society has a responsibility to help children receive necessary health care. Parents should use every opportunity to buy health insurance and provide for the care of their children. Employers must renew their willingness to provide workers with family health coverage and other family supporting benefits. They should stop dropping coverage for children and pay premiums for family coverage. States should ensure that all eligible children are enrolled in Medicaid, and should adopt good child health programs like those adopted in 1966 in New York and in Massachusetts.

Again, the Federal Government must also help working families obtain health insurance for their uninsured children. A child's chances of growing up healthy and strong should not depend on what State he or she is from. We have a Federal responsibility.

Any initiative on children's health coverage must be effective, not symbolic or cosmetic, and should include certain basic principles.

I too want to acknowledge the good work of the Children's Defense Fund for helping to define the problem, to quantify it in statistics, the challenge we face, and to qualify it in terms of the nature of the problem we are faced with. I associate myself with the principles they have advanced that state that uninsured children, at least through age 18, and uninsured pregnant women should receive coverage for all the full range of necessary services, including care required for children with special needs.

The proposal should build on successful private, State, and Federal efforts to help working families afford health insurance for their children, and while there is a broad consensus that working parents should help pay for their children's private insurance, the cost must be affordable, it must be based on family income, and must allow all families to obtain coverage and seek care for their children.

While I think it is very important for employers to retain and in some cases obtain health insurance for their workers, I think that the sad part of all of this debate about children in America is it is so obvious that it is such a good investment, that these children will be stronger in every way if they are invested in in terms of their good health. But also the fact that we have to talk about a public role I think speaks to the fact that wages in America have not risen with our great economic success. In some ways, government is once again being called upon to subsidize a low wage in America.

Every working parent should either have health insurance with his or her job, or have the ability to purchase health insurance for their children. No wonder some people find it a matter of survival to have to go on welfare in order to receive Medicaid benefits if their children are sick and they simply have no other recourse. Let us not have seeking health care be an incentive to go on welfare. That is exactly the wrong direction. But also let us look to the needs of not only people on welfare, but to the working poor in America and their health care needs.

I thank the gentleman once again for his leadership on this.

Mr. PALLONE. I want to thank the gentlewoman, and I think particularly what she said at the end there about how unfair it is, or the disincentive it creates, that in fact people who are working oftentimes do not have health insurance for their children, and yet people who fall below a certain income are on welfare, and end up having health insurance.

We certainly do not want to encourage people not to work, which is basically the disincentive that is sometimes built into the system. I think that is very important. I appreciate her comments in that regard.

□ 1845

I wanted to also mention, going back to what my colleague from Oregon said, the situation with regard to self-employed, part-time temporary workers, independent contractors, parents working for very small businesses or service sector companies. These are the areas that the Children's Defense Fund points out where they are very likely to have parents who work, but they are not having any health coverage for their children.

What is interesting about it is, if we look at it from a cost point of view, because we always have to be worried about cost in the Congress, is that the parents who do not have access to a group policy through their employer often have to pay $6,000 a year or more, according to the Children's Defense Fund, if they buy a family health policy on their own.

Obviously when you talk in those kinds of numbers, it is completely out of the question for many of these working families. The other thing, going back to prevention, because I think we continually have to stress that, the cost that is saved, the amount of money that is saved through preventative measures, and they give some very good examples with the Children's Defense Fund report where they talk about preventative care and say that each dollar invested to immunize a child saves between $3.40 and $16.34 in direct medical costs. Nine months of prenatal care costs $1,100, 1 day of neonatal intensive hospital care for a low-birth-weight baby costs $1,000. On the average, hospital costs for low-birth-weight babies are 10 times the costs of prenatal care.

Mr. Speaker, they give an example in Florida where a rural county provided all children and pregnant women access to outpatient health care and the rate of premature births dropped by 39 percent. The percentage of children receiving checkups doubled and emergency room visits were cut by nearly 50 percent.

We had some discussion in our children's health care task force that the Democrats have about the costs and estimates basically around $500 per child if we were actually covering every one of the 10 million children who do not have insurance. So compare that $500 to the cost that some of these families are paying annually, well, they can't afford it. But if they could afford it, I mean the bottom line is that, if you devise a program that takes in most of these children, it can be a very relatively, a very cheap policy as opposed to the costs of insuring an adult or senior citizen.

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. A lot of these parents, they cannot afford a full policy. They find it unaffordable. It is not that they are not willing to pay some money and squeeze out some money out of a very limited budget for some health insurance. It is the cost. Mr. Speaker, if we go out and buy individually for a family or what we were talking about, if they work for a small business, they are a part-time worker, there is maybe not a policy in their company, and for them to go out and buy that individually is very expensive. But these are, if it were a little more affordable, these are people willing to help and pitch in to pay for part of it. They just cannot afford the whole coverage.

It reminds me when we talk about the cost and about prevention, I do not know if we remember the old television ad: You can pay me now or pay me later. It is one of those, if we do not take care of them now, we really do pay so much more later on.

Mr. PALLONE. Exactly. That is true.

Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to mention briefly that obviously there are various proposals that Democrats have put forward about how to deal with this problem. The President has a proposal, some of our leaders in the House of Representatives have proposals. I just thought I would mention a few of them. We do not, not necessarily saying which ones are better than others. One of the things is to just mandate that insurance companies provide a kids-only policy because there are a lot of parents who cannot afford, for example, or may decide that they do not want to cover themselves but still want to cover the children.

My understanding is it is very difficult to buy that kind of policy. So you could actually say that any insurance company that does business with the Federal Government, for example, has to provide a kids-only insurance policy.

The other options that have been put forward, one is H.R. 560 by the gentleman from California [Mr. STARK] that establishes a new Medicare-like entitlement program for children under age 18, so we could expand Medicare. We could expand Medicaid to bring in some of the children.

The other one, another one, H.R. 561, by Representative STARK again, authorizes a refundable tax credit for 95 percent of the costs of children's health insurance. So again, we could use tax credits as a way of trying to provide coverage.

I wanted to also mention Senator DASCHLE has S. 13, which establishes a Federal program of subsidies for children and families with income under 75,000. So we could basically subsidize care, based on sort of a sliding scale, based on what a person can afford. And of course the one that, the proposal that has probably had the most coverage in the media was what President Clinton proposed in his budget. Basically he has a number of provisions to expand health insurance. He has a State administered program of temporary health insurance premium assistance for unemployed workers and their families. He has a Federal grant program to encourage the development of voluntary health insurance purchasing cooperatives, and then he has grants to States who expand children's health insurance.

Mr. Speaker, I just mention these because there really are a variety of ways to accomplish this. Frankly, it is not that costly. The more children you include, the less the cost actually becomes per child.

I think that I want to leave everybody with this tonight, and of course we have been saying this over and over on the floor the last couple of weeks or the last couple of months now, is that as Democrats we feel very strongly that this issue needs to come to the House floor. We would like the Republican leadership to give us a date certain and say as of such and such a date, I think the President throughout the date of July 4, that as of such-and-such a date, a children's health insurance proposal or some combination thereof will come to the House floor. We will have an opportunity to consider it and to vote on it.

What was really bothering me is that in discussing their priorities, the GOP basically has not included this issue. And I think that is wrong because it is

an issue that must be addressed. That is why we are going to be here almost every day or at least several times a week talking about the nature of the problem.

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. Again, all I want is a chance for it to be brought up so we can look at all of the different ways. I think we can do it within the current system, but I would like to see it brought up so we can have that debate on how do we solve this problem, how do we cover our kids with health insurance, a critical issue, one facing an incredible number of families. Just think about it, three kids every single minute. We have been talking I do not know how many minutes, but three kids each of those minutes we have been talking loses their health insurance. It is an issue we just have to face.

Mr. PALLONE. I yield to the gentleman from New York [Mr. SERRANO], who has been on the floor several times in the last month or so talking about this issue.

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank once again the gentleman from New Jersey for bringing us together, as you have on different occasions, to discuss this subject.

I was back in my office at the beginning of this hour listening to the comments of both of you as well as other Members. It dawns on me that one of the things we see in this House quite a bit of and throughout the Nation recently is in the last few years people celebrating the fact that the cold war is over and that we have played a major role in bringing that about and that we were very influential in changing the way different countries behaved.

I think we have to celebrate that. I think it is good. It is a good sign about who we are as a people and a nation.

But I think that when we do that, we also have a responsibility and that is to every so often look inward and take a look to see what we are accomplishing right here at home.

When you look at the figures, for instance, in my city of New York, where 25 percent of all the residents under 65 are not covered by health insurance and where 20 percent of all children under 18 are not covered by health insurance, we know that this is a very serious problem. But what is interesting about it, both of you brought this up, is that 22 percent of those who are insured work for corporations, for companies that have more than 1,000 employees. That is an alarming statistic.

We thought that if you were working, one, two, working for a large outfit, everything would be fine. Here we have the wealthiest city in the world in the wealthiest Nation on Earth with 25 percent of its population not insured.

Then there is a contradiction in that we say, if you are very poor, as so many are in my south Bronx district, we will cut you here and there, but we will try to find a way to take care of you. But what you have to do is get yourself out of the condition and move forward. And when some people do by their bootstraps and in some cases with past government help move out of that condition, they find themselves then not having the availability of health insurance for themselves and for their children.

How are we judged throughout the world? How do we judge ourselves? Well, some of us would say that because we have a great army, which is always ready, that we are a great nation, and that because we have accomplished so much in technology and other fields, we are a great nation. And we are and those are good signs of what we have done.

But I think that there is taking a bite out of our existence and our future as a great nation and our present as a great nation the fact that so many of our children are uninsured. And I do not understand why anyone in charge of this House would say, we are not going to include that as an issue for discussion.

I represent a district that has many titles. It is one of the more compact districts in the Nation. You can walk my district from one side to the other in 30 minutes. That is good for me. It is also bad because my opponent can walk it in 30 minutes also. It is one of the youngest districts in the Nation. It is at times one of the poorest districts in the Nation.

And I have had friends of mine come to visit the district, and the first thing they say to me is, there are so many children: children who are going to school, children who are living in the neighborhood, children who are looking towards the future. The majority of those children have parents who are working, and yet the reason we are here tonight and the reason we have been here before and the reason we will continue to be here is because there is something terribly wrong at this moment in our country when we have allowed the situation to get out of hand to the point where if you did not know that you were watching Members of the U.S. Congress, you would think that you were watching members of another parliament or another government discussing conditions in their country. These are American children, and we are the country that claims that we have solved so many problems.

I would make the same request that I made when I joined the gentleman from New Jersey before, and that is, if you are a parent, if you are a guardian of a child who is not going through this condition, as you help that child with his or her homework tonight, as you put that child to sleep, as you cuddle and tuck that child in bed and pray with him and feel good about the fact that you have got a good family which is doing well, maybe perhaps you will just take another 15 minutes and write to a Member of Congress and say, I put my child to sleep. My child has health care. My child is OK. I may complain about other things in this society and what Government is doing, but this is OK. I do not have a problem with you if you deal with this issue so that other children can have what my child has and that other parents can feel as good as I feel about my child's safety.

I think what we need to do is to begin to have people who are in a better situation than others to defend the need for those folks to have something a little better than what they have now.

I think that eventually we will be measured amongst many things in terms of how we treat our children. If we have to continuously get up to bring up this subject and it does not get solved, then that will be our failure. So I would hope that we come together, that we continue to do this. And once again, I want to thank you for the opportunity to join you tonight and to continue to ask you to continue this fight. You have been the leader on it for such a long time. Do not give it up. It is the right thing, and we will stand by you together as we do this.

Mr. PALLONE. I thank the gentleman. And I particularly appreciate what he says about getting our constituents to reach out and other constituents to reach out to their Members of Congress to make them aware of the fact that this is a crisis and that it needs to be addressed.

I do not like to give out what I would consider unfavorable statistics about our country, because I am so proud of our country, but you mentioned about our situation here in America versus other countries. If you look at, again, this is from the Children's Defense Fund, this report we have been talking about this evening, they point out that in every industrialized country children get better health coverage than in the United States. Every other industrialized country provides health coverage to all its people.

America, of course, does not even cover all its children. The United States ranks 18th in overall infant mortality. Only Portugal does worse. And if the United States matched Japan's infant mortality rate, more than 15,000 American babies who died before their first birthday in 1994 would be alive today.

□ 1900

The United States ranks 18th in the percentage of babies born at dangerously low weight. No industrialized country does worse. Again, it is not because we want to point out bad things about our country, but it is really shocking and it is really shameful that in the greatest country and the wealthiest country in the world that we have to point out those statistics with regard to infant mortality and health care.

Mr. SERRANO. If the gentleman will yield, I think he makes an interesting and a very important point. This is not about knocking ourselves, about turning our backs on our country. This is not about an unpatriotic act.

This is about the fact that the strength of the country is in the future

of its children, and if at the present we cannot provide them with health care, not to mention other harm we may bring to them, if we cannot provide them with basic health care, if we cannot allow a parent to feel the safety of knowing that that child will get sick and will be covered by health insurance in a country where you have to pay for medical care, if we cannot do that and if we keep quiet about it, then we are not honoring our country, I think. We are just dishonoring the country.

We have to speak up and say this is a problem. But we are not saying, ''This is a problem, fix it.'' We are saying, ''This is a problem. You as a majority party bring the issue to the table and give us the opportunity to participate with you in finding solutions.''

Again, and I will close with this, as I said before, we have solutions. We have covered X amount of people. If we were inventing a health care system in this country, that would be a problem. If no one was covered and we had to start from scratch to cover people, that would be a problem. But most Americans are covered by a health plan. So what we have to do is make sure that others are covered. We do not have to reinvent the wheel.

This should not be so difficult if the willingness is there, if the desire is there, if we begin to accept the fact that there are people in this society in certain conditions not because they chose those conditions or brought them on themselves, if we get out of that mentality and say, ''Yes, I am my brother's keeper. If there is a 9-month-old baby who is not covered, that is my problem, too. If there is someone uncovered somewhere else, that is my problem, too.''

If we get into that mentality, then I believe we can deal with this issue. We do not have to reinvent the wheel or set up a new plan, just deal with what we have in this country, just make sure it is fair and expanded to all.

Mr. PALLONE. I agree completely. Again, I want to thank not only the gentleman but also the gentlewoman from Oregon because she continues to point out, I think a major point here, we are talking about working people who are willing to pay either all or some of the cost of the health insurance for their children. But unless we establish some system, as the gentleman from New York said, to build on the existing plans that are out there, they just do not have access to it, or it is too costly for them because they do not get it through a group plan, through their employer or whatever. We are talking about working people.

We are going to continue to do this over the next few weeks and the next few months, I hope not the next few months because I hope our colleagues on the Republican side of the aisle will be willing to bring this up at some point in the next few months. But we have to keep talking about it because it really is a crisis, as the Children's Defense Fund report points out.

CONGRESSIONAL POLICYMAKING FOR WORKING PEOPLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from New York [Mr. OWENS] is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, the previous discussion, I think, is really a good prelude to what I have to say, it really dovetails neatly. We have a situation in America where we cannot take care of, or we refuse to take care of, a large part of the population of our children. We refuse to take care of it, even though the gross national product is quite healthy, the profits are booming on Wall Street, we have an unprecedented period of prosperity, no recessions for a long time, and yet we are refusing to take the necessary steps to take care of the health needs of the children of America.

We have already dropped any discussion of a universal health plan. That is off the board completely. Beyond the children, there are 40 million Americans who are not covered, and that number is increasing all the time. We are not even discussing it. This is an era where those who have the most are in charge. In the last election, unfortunately, large numbers of people did not bother to come out and exercise their democratic right and vote, so there is a great deal of contempt for people out there who have needs and did not bother to go vote to protect their rights or their needs.

So as a Member of the House of Representatives' Education and the Workforce Committee, I would like to talk today about the state of affairs with respect to policymaking for working people in this Congress, what is ahead of us, what are the dangers, what does it mean to have the first bill introduced by the Republican majority, a bill known as H.R. 1, what does it mean to have that bill focus on the elimination of overtime cash payments.

The Republicans are coming for your overtime, working people. The Republicans are coming for your overtime. They have made it their highest priority. It is the first bill introduced by the Republicans, a bill to change the Fair Labor Standards Act so that the Fair Labor Standards Act will no longer require that all employers pay overtime in cash. The Fair Labor Standards Act says you must receive time and a half for any hours worked over 40 hours per week. That is the present law. They want to change the law to say that the employers can pay you in comp time. They will give you an hour and a half off for every hour you work overtime instead of cash.

That is what H.R. 1 is all about. I call it the Employer Cash Enhancement Act. It is an act which will put large amounts of money in the hands of employers that they did not have before, because really do you think there are many employers who will make the choice to pay an employee, an hourly worker or a salaried worker who is required to receive overtime in cash, how many employers would make the choice to pay them in cash if they can pay them with comp time, time that they can take off later? You cannot invest comp time on the stock market. You cannot invest it in new plant, new equipment. You can invest cash. And always the tendency will be to move toward the employee who chooses to take comp time instead of cash.

The bill talks about choice and says it will be a violation of the labor law if any employer refuses to give the employee a choice, but it does not say how that can be monitored. It does not talk about the details in terms of here is the employer who holds a great deal of leverage over the employee, here is the employer who decides whether they stay on the job or not. He does not have to keep them.

Here is the employer who does not have to say to them, ''I demand that you take your overtime in comp time instead of cash.'' The employer can just say, ''Who wants to take their overtime in comp time and who wants to take it in cash?'' We will suddenly find that all the people who choose to take their comp time in cash, refuse to take their overtime in comp time, are suddenly in a few weeks laid off, or dismissed.

There is no reason why private employers have to keep people on, they have a lot of leeway, and they are replaced with other people. All the people who choose to take comp time, want an hour and a half for every hour they work, they are kept on. All the people who chose to take it in cash, they are gone. The message will get out there very rapidly.

In fact, working people in situations without the protection of unions and even in many cases with unions, they know very well where they stand with respect to their employers. They will get the message very rapidly.

So here is the Fair Labor Standards Act that was brought in by Franklin D. Roosevelt as part of the New Deal because you had exploitation and oppression of workers, workers were made to work endless hours without being compensated at a rate for the overtime greater than the regular rate. This Fair Labor Standards Act has many other provisions, and it came along at a time when we created a number of pieces of labor law which still exist. And suddenly we are going to reach in and take out this piece of the labor law which says an employee must be paid in cash, the rate plus 50 percent in overtime, they are going to suddenly take away that protection in the law and leave it to the employers to work it out with the employees.

Many unions already bargain and they have bargained this situation where some employees take comp time instead of cash, et cetera. That is allowed. My problem is this. We have a steamroller rolling, we are going to have this on the floor next week. It is H.R. 1.

We have done a lot of playing around on the floor so far. The House has not conducted any serious business of any great magnitude in affecting the lives of the American people. This act will affect the lives of millions of Americans, and it will be on the floor next week to be voted on.

In our committee deliberations we have already lost the vote. It was a foregone conclusion that the majority had enough votes to pass H.R. 1, so despite the fact that we tried to improve H.R. 1, it has passed, it has passed the committee. It is now headed to the floor and next week it will be on the floor.

What we have on the floor is a situation where there are those who say we want to vote for H.R. 1, which takes away this right and does not provide any protections for the workers, and then there are those who say we are going to vote against it, we are going to vote no. The White House has said clearly to us, we will veto the bill if it comes to us in the present form.

So it looks as if we have a united Democratic position versus the majority Republican position in the House, and probably the other body will have the same position as the Republicans in this House. So they have the majority. It is going to pass. Despite the fact the Democrats will loyally, vehemently, maybe emotionally say no, it is going to pass in this House. The Senate will pass their bill, which may be different in some respects, more moderate, maybe provide a few more protections, but basically what the Senate will pass will be pretty much the same as what the House has.

So we are going to have a bill which has removed the protections of the Fair Labor Standards Act and a bill that is in many quarters popular in America. There are many families, there are many segments of the population who would like to have comp time instead of cash. They would like to have that flexibility. They do not want to be under a law which says they must take their overtime in cash. There are families that are comfortable, with enough cash, a reasonable amount of cash, many families with two people working, making $70,000, $80,000. The time they spend with the family, their quality of life is what means the most to them, and they would like to have a situation where they have maximum opportunity to make that choice. I am all in favor of having those families make those choices.

My problem is that there are other families whose quality of life depends on the amount of work, the amount of cash that the wage earners can bring home each week, each month and put on the table. You cannot put food on the table with comp time. There are many workers whose lifestyle, whose quality of life, whose survival will be affected by dropping their wages because they are working and depending on the overtime pay to be added to their regular wages.

In fact, what we did was look at the statistics, and two-thirds of the work force in America are earning $10 an hour or less, two-thirds of the people who are working. We are not talking about people on welfare, we are not talking about workfare, interns, we are talking about working people. Two-thirds of the workforce are earning $10 or less. That is $20,000, approximately, a year. Eighty percent of the women working, 80 percent of the women in the workforce are earning $10 an hour or less.

Now, can they afford to really give up any opportunities to bring home some cash in overtime? Has anybody asked them? No. We do not have any polls, we do not have any surveys of working people making $10 an hour or less and what they think. What we have is a general sentiment in the population of opinionmakers.

The opinionmakers are higher income people, the opinionmakers are more educated people, they are a little more comfortable in terms of the dollars they bring home, and they are opting for more opportunities for comp time. I think they can be accommodated. The problem is, whenever we talk about accommodating them and separating out the folks who are making $10 an hour or less, nobody wants to hear it. None of the proposals that are going to be on the floor at this point deal with the fact that we can protect or we should act to protect those who are making $10 an hour or less by keeping them under the Fair Labor Standards Act.

□ 1915

In fact the way we word it, and I introduced an amendment; the amendment is that those who make 2.5 times, no more than 2.5 times, the minimum wage so that in years to come, as the salaries rise, wages rise, you will have that ratio and not be fixed into a solid figure like $10 an hour. It is 2.5 times the minimum wage is the way the amendment is worded.

That amendment was defeated, and the problem is that there is nothing else now being offered after we passed the committee and that amendment was offered. The only things on the floor now are: vote no, just say no, to the Republicans, or vote for the Republican majority bill because what happens is that if the Democrats are introducing a substitute, the only substitute being prepared at this point does not deal with the protection of the people who make $10 an hour less.

There is a Committee on Rules meeting coming. Those of you who know a little bit about the process before we go to the floor, we will have an opportunity to go to the Rules Committee and beg to offer the amendments that we want to offer to change the bill. That is a process that is still honored, you know, in a fragmentary way in the way the Republicans have run the House in the last 2 years and for this year. They have not been very gracious about offering amendments that run counter to what they want to do on the floor, but occasionally they do. So we can have a substitute bill, and maybe we can have an amendment, but so far that is not in the program. It is highly improbable that my amendment will be allowed on the floor, and of course there are enough votes to vote it down.

So why am I here? Why do I think it important to make this presentation and appeal to the common sense of Americans to go to work?

Voters, Americans out there, your common sense showed the people in this capital that education was important over the last 2 years when terrible things were being proposed with respect to the Federal role in education. We appealed from this podium, we appeal over and over again to the people in America, to let the legislators at every level, let the legislators here in the House and the Senate know, let the White House know, that common sense says you ought to do it this way, you know.

This protection that I am talking about, a simple matter of exempting all workers who make $10 or less, is so simple it is beyond the reach of the imagination of most folks here. They just cannot comprehend this is a simple answer to the problem.

We are talking a lot about bipartisan cooperation or bipartisan compromise. They do not want any deadlock. We just, Democrats and Republicans, went away, and they had a conference, unprecedented retreat, bipartisan retreat, Democrats and Republicans face to face, talking with each other, and from all reports that I hear—I was not able to go, but from all reports I hear it was a very positive weekend.

So you know some people have looked upon this as being dangerous. I think Ralph Reed of the Christian Coalition says that there is a great danger in all this muddle minded moderation, and they worried about this. But I am all in favor of it. Why can we not have some bipartisan cooperation and say that no matter what goes forward, we are going to build in this protection for the workers who need it most? The people who are making $10 an hour or less will not be impacted. Let us go ahead if we have to.

I am not in favor of changing the Fair Labor Standards Act at all. I am one of those people who just wants to say no because in the bill which proposes to change it, that changes Fair Labor Standards Act, they are not willing to give the protections that are necessary. In fact, at this point I will just read my opening statement, which covers more than just the matter of $10 per hour workers being protected. It talks about some other aspects of the bill.

My first position is just say no, and I have letters here from various unions, Department of Labor, the President, that all say just say no. The problem with just saying no and letting it go is that it will pass the House, it will pass

the Senate. In conference the House and Senate will agree. It goes to the President or the President will be called to negotiate with the House and Senate, and we are all out of it. All the other legislators, all the Members of the House, we are out of the process. The public is out of the process.

I want to get the public in the process right now. You need to let your Congressman know now, you need to let the President know now, that you want protection no matter what is done. If you must go forward with this change of the Fair Labor Standards Act, you want protection for the people who make $10 an hour or less.

But let us talk about why we want to say no to the whole bill as it is now. I speak as the ranking Democrat on the Subcommittee on Workforce Protections. Subcommittee on Workforce Protections is charged with dealing with all of these various labor laws, including the Fair Labor Standards Act. This is my third year in that role.

H.R. 1; I am quoting the statement that I made as an opening statement at the—I submitted as an opening statement at the markup. The markup is where we decide on changing the bill and putting it into final form and then passing it. That has taken place, and the bill passed with a straight party line vote. All Democrats voted against it; all Republicans voted for it.

H.R. 1 is bad public policy because it will reduce the income of that large segment of the work force which has benefitted the least from the current national prosperity. Instead of leaving more cash in the hands of prosperous employers, we need legislative initiatives which will improve the lot of those whose incomes have stagnated or declined over the last 10 years. I oppose this kind of mutilation of the Fair Labor Standards Act because it is bad economics and a cruel injustice for working Americans. In addition to being negative in substance and policy, H.R. 1 is a badly drafted bill, and this loose construction makes it impossible to move toward a bipartisan compromise with integrity. You cannot use the bill that exists now as a basis for making a compromise because it is such a bad bill. The sweeping language and the excessive amount of general assumptions in this bill placed the workers at great risk and offers the employers many temptations and opportunities for deregulated exploitation.

As written, it is the enhancement of the employers' accumulation of cash that is achieved. I want to repeat. As the bill is presently written, it is the enhancement of the employers' accumulation of cash that is achieved. Any movement toward a bipartisan compromise will have to first reshape the language of the bill to make it consistent with the stated intent of the bill. On the surface the bill proposes to give employees a choice. In numerous ways the language of the bill fails to support and enforce this proposition. The drafters of the bill have studiously avoided making the employers accountable. In negotiating the decision to choose compensatory time instead of cash, there is no balance of power between employer and employee. All factors weigh down on the side of the employer.

We have already proposed obvious remedies for many of these shortcomings; however, there has been no movement from its hardened position by the Republican majority. If we are in an era of compromise, bipartisan compromise of cooperation, then why do we have a bill, H.R. 1, before us now which is very much the same as the bill that was introduced in the last Congress? In the 104th Congress, where the majority clearly adopted a position of extremism on many other issues, and they moderated those extreme positions, why are they coming now with the same bill that they had in that Congress? Is it a statement that on labor issues the extremism is still here? The majority, Republican majority, has the same extremist positions as it had before on labor issues. We are going to compromise, we are going to work together, and I applaud that on education.

Everybody seems to be falling into a basic groove that says we have neglected our duty, we have been derelict in our duty, on education; the Federal Government is not responsible primarily for education, but it needs to do more to help the States to help the localities. I am quite overjoyed, I am quite pleased, happy. I smile all the time when I think of where we have come on matters related to education and how we can look forward to a very productive Congress, 105th Congress, with respect to education. But on labor, on issues effecting working people, we are in trouble. The extremist position of the majority is still there.

It means that while we work hard to try to improve conditions for children and schools, the poor children of America will be going home to less food, less money for clothing, less money for shelter, because we are going to take away their overtime. The Republicans are still coming for your cash payments of overtime.

To return to my opening statement, among the simpler improvements that could easily be achieved is the requirement for the establishment of an escrow account or some other kind of assurance device to eliminate the risk of employees losing rightfully accumulated income when businesses go bankrupt or illegally disappear.

I am trying to highlight some of the problems with the bill other than the basic problem that I want to deal with tonight, and that is the vulnerability, the lack of protection, for the workers who need the income the most.

There are problems for other workers. Businesses could go bankrupt or illegally disappear in some way, and the comp time people have accumulated is gone. You know, you go find it.

There is a statement always that we get from the Republican majority when we make this statement: Well, if there is a bankruptcy, people's wages are first in line for payment. Anybody who has ever been involved with a bankruptcy case, you know how ironic, how ridiculous, that can become. You are first in line, but you cannot find the line in many cases.

At any rate, the protection could be built in there with an escrow account. You could require the employers pay into an escrow account the comp time money, the money that people received that took their overtime in cash. So everybody with comp time would be protected. If the business goes out of existence, they can collect the cash that was due them. They will not do that.

A study by the Economic Policy Foundation—this is a business group, an employers group— a study by the Economic Policy Foundation shows that there is approximately $19 billion, $19 billion—listen—in unpaid overtime lost each year. A study by the Economic Policy Foundation shows that there is approximately $19 billion in unpaid overtime lost each year.

I could not believe the figure. I said this is a cumulative figure over many years? No, this is lost each year, various tricks, machinations, maneuvers, various things done by employers to swindle employees out of overtime, and $19 billion per year is the estimate. This is a business group, a business group saying $19 billion.

Reasonable penalties for employers who violate the code of negotiated choice should be written into the act, given with the fact that we know from experience, we have studies to show, we have statistics to prove that there is a problem with employers swindling employees out of overtime pay. Why do we not write into the act penalties which would threaten the employer and make them be less likely to try to swindle any of the employees?

Clear language to guarantee the crediting of time worked to the pension, Social Security, and other records also must be provided. At this point there is fuzziness about if you are working and your pay is geared to your pension and geared to the amount of money you are going to get in your Social Security, there are a number of things that your actual pay in dollars drives. Those things can be corrected. The bill can take steps to make certain that there is no question about this. But they refuse to do it.

You know, we have a situation where the bully is standing in front of the babies and saying to the babies, you know we going to do it my way because I have the power to rule this hour, I am going to do what I want to do. I am not going to do anything to make obvious improvements in this bill, and that is the situation we are up against.

These are a few of the modifications that a good-faith negotiating process should accept. You know, the danger is that if you just say no to what they are proposing, many of these things are

going to be left in there, and somewhere down the road an agreement is going to be reached behind closed doors in the conference between the Senate and the House, with the White House representatives there, and all these protections that we have requested will not be put into the bill. A few compromises will be made here and there on the surface, and we are going to end up with the work force of America, including the people who want the comp time, being in a far worse position than after the passage of the legislation than they are now.

But let me get to the heart of the matter again. Beyond deceptive drafting, beyond deceptive drafting, however, there are some greater problems of substance. While public opinion polls show that families with 2 wage earners and comfortable incomes are in favor of more compensatory time, the available evidence also shows that workers earning less than $10 an hour, or its equivalent, prefer and need more take-home pay.

□ 1930

The prevailing evidence clearly shows that workers earning less than $10 an hour or its equivalent prefer and need more take-home pay. Is it hard for us to understand? Why should that be beyond the reach of the imagination of the Members of Congress. If you are making such a little amount of money, cash in your check each week means a great deal.

Nearly two-thirds of the work force is stuck in this low wage category. You are talking about two-thirds of the people out there going to work every day, and they are making $10 an hour or less.

A constructive compromise would be enhanced by exempting these members of the work force, a constructive compromise. If you really want a bipartisan agreement, then exempt these people.

I offered an amendment which would accomplish this by leaving all workers who earn less than 2.5 times the minimum wage under the Fair Labor Standards Act, leave them under it. Do not touch them. They should be protected by the Fair Labor Standards Act. Leave them there.

I have had inquiries saying, ''Congressman OWENS, we have heard that you are ready to sell us out by cooperating with these people and proposing a compromise. You wanted to have a bipartisan agreement.'' No. I say just say no, vote no, as a first starting position.

On the other hand, let me invite you laymen, working people, ordinary citizens, let me invite you into the political process. Let me invite you into the political management of this issue.

The political management of this issue requires that your voice be heard now. Public opinion needs to come in right now. Voters need to talk right now to their legislators and tell them that you wanted some people protected.

If you are going to have this, again, there is a steam roller coming. I will talk more about that in a few minutes, why it is a steam roller. And I am saying protect the most vulnerable.

The following are some other reasonable compromises that should be considered. You could consider a 2-year sunset experiment with workers at the top of the earning scale only, an experiment which is almost what I said before. Deal with the people at the top of the earnings scale. They are the ones that want to have the choice.

This could be a win-win situation for everybody. It could be a win-win situation instead of a win-lose situation at this point, a phase-in process that first includes workers at the top of the wage scale and requires Congress to revisit the issue every 2 years. That could be another compromise.

It would also provide for surveys and studies which objectively measure the impact on workers and on the overall economy. A 2-year waiver of the Fair Labor Standards Act in certain segments of the job markets where objective surveys and polls show strong worker support for the choice of compensatory time over cash.

There are a number of ways you can do this. There has been much said since the opening of the 105th Congress about a spirit of bipartisan cooperation. Since H.R. 1 is the first piece of legislation being offered this year, it represents the first opportunity to exhibit a true bipartisan effort. Democratic bipartisanship means that all segments of the American population must be represented in the negotiating process. No self-appointed oligarchy operating from a command and control mode behind closed doors in a conference will be able to produce an experiment in this critical area which is practical and also has integrity and justice for the workers preserved.

I have voiced clearly what my position is, what my fear is. Let me make it perfectly clear that this is not the position of the Democratic Party. The Democratic Caucus did not take a position. There is a statement that most of the Democratic Party people will vote no. That is not a position beyond voting no. Beyond voting no, there are no positions on this, except a substitute will be offered, may be offered. We do not know whether that is going to be accepted by the Committee on Rules or not, and then they would vote yes or no for the substitute.

At first I was in favor of voting yes for the substitute. What I am saying now is the substitute is poisoned too. If you vote yes for the substitute, you are leaving out two-thirds of the work force. As I know the substitute at this point, and I do not have a copy in my hand, the proposed substitute does not deal with exempting those people who make $10 an hour or less. It deals with a lot of other things, but it chooses not to do that.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know why exempting people who make $10 an hour or less is beyond the reach of the imagination of Democratic Party legislators. I do not know why. At this point I have not heard why.

I do know that the employers, the people who want this bill, the people who have given it the highest priority, they want the cash. They do not want fairness. They do not want a win-win situation for every level of working Americans, all the levels. They do not want that. They want cash. And they cannot tolerate a solution or compromise which says two-thirds of the work force should be exempted. That cash is what they are after, and that cash they will not be able to get.

Mr. Speaker, the question is, why can you not accept an amendment, a compromise, which will allow the most needy Americans, the hard-working Americans making $10 or less an hour, to be protected from exploitation? Why can you not allow those Americans working and making $10 or less an hour to be in a situation where they do not have to give up involuntarily the cash that they take home in their paycheck?

Why can we not have a paycheck protection act instead of this paycheck reduction act? Why can Democrats not take the initiative? Why can somebody out there not let them know? Why can the work force not let them know that we have to go beyond just saying no.

Mr. Speaker, I have a set of letters here from various unions. United Auto Workers says no, no, no, even though they are one of the best organized segments of the work force. They do not want to start eroding employee income. They say just say no.

The Teamsters say no. No, no, no. Unite says no. But they do not talk about the political management of the issue. After we say no and the majority in the House votes yes and the majority of the Senate votes yes, and it goes to a conference and the White House sends down its representatives to negotiate what the President will or will not veto, where are we?

We are in a position where on the table the only thing they have to talk about has ruled out protection for the most vulnerable workers in America.

Mr. Speaker, I could become very unpopular with people who say the virile thing to do, the manly thing to do is just say no. Do not talk about a compromise at this point. Do not propose to cooperate with these folks at all.

Well, I have been around a long time. I have been here 14 years. I am not going to walk into this ambush without my eyes open and warning all of the other workers of America. An ambush is coming. An ambush is coming.

I applaud the fact that the White House is saying just say no, they will not sign the bill as it is. They will not sign it as it is. But I have heard that language before. If they said I will under no conditions sign a bill that does this, this and this to workers, then I would be here with a different story. The White House is not saying

what their conditions are. They have their own bill and said they prefer their own bill, but it does not deal with this problem.

We want the administration to change its bill, because its bill does not say that people making $10 an hour or less should be exempted, should be exempted from any attempt to remove the protection of the Fair Labor Standards Act, or more particularly what my amendment says, people earning less than 2.5 times the minimum wage should not be involved in this process. We want the White House and Democratic caucus to take that position. American workers wake up, an ambush is coming. If you took this position now, then you would have something to negotiate.

Public opinion still is in this process. But as the days go by, as next week arrives and we have it on the floor here and people feel good about voting no and what you are left with is only two, at best, you would be left with two propositions. One is the majority bill, which they are insisting that they wanted, and the other is the substitute offered by the Democrats.

Even if everybody voted, if the majority were to allow the substitute to pass, the workers who earn $10 or less would be in trouble, because the substitute at this point is not dealing with their problem. So this is the message I am sending.

You might say, why are we in this position? Why do we not have a strong voice in favor of protecting the most vulnerable workers in any piece of legislation? Is this setting a precedent for the coming year?

As I said before, there is going to be a lot of bipartisan agreement and cooperation on education. There may be bipartisan agreement and cooperation on the environment. There are a number of areas where the signal has been given, and we are going to try to work together to come up with meaningful legislation. I applaud that. I applaud where we are going on education. I have never felt better about education and public policymaking with respect to education. I learned today my own State of New York, the legislature is proposing as much as a 50-percent increase in State aid to education. This is what President Clinton has done. This is what the bully pulpit, even though the Federal Government is not responsible for education and their expenditures only represent about 7 percent of the total expenditures for education, when the President speaks, when the bully pulpit is in operation, it stimulates what happens at the State level. It stimulates generosity. People's eyes come open. The vision of the White House, it is infectious. It contaminates people. The wonderful thing about leadership in America is when you have strong leadership they pick it up in the capitals of the States and city councils, and that is what has been lacking on the issue of education before President Clinton decided to take his initiatives.

Over and over again he emphasized the fact he is making education the No. 1 priority. In his budget he made education a No. 1 priority. As I said before on this floor, I am proud of the fact that the Congressional Black Caucus budget last year proposed a 25-percent increase in Federal aid to education. People said that is absurd, you will never get that. That is pie in the sky.

Well, the President is proposing a 20-percent increase this year, 20 percent. That is pretty good. An example set by the Congressional Black Caucus budget is being followed.

But why now are we moving on education at such a progressive, productive way? We are going to take care of the kids, maybe, because this could all degenerate into headlines and a Potemkin village approach where it looks like they are doing something but the commitment never comes. You do not know, until the appropriation committees act, what is going to happen.

Let us assume this is going to be real, we are not going to perpetuate a fraud on the American people in terms of the position of both parties here in Washington on education. Let us assume it is real.

We are taking care of the children of the workers, giving them some better opportunities, safer school buildings, adequate equipment in the lab. We are going to move to really try to provide decent educational opportunities. But the same child has to go home, if their parents, as you can see, two-thirds of the work force is in this condition, and have their parents putting less food on the table because they do not have the cash.

The same children will have problems with their clothing because the cash is not there to buy the clothing. The cash is not there to pay for higher rent. Cash is very important for people who are in certain income brackets. They do not have the luxury of saying I want to improve my quality of life by taking more time off to spend with my kids. They have to rush out and try to get another job and another job and another job. You are placing them in greater jeopardy.

One of the things that study after study shows is that low income parents spend less time than anybody else with their children. They are often in situations where the pressure is so much greater that you generate a number of problems that would not be generated if parents had more time to spend with their children. But they have to work.

They have no choice. If you take away the overtime pay that many of them depend on, then you are only complicating matters more. If a person instead of making cash on his job for overtime has to go to another job, he has the travel time. You have a whole set of problems generated by having a second job. And on the second job of course he is making regular pay, there is no overtime. There is no advantage in his skills and experience, and the labor that he puts in above 40 hours in a given week, it is not the same to have to go get another job, if the jobs are available.

Mr. Speaker, I will not get into all that. But why are we doing this? Why are we changing the laws in ways that oppress and make life more difficult for the poorest people?

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The plain, blunt answer: in America, in a democracy, the voters determine what happens; the people who vote are always respected.

The people who vote eventually will influence public policy. In the last election, we had a great disappointment. Only 49 percent of the people eligible to vote came out to vote. And of the people not voting, the largest number were in these working class categories. The people who make $10 or less an hour were the ones who did not vote.

We have study after study confirming the fact that the people who vote regularly and the most are the people who have the highest incomes. The richest people in America go out to vote all the time. As you go down the income level, there is a clear correlation.

The rich understand. People who are rich and have power understand that their vote is important. They think they have other ways to impact on the government. They make contributions. The same people who make those contributions never hesitate to go out and vote, because they know for them it is just symbolism. Their dollars and their contributions have a great impact on their single vote, but they understand what a democracy is all about.

The people in Poland understand what a democracy is all about. Poland has a problem with its economy. Poland's budget for the government is a very meager government under a lot of pressure. But the pensioners in Poland, the people who are on social security and pensions, they are getting a far bigger bite of the budget than anywhere else in the world, almost, because they vote. They have the power of their vote over the government and their needs are being met because that government knows that they will come down. Forty percent of the electorate of Poland is involved with pensions and so forth, so they know that they can bring the government down.

Americans have the same option. The 51 percent who did not go out to vote can have an impact on policy. They do not have to have the Fair Labor Standards Act gutted to their disadvantage. They do not have to have people ignoring their interests if they go out to vote. It is simple. You do not have to be a genius to figure out why there is a steamroller going to take away from the workers who need the pay most and give it to the employers, more cash to them, in the name of helping the upper income and the middle income voters who want that flexibility.

People who are really in those categories, the upper income and the middle income categories, there are other

ways that they can get the flexibility without this law. A few may be stuck in the situation where the employees of large corporations do not have the flexibility and they need a change in the law, but we can accommodate them.

What we are going to have is a situation where pressure is being applied to every lawmaker by the people who did go out to vote and by the employers with the cash who want more cash, and they will push the steamroller, unless the working people out there wake up right now and get to your legislators and remind them that you might not have gone out to vote last time, but you have the right to vote still, and you are going to wake up and come to your senses.

I despise, I have great contempt for people who do not vote. People who do not participate in the voter process, I really have no use for them, but I represent a lot of them and I am sworn to represent everybody, so I will protect your interests despite the fact that you did not vote. But that is the problem. Understand the problem.

You do not have to talk in diplomatic language about this. The problem is that there is a perception in the power circles, whether it is the House of Representatives or the Senate or the White House, that they must please the people who vote, and we clearly have a situation where those who are jeopardized by this H.R. 1 did not vote in large numbers.

I was once the commissioner of a community development agency, the antipoverty program for New York City, and we used to have workshops. At one point we had workshops on voting, the importance of voting. Poor people must vote. Part of poverty can be resolved, and you could have some chance of changing public policies to create better opportunities if you vote.

In the workshop we had a proposal that people who do not vote should be put in jail. There was a great outcry, a great outcry about how unjust that was. I put that in there, in the trading package, because there were some countries at that time, I do not know whether Italy still does it or not, but there are a few countries in the world where it is against the law not to vote. They consider it is that important, everybody's duty and, of course, most of the democracies in the world, especially those in Europe, have a much higher voter turnout than we do. In the South African region you have an unprecedented 90 percent turnout. The disenfranchised people, in their first election we had a more than 90 percent turnout. We had a 49 percent turnout in our last election for President and other offices.

So if you take voting seriously, then you will not have a great outcry about putting people in jail if they do not vote. What it demonstrated to me was, you are not serious about voting, you are worried about going to jail. The injustice of going to jail is not the question. The question is, why do you not vote?

In New York City we have huge housing projects in my district where the voting booth is right there in the middle of the housing project. It takes a person no more than 30 minutes to get out of their house, go down, walk over, vote, especially since the lines are not very long. So as a result of folks year after year not doing this, you have a set of attitudes and approaches that have developed, a way of operating politically that is now based on contempt for the poor, contempt for the low-wage earners.

It is not hard to figure out what is happening. The steamroller will roll right over us, so leaders of organized labor and various people who do represent these workers, those who did not vote, must join with me and understand we represent everybody, not just those who vote. Somebody must protect those who are not protected. What is happening here in the floor, or what is happening here in this process of H.R. 1 rolling past us, is that nobody is stepping forward to protect those workers.

We can take care of the needs of those who are middle class, middle income, one more time for their children, we can lift the Fair Labor Standards Act for you. At the same time we can keep the Fair Labor Standards Act to protect the others. What is wrong with that kind of compromise? What is the matter? Why must we insist on beating those who are weakest? And those who do not vote are weak.

The same people who do not vote certainly do not contribute to political campaigns. If they are not interested enough to go out and take 30 minutes to vote, they certainly are not going to put a dime into a political campaign.

They are weak, they are misguided, they are un-American in the greatest sense of the word. Not to participate in the process, not to vote makes you un-American, but they still have to be protected. We hope to have a redeposition. Our democracy will not survive if these people continue to be alienated, outside of the system, so they must be protected.

There is a pattern in other ways. I have talked about the CPI, the consumer price index, and all of the discussion in Washington: Let us tamper with the consumer price index, because the consumer price index decides what the cost-of-living increase is going to be for people on Social Security or people in a number of other jobs. The COLA's, we call them.

Your COLA was in danger this time last week, grave danger. There was a lot of talk. The President said he would have to take a look at it, Senator MOYNIHAN of New York, NY, liberal New York, MOYNIHAN, the great defender of the poor said yes, we ought to take a look at it. There are a lot of people who want to take a look at the CPI, the consumer price index, so that we can perhaps tamper with it, revamp it and bring down the cost of living which gives people on Social Security a few more dollars every year. As the cost of living goes up, they get a few more dollars. We almost lost those few dollars or we almost had a situation where they were compromised.

I am here to announce good news tonight. The badgering of the poor, the harassment of the poor will not take place through this medium. The President announced he will have nothing to do with it. He is not going to go forward with a CPI panel. They are not going to have a commission or a panel to look at the consumer price index. Thank you, Mr. President.

We are going forward this year, at least, without a panel to tamper with and sabotage the consumer price index. It may happen in the future, but the pressure has been so great. Again, the steamroller was rolling. Everybody this time last week was on board, everybody this time last week empowered. The oligarchy was moving. They had made a decision that they were going to deal with the consumer price index.

This week it is different, because there was a big outcry. The gentleman from Missouri [Mr. GEPHARDT], House Democratic leader, refused to embrace the idea, and labor stood with him. There was an outcry, even by some Republicans and conservative Democrats. They met fierce resistance in meetings with organized labor, in meetings with the American Association of Retired Persons [AARP], conservative Democrats, and even some Republicans who did not want to go forward with punishing the poor by taking away the extra pennies they get when they get a COLA as a result of the cost of living going up and being measured by the consumer price index.

So we can celebrate, and I end on that note, because it is important to celebrate and understand how it happened. It did not happen by magic; there was no decree that came down from heaven. It is the public opinion process operating, despite the fact that you are not protected by the fact that it is well-known you did not go out to vote. The people who are the most vulnerable have advocates. The people who are most vulnerable have representatives who are committed to represent them, despite the fact that they did not vote.

This process, we hope, will protect you for a little while longer, but the great appeal is for everybody to understand the steamroller in Washington this year will be moving again and again against the work force.

Last year we had extremist proposals about eliminating certain parts of OSHA to protect workers; we had a big cut in the apparatus for negotiating agreements, labor agreements. Everywhere that labor existed they were under attack, and even now, those attacks are being readied again. Davis-Bacon is under attack again. We will talk more about that later.

But as the ranking member of the committee on work force protections, I hope that all of the Members will hear my message that the people who are the working people in America, certainly those who are making $10 or less an hour, need protection. Do not let H.R. 1 pass. Do not let the paycheck ripoff act go through. We want a paycheck protection act instead.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. KINGSTON (at the request of Mr. ARMEY) for today on account of attending a funeral.

Mr. MCHUGH (at the request of Mr. ARMEY) for today after 2 p.m. on account of official business.

Mr. MCINTYRE (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today on account of official business.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

The following Members (at the request of Mr. MANZULLO) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:

Mr. BEREUTER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GEKAS, for 5 minutes each day, on March 17 and 18.

Mr. QUINN, for 5 minutes, today.

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

By unanimous consent, permission to revise and extend remarks was granted to:

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, and to include extraneous material, notwithstanding the fact that it exceeds two pages of the RECORD and is estimated by the Public Printer to cost $674.00.

The following Members (at the request of Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts) and to include extraneous matter:

Mr. SERRANO.
Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas.
Mr. POSHARD.
Mr. RAHALL.
Mr. BONIOR.
Mr. VISCLOSKY.
Mr. CONDIT.
Mr. MORAN of Virginia.
Ms. HARMAN.
Mr. TOWNS.
Mr. MILLER of California.
Ms. VELAZQUEZ.
Mr. KLECZKA.
Mr. FROST.
Mr. PASCRELL.
Mr. MENENDEZ.
Mr. LEVIN.
Mr. BARCIA.
Mr. RANGEL.
Mr. GEJDENSON.
Mr. PALLONE.
Mr. MATSUI.
Mr. HOYER.
Mr. LIPINSKI.
Ms. MCCARTHY of Missouri.

The following Members (at the request of Mr. MANZULLO) and to include extraneous matter:

Mr. COBURN.
Mr. KINGSTON.
Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.
Mrs. FOWLER.
Mr. OXLEY.
Mr. DELAY.
Mr. RADANOVICH.
Mr. GINGRICH in two instances.
Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania.
Mr. SCARBOROUGH.
Mr. BARTON of Texas.
Mr. PORTMAN.
Mr. WOLF.

The following Members (at the request of Mr. OWENS) and to include extraneous matter:

Mr. MARKEY in two instances.
Ms. PELOSI.
Mr. MCINNIS.
Mr. PACKARD.
Mr. STUMP.
Mr. LEWIS of California.
Mr. GREEN.
Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts.
Ms. DUNN.
Ms. SANCHEZ.
Mr. PASCRELL.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 57 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Monday, March 17, 1997, at 2 p.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XXIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

2233. A letter from the Agricultural Marketing Service, Administrator, transmitting the Service's final rule—Grapes Grown in a Designated Area of Southeastern California; Assessment Rate (Docket No. FV96–925–1 FIR) received March 12, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

2234. A letter from the Agricultural Marketing Service, Administrator, transmitting the Service's final rule—Olives Grown in California; Assessment Rate (Docket No. FV96–932–4 FIR) received March 12, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

2235. A letter from the Agricultural Marketing Service, Administrator, transmitting the Service's final rule—Onions Grown in South Texas; Assessment Rate (Docket No. FV96–959–1 FIR) received March 12, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

2236. A letter from the Secretary of Transportation, transmitting a report of a violation of the Anti-Deficiency Act which occurred in the Coast Guard's acquisition, construction and improvements [AC&I) appropriation, U.S. Treasury symbol 699/30240, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1517(b); to the Committee on Appropriations.

2237. A letter from the Export-Import Bank of the United States, President and Chairman, transmitting a report involving United States exports to the Republic of Korea, pursuant to 12 U.S.C. 635(b)(3)(i); to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

2238. A letter from the Federal Communications Commission, Managing Director, transmitting the Commission's final rule—Amendment of Section 73.202(b), Table of Allotments, FM Broadcast Stations (Nikiski, Alaska) (MM Docket No. 96–50, RM–8768) received March 11, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2239. A letter from the Federal Communications Commission, Managing Director, transmitting the Commission's final rule—Amendment of Section 73.202(b) Table of Allotments, FM Broadcast Stations (Weaverville, California) (MM Docket No. 96–168, RM–8836) received March 11, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2240. A letter from the Federal Communications Commission, Managing Director, transmitting the Commission's final rule—Amendment of Section 73.202(b), Table of Allotments, FM Broadcast Stations (Greensboro, Alabama) (MM Docket No. 96–176, RM–8851) received March 11, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2241. A letter from the Federal Communications Commission, Managing Director, transmitting the Commission's final rule—Amendment of Section 73.202(b), Table of Allotments, FM Broadcast Stations (Jupiter and Hobe Sound, Florida) (MM Docket No. 96–205, RM–8862) received March 11, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2242. A letter from the Federal Communications Commission, Managing Director, transmitting the Commission's final rule—Amendment of Section 73.202(b), Table of Allotments, FM Broadcast Stations (Riverdale and Huron, California) (MM Docket No. 96–122, RM–8795, RM–8860) received March 11, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2243. A letter from the Federal Communications Commission, Managing Director, transmitting the Commission's final rule—Amendment of Section 73.202(b), Table of Allotments, FM Broadcast Stations (Frederiksted and Charlotte Amalie, Virgin Islands) (MM Docket No. 96–43, RM–8754, RM–8830) received March 11, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2244. A letter from the Federal Communications Commission, Managing Director, transmitting the Commission's final rule—Responsible Accounting Officer Letter 20, Uniform Accounting for Postretirement Benefits Other Than Pensions in Part 32; Amendments to Part 65, Interstate Rate of Return Prescription Procedures and Methodologies, Subpart G, Rate Base (CC Docket No. 96–22) received March 11, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2245. A letter from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, Chair, transmitting the Commission's final rule—Open Access Same-Time Information System and Standards of Conduct (Docket No. RM95–9–001; Order No. 889–A) received March 11, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2246. A letter from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, Chair, transmitting the Commission's final rule—Promoting Wholesale Competition Through Open Access Nondiscriminatory Transmission Services by Public Utilities; Recovery of Stranded Costs by Public Utilities and Transmitting Utilities (Docket Nos. RM95–8–001 and RM94–7–002; Order No. 888–A) received March 11, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2247. A letter from the Food and Drug Administration, Director, Regulations Policy Management Staff, Office of Policy, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Cold, Cough, Allergy, Bronchodilator, and Antiasthmatic Drug Products for Over-the-Counter Human Use; Amendment of Monograph for OTC Bronchodilator Drug Products; Correction (Docket No. 94N–0247) (RIN: 0910–AA01) received March 12, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2248. A letter from the Food and Drug Administration, Director, Regulations Policy Management Staff, Office of Policy, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Indirect Food Additives: Adjuvants, Production Aids, and Sanitizers (Docket No. 93F–0028) received March 12, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2249. A letter from the Food and Drug Administration, Director, Regulations Policy Management Staff, Office of Policy, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Indirect Food Additives: Paper and Paperboard Components (Docket No. 96F–0242) received March 13, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2250. A letter from the Consumer Products Safety Commission, Chairman, transmitting a report of activities under the Freedom of Information Act for the calendar year 1996, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552(e); to the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight.

2251. A letter from the Department of Energy, Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration, transmitting a report of activities under the Freedom of Information Act for the calendar year 1996, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552(e); to the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight.

2252. A letter from the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science, Executive Director, transmitting the fiscal year 1996 report under the Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act [FMFIA] of 1982 and the Inspector General Act, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3512(c)(3); to the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight.

2253. A letter from the National Indian Gaming Commission, Acting Chair, transmitting a report of activities under the Freedom of Information Act for the calendar year 1996, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552(e); to the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight.

2254. A letter from the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation, Executive Director, transmitting a report of activities under the Freedom of Information Act for the calendar year 1996, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552(e); to the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight.

2255. A letter from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Deputy Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Maximum Retainable Bycatch Percentages (Docket No. 961220363–7038–02; I.D. 120296B) (RIN: 0648–AI65) received March 12, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Resources.

2256. A letter from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Inshore Component Pollock in the Aleutian Islands Subarea (Docket No. 961107312–7021–02; I.D. 030497A) received March 12, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Resources.

2257. A letter from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Summer Flounder Fishery; Final Specifications for 1997; Adjustment to 1997 State Quotas; Commercial Quota Harvested for Delaware (Docket No. 961210346–7035–02; I.D. 102596B) (RIN: 0648–xx76) received March 12, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Resources.

2258. A letter from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Acting Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Framework Adjustments to the Northeast Multispecies and American Lobster Fishery Management Plans (Docket No. 970221036–7036–01; I.D. 012797D) (RIN: 0648–AJ48) received March 12, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Resources.

2259. A letter from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator for Ocean Services and Coastal Zone Management, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Coastal Zone Management Program Regulations and National Estuarine Research Reserve System Regulations (RIN: 0648–AJ24) received March 13, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Resources.

2260.A letter from the Boy Scouts of America, transmitting the Boy Scouts of America 1996 report to the Nation, pursuant to 36 U.S.C. 28; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

2261. A letter from the Department of Transportation, General Counsel, transmitting the Department's final rule—Policy on Transit Joint Development (Federal Transit Administration) (RIN: 2132–xx00) received March 13, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2262. A letter from the Department of Transportation, General Counsel, transmitting the Department's final rule—Special Local Regulations; Miami Beach, Florida (U.S. Coast Guard) (CGD07 97–008) (RIN: 2115–AE46) received March 13, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2263. A letter from the Department of Transportation, General counsel, transmitting the Department's seven final rules—Special Local Regulations/Regattas (U.S. Coast Guard) (RIN: 2115–AE46) received March 13, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2264. A letter from the Department of Transportation, General Counsel, transmitting the Department's 101 final rules—Safety/Security Zones (U.S. Coast Guard) (RIN: 2115–AA97) received March 13, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2265. A letter from the Department of Transportation, General Counsel, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; AlliedSignal Inc. TFE731 Series Turbofan Engines (Federal Aviation Administration) (Docket No. 96–ANE–08; Amdt. 39–9926; AD 97–04–03) (RIN: 2120–AA64) received March 13, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2266. A letter from the Department of Transportation, General Counsel, transmitting the Department's final rule—IFR Altitudes; Miscellaneous Amendments (Federal Aviation Administration) (Docket No. 28833; Amdt. No. 401) (RIN: 2120–AA63) received March 13, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2267. A letter from the Department of Transportation, General Counsel, transmitting the Department's final rule—Revision of Class E5 Airspace; Sawyer Airport, Gwinn, MI (Federal Aviation Administration) (Airspace Docket No. 96–AGL–19) (RIN: 2120–AA66) received March 13, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2268. A letter from the Department of Transportation, General Counsel, transmitting the Department's final rule—Amendment to Class E Airspace; Columbia, SC (Federal Aviation Administration) (Airspace Docket No. 96–ASO–38) (RIN: 2120–AA66) received March 13, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2269. A letter from the Department of Transportation, General Counsel, transmitting the Department's final rule—Establishment of Class E5 Airspace; Sawyer Airport, Gwinn, MI (Federal Aviation Administration) (Airspace Docket No. 96–AGL–19) (RIN: 2120–AA66) received March 13, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2270. A letter from the Department of Transportation, General Counsel, transmitting the Department's final rule—Establishment of Class E2 Airspace; Sawyer Airport, Gwinn, MI (Federal Aviation Administration) (Airspace Docket No. 96–AGL–18) (RIN: 2120–AA66) received March 13, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2271. A letter from the Internal Revenue Service, Chief, Regulations Unit, transmitting the Service's final rule—Last-in, First-out Inventories (Rev. Rul. 97–15) received March 12, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. ARCHER: Committee on Ways and Means. H.R. 968. A bill to amend title XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to permit a waiver of the prohibition of offering nurse aide training and competency evaluation programs in certain nursing facilities; with amendments (Rept. 105–23 Pt. 1). Ordered to be printed.

TIME LIMITATION OF REFERRED BILL

Pursuant to clause 5 of rule X the following action was taken by the Speaker:

H.R. 968. Referral to the Committee on Commerce extended for a period ending not later than March 18, 1997.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 5 of rule X and clause 4 of rule XXII, public bills and resolutions were introduced and severally referred as follows:

By Mr. KLECZKA (for himself and Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts):

H.R. 1052. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to provide that changes to the Consumer Price Index used in making increases in Social Security benefits shall be restricted to changes specifically authorized by law; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. OXLEY (for himself, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. BLILEY, Mr. GILLMOR, Mr.

CRAPO, Ms. FURSE, Mr. LARGENT, Mr. GANSKE, and Mr. BOUCHER):

H.R. 1053. A bill to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to eliminate legal impediments to quotation in decimals for securities transactions in order to protect investors and to promote efficiency, competition, and capital formation; to the Committee on Commerce.

By Mr. COX of California (for himself and Mr. WHITE):

H.R. 1054. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to establish a national policy against State and local interference with interstate commerce on the Internet or interactive computer services, and to exercise congressional jurisdiction over interstate commerce by establishing a moratorium on the imposition of exactions that would interfere with the free flow of commerce via the Internet, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. DEFAZIO (for himself, Mr. FILNER, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. NORTON, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. ARCHER, Mr. ANDREWS, Mrs. MINK of Hawaii, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. GREEN, Mr. RUSH, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. EVANS, and Mr. FOGLIETTA):

H.R. 1055. A bill to establish within the National Institutes of Health and agency to be known as the National Center for Integral Medicine, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce.

By Mr. CHRISTENSEN (for himself and Mr. WELLER):

H.R. 1056. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a credit or refund of motor fuel excise taxes on fuel used by the motor of a highway vehicle to operate certain power takeoff equipment on such vehicle; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BURTON of Indiana:

H.R. 1057. A bill to designate the building in Indianapolis, IN, which houses the operations of the Circle City Station Post Office as the ''Andrew Jacobs, Jr. Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight.

By Mr. BURTON of Indiana (for himself and Mr. PEASE):

H.R. 1058. A bill to designate the facility of the U.S. Postal Service under construction at 150 West Margaret Drive in Terre Haute, IN, as the ''John T. Myers Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight.

By Mr. BACHUS:

H.R. 1059. A bill to amend the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act to reduce the cost of credit, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

By Mr. BURR of North Carolina (for himself, Mr. CONDIT, Mr. DELAY, Mr. MCCOLLUM, Mr. NETHERCUTT, Mr. CANADY of Florida, Mr. ANDREWS, Mr. DEAL of Georgia, Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. HASTERT, Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. KLUG, Mr. LIVINGSTON, Mr. SPRATT, Mr. MCINTOSH, Ms. FURSE, Mr. SAXTON, Mr. COBURN, Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. EHLERS, Mr. BARTON of Texas, Mr. NORWOOD, and Mr. MILLER of Florida):

H.R. 1060. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to authorize compounding of drugs and devices under certain circumstances; to the Committee on Commerce.

By Mr. CANADY of Florida (for himself, Mr. BOUCHER, Mr. COOKSEY, Mr. EVANS, Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. FROST, Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, Mr. HEFNER, Mr. LIPINSKI, Ms. JACKSON-LEE, Mr. MASCARA, Mr. SHADEGG, Mr. WALSH, and Mr. NETHERCUTT):

H.R. 1061. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to eliminate the time limitation on benefits for immunosuppressive drugs under the Medicare Program; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. COBURN (for himself, Mr. BARR of Georgia, Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland, Mr. BARTON of Texas, Mr. BILBRAY, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BRYANT, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. CANADY of Florida, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mrs. CHENOWETH, Mr. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. COMBEST, Mr. COOKSEY, Mr. CRANE, Mrs. CUBIN, Mr. DAVIS of Virginia, Mr. DELAY, Mr. DICKEY, Mr. DOOLITTLE, Mr. DUNCAN, Ms. DUNN of Washington, Mrs. FOWLER, Mr. GANSKE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. HASTERT, Mr. HAYWORTH, Mr. HEFLEY, Mr. HILLEARY, Mr. HOEKSTRA, Mr. HOSTETTLER, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. HUTCHINSON, Mr. SAM JOHNSON, Mr. JONES, Mr. KINGSTON, Mr. KLUG, Mr. LARGENT, Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky, Mr. LINDER, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. LUCAS of Oklahoma, Mr. MCCRERY, Mr. MCINNIS, Mr. MCINTOSH, Ms. MOLINARI, Mrs. MYRICK, Mr. NETHERCUTT, Mr. NEUMANN, Mr. NORWOOD, Mr. PARKER, Mr. PICKERING, Mr. POMBO, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. RYUN, Mr. SALMON, Mr. SAXTON, Mr. SHADEGG, Mr. SCARBOROUGH, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mrs. LINDA SMITH of Washington, Mr. SOUDER, Mr. STEARNS, Mr. STUMP, Mr. TALENT, Mr. TIAHRT, Mr. WAMP, Mr. WATKINS, Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma, Mr. WELDON of Florida, and Mr. WICKER):

H.R. 1062. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act with respect to preventing the transmission of the human immunodeficiency virus—commonly known as HIV—and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce.

By Mr. EHRLICH:

H.R. 1063. A bill to amend the Webb-Kenyon Act to allow any State, territory, or possession of the United States to bring an action in Federal court to enjoin violations of that act or to enforce the laws of such State, territory, or possession with respect to such violations; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. FILNER:

H.R. 1064. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to extend the duration of the pilot program providing for interest buy down authority, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. GILCHREST:

H.R. 1065. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide that the actual deferral percentage test shall not apply in determining whether an arrangement for restaurant employees is a qualified cash or deferred arrangement; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas:

H.R. 1066. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide that an individual who receives a passing grade in an examination for entrance into the competitive service shall, if such individual is a welfare recipient, be granted additional points above the individual's earned rating; to the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight.

By Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts (for himself, Mr. HANSEN, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. BACHUS, Mr. DELLUMS, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Ms. NORTON, Ms. JACKSON-LEE, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, Mr. KASICH, Mr. FATTAH, Ms. KAPTUR, and Mr. SMITH of New Jersey):

H.R. 1067. A bill to prohibit the advertising of distilled spirits on radio and television to the Committee on Commerce.

By Mr. LIPINSKI (for himself, Mr. COSTELLO, and Mr. POSHARD):

H.R. 1068. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the limitations on the number of taxpayers who may have medical savings accounts; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. LOWEY:

H.R. 1069. A bill to permit individuals to continue health plan coverage of services while participating in approved clinical studies; to the Committee on Commerce.

By Mrs. LOWEY (for herself and Mrs. MORELLA):

H.R. 1070. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to extend the program of research on breast cancer; to the Committee on Commerce.

By Mrs. LOWEY:

H.R. 1071. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a credit for employers for certain costs incurred to combat violence against women; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. MALONEY of New York:

H.R. 1072. A bill to establish a commission to investigate certain policies and procedures with respect to the military justice system, including policies and procedures with respect to the investigation of reports of sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, and unlawful gender discrimination; to the Committee on National Security.

By Mrs. MEEK of Florida:

H.R. 1073. A bill to amend chapter 89 of title 5, United States Code, to encourage the use of generic instead of nongeneric drugs; to the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight.

By Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD:

H.R. 1074. A bill to promote the fitting of firearms with child safety locks; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. PAYNE (for himself, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. MANTON, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Ms. DEGETTE, Ms. NORTON, Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts, Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. BORSKI, and Mrs. MEEK of Florida):

H.R. 1075. A bill to limit the sale or export of plastic bullets to the United Kingdom; to the Committee on International Relations.

By Ms. PELOSI (for herself, Mr. BALDACCI, Mr. BARRETT of Wisconsin, Mr. BEREUTER, Mr. BOUCHER, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. DEFAZIO, Ms. DEGETTE, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. EVANS, Mr. FARR of California, Mr. FOGLIETTA, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. FROST, Mr. GEPHARDT, Mr. GREEN, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Ms. JACKSON-LEE, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut, Mrs. KENNELLY of Connecticut, Mr. LAFALCE, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MARTINEZ, Mrs. MEEK of Florida, Ms. MOLINARI, Mrs. MORELLA, Ms. NORTON, Mr. OLVER, Mr. OWENS, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. ROMERO-BARCELO, Mr. ROTHMAN, Mr. SABO, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. STARK, Mr.

TORRES, Ms. WATERS, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. YATES, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, and Mrs. LOWEY):

H.R. 1076. A bill to amend the Legal Services Corporation Act to prescribe an income rule for determining if a client who is a victim of domestic violence is eligible for assistance; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. QUINN (for himself, Mr. ACKERMAN, Mr. GILMAN, Mr. MANTON, Mr. BOEHLERT, Mr. SOLOMON, Mr. FORBES, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. MCHUGH, Mr. PAXON, Mr. WALSH, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. KELLY, Mr. LAZIO of New York, Mr. TOWNS, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. LAFALCE, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. MCNULTY, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. NADLER, and Mr. HOUGHTON):

H.R. 1077. A bill to stay implementation of the plan for allocation of health care resources of the Department of Veterans Affairs until the Secretary of Veterans Affairs certifies that the Secretary, in developing such plan, took into account certain medical and nonmedical factors of veterans residing within each region to be served by a veterans integrated services network; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. RIVERS:

H.R. 1078. A bill to require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to prescribe a rule that prohibits the importation for disposal of polychlorinated biphenyls at concentrations of 50 parts per million or greater; to the Committee on Commerce.

By Mr. SANDERS (for himself, Mr. BONIOR, Mr. MILLER of California, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, and Mr. SPRATT):

H.R. 1079. A bill to require the inclusion of provisions relating to worker rights and environmental standards in any trade agreement entered into under any future trade negotiating authority; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SAXTON:

H.R. 1080. A bill to study the high rate of cancer among children in Dover Township, NJ, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce.

By Mr. SMITH of Michigan:

H.R. 1081. A bill to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to reduce the influence of multicandidate political committees in elections for Federal office; to the Committee on House Oversight.

By Mr. YOUNG of Alaska (for himself and Mr. MILLER of California):

H.R. 1082. A bill to amend the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Resources.

By Mr. GOODLING (for himself, Mr. RIGGS, Mr. MARTINEZ, and Mr. KILDEE):

H. Con. Res. 48. Concurrent resolution recognizing the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the first nutrition program for the elderly under the Older Americans Act of 1965; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. HOYER:

H. Con. Res. 49. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. LANTOS (for himself, Mr. GILMAN, Mr. ACKERMAN, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. DEUTSCH, Mr. FILNER, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. FROST, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. ROTHMAN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. SHERMAN, and Mr. WAXMAN):

H. Con. Res. 50. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of the Congress regarding the status of the investigation of the bombing of the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires in 1992; to the Committee on International Relations.

By Ms. RIVERS:

H. Res. 97. Resolution amending the Rules of the House of Representatives to require that the expenses of special-order speeches be paid from the Members representational allowance of the Members making such speeches; to the Committee on Rules.

By Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania (for himself, Mr. PICKETT, Mr. MCHALE, Mr. MURTHA, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. HALL of Texas, Mr. SKELTON, Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi, Mr. SPENCE, Mr. GIBBONS, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland, Mr. CONDIT, Mr. GINGRICH, Mr. ANDREWS, Mr. SAM JOHNSON, Mr. HYDE, Mr. CUNNINGHAM, Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. SOLOMON, Mr. BONO, Mr. SAXTON, Mr. YOUNG of Florida, Mr. MCDADE, Mr. HEFLEY, Mr. RILEY, Mr. STUMP, Mr. EVERETT, Mr. MCCRERY, Mr. COX of California, Mr. SHADEGG, Mr. MCKEON, Mr. PAPPAS, Mr. SCARBOROUGH, Mr. SISISKY, Ms. HARMAN, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. DUNCAN, Mrs. FOWLER, Mr. THORNBERRY, Mr. GILMAN, Mr. BATEMAN, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. HANSEN, Mr. STENHOLM, Mr. DELAY, Mr. LIVINGSTON, Mr. TALENT, Mr. QUINN, Mr. CLEMENT, Mr. REYES, Mr. TRAFICANT, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, and Mr. ISTOOK):

H. Res. 98. Resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives with respect to limits in any bilateral or multilateral agreement on certain missile defense systems of the United States; to the Committee on International Relations.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 4 of rule XXII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 28: Mr. SNYDER.

H.R. 58: Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. CUNNINGHAM, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. FRANKS of New Jersey, and Mr. NADLER.

H.R. 66: Mr. LARGENT, Mr. BISHOP, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. FOGLIETTA, Mr. PASTOR, Mr. METCALF, Mrs. CARSON, and Mr. BARCIA of Michigan.

H.R. 68: Mr. KLECZKA.

H.R. 87: Mr. JONES and Mr. SHADEGG.

H.R. 96: Mr. GOSS, Mr. BACHUS, Mr. NETHERCUTT, Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska, and Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 113: Mr. SHAYS.

H.R. 123: Mrs. LINDA SMITH of Washington, Mr. YOUNG of Florida, and Mr. CAMP.

H.R. 135: Mr. MCHALE.

H.R. 136: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mrs. MEEK of Florida, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mrs. THURMAN, and Mr. SHAW.

H.R. 143: Mr. FAZIO of California, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. CALVERT, Ms. HARMAN, Mr. MCKEON, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. LANTOS, Mr. DOOLEY of California, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, and Mr. CAPPS.

H.R. 146: Mr. STUPAK, Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota, Mr. STEARNS, Ms. LOFGREN, and Mr. KANJORSKI.

H.R. 192: Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. HOBSON, Mr. METCALF, Ms. FURSE, Mr. SANDERS, and Mr. WAMP.

H.R. 198: Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN.

H.R. 200: Ms. MOLINARI and Mr. KING of New York.

H.R. 216: Mr. METCALF, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Ms. MOLINARI.

H.R. 253: Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, and Mr. EVANS.

H.R. 255: Mr. CRAMER and Mr. MASCARA.

H.R. 279: Mr. TAYLOR of North Carolina, Mr. TURNER, Mrs. CHENOWETH, Ms. NORTON, Mr. DELAY, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. GILLMOR, Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. MCHUGH, Mr. MURTHA, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. DOYLE, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. COBURN, Mr. BALDACCI, Mr. HOYER, Mr. STARK, Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. TIAHRT.

H.R. 292: Mr. DELAY.

H.R. 306: Ms. FURSE and Mr. HASTINGS of Florida.

H.R. 312: Mr. MANZULLO.

H.R. 331: Mr. JONES.

H.R. 339: Mr. WICKER, Mrs. EMERSON, and Mr. WATKINS.

H.R. 343: Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland and Mr. HAYWORTH.

H.R. 345: Mr. GRAHAM.

H.R. 366: Ms. RIVERS.

H.R. 371: Mr. FAZIO of California and Mr. HERGER.

H.R. 408: Mr. CASTLE, Mr. KINGSTON, and Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 414: Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. METCALF, Mr. SANDERS, and Mr. WAMP.

H.R. 417: Mr. PASTOR, Ms. DELAURO, and Mr. MANTON.

H.R. 419: Mrs. LOWEY.

H.R. 420: Mrs. THURMAN, Mr. FROST, Mr. HORN, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. MCNULTY, Mr. CARDIN, and Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts.

H.R. 426: Mr. LATOURETTE, Mr. QUINN, Mr. HEFLEY, and Mr. PASTOR.

H.R. 446: Mr. FAZIO of California and Mrs. THURMAN.

H.R. 457: Mr. UPTON, Mr. EHLERS, Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania, and Mr. HOUGHTON.

H.R. 459: Mr. SAXTON.

H.R. 492: Mr. ACKERMAN, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. BLAGOJEVICH, Ms. CHRISTIAN-GREEN, Mr. COYNE, Mr. FARR of California, Ms. FURSE, Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. LIPINSKI, Ms. LOFGREN, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Ms. NORTON, Mr. SHERMAN, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mr. TIERNEY, and Mr. VENTO.

H.R. 498: Mr. MINGE.

H.R. 501: Mrs. LOWEY.

H.R. 519: Ms. MOLINARI, Ms. RIVERS, and Mr. DINGELL.

H.R. 548: Mr. BOEHLERT, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. MCHUGH, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. HINCHEY, and Mr. MANTON.

H.R. 577: Mr. PASTOR, Mr. CLEMENT, Mr. FROST, Ms. LOFGREN, and Mr. DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 586: Mr. BLAGOJEVICH, Mr. CLAY, Mr. EHRLICH, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, Mr. GOODE, Mr. SAM JOHNSON, Mr. KIM, Mr. KNOLLENBERG, Mr. LIVINGSTON, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. REGULA, Mr. SNOWBARGER, Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi, and Mr. UNDERWOOD.

H.R. 599: Ms. NORTON, Mr. WATT of North Carolina, Mr. FOGLIETTA, Mrs. CLAYTON, Mr. YATES, Mr. OWENS, Mr. OLVER, Mr. TORRES, Mr. HOLDEN, Ms. RIVERS, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. WYNN, and Mr. KUCINICH.

H.R. 612: Mr. KANJORSKI, Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts, Ms. FURSE, and Mr. BISHOP.

H.R. 629: Mr. TAUZIN.

H.R. 680: Mr. JEFFERSON and Mr. FILNER.

H.R. 687: Mr. DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 695: Mrs. MORELLA, Mr. BILBRAY, Mr. SOLOMON, and Mrs. MYRICK.

H.R. 745: Mr. VENTO, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. SHAYS, and Mr. CHABOT.

H.R. 753: Mr. EVANS, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. FLAKE, and Ms. FURSE.

H.R. 756: Mr. VISCLOSKY, Mr. WAXMAN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. SKAGGS, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. MILLER of California, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. CLAY, and Mr. DEFAZIO.

H.R. 768: Mr. COBLE and Mr. ETHERIDGE.

H.R. 789: Mr. HAYWORTH and Mr. NUSSLE.

H.R. 793: Mr. DINGELL.

H.R. 795: Mr. BORSKI, Mr. GEJDENSON, Mr. STARK, Mr. BROWN of California, Mr.

DEFAZIO, Mr. KLINK, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. EVANS, Mr. YATES, Mr. ROTHMAN, Ms. KILPATRICK, Mr. LIPINSKI, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. FOGLIETTA, and Mr. DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 812: Mr. SAXTON, Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland, Mr. FORBES, and Ms. KAPTUR.

H.R. 818: Mr. KUCINICH.

H.R. 819: Mr. KUCINICH.

H.R. 830: Mr. COOK and Mr. FROST.

H.R. 857: Mr. STUMP.

H.R. 864: Mr. QUINN, Mrs. MEEK of Florida, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. STOKES, Mr. CLAY, Mr. YATES, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. THOMPSON, Ms. RIVERS, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. JEFFERSON.

H.R. 867: Mr. LEVIN and Mr. KLUG.

H.R. 877: Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania, Mrs. CARSON, Mr. BOUCHER, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, Ms. RIVERS, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mrs. CLAYTON, Mr. HASTINGS of Washington, Mr. SHAYS, Mr. DELLUMS, Mr. KINGSTON, Mr. FILNER, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. MASCARA.

H.R. 895: Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. GEJDENSON, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. SOLOMON, Mr. LIPINSKI, Ms. DELAURO, and Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA.

H.R. 898: Mr. MINGE.

H.R. 907: Mr. GORDON, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, and Mr. FORD.

H.R. 920: Mrs. MINK of Hawaii, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, and Mr. CONYERS.

H.R. 925: Mr. MINGE.

H.R. 928: Mr. STEARNS, Mr. KLUG, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland, Mr. TIAHRT, Mr. WATKINS, Mr. EHRLICH, Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska, and Mr. CRANE.

H.R. 929: Mr. GOSS, Mr. WOLF, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. RILEY, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. KINGSTON, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mrs. FOWLER, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. SNOWBARGER, Mr. RADANOVICH, Mr. TAUZIN, Mr. MORAN of Kansas, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. LATOURETTE, Mr. CLEMENT, and Mr. SCARBOROUGH.

H.R. 934: Mrs. MYRICK.

H.R. 953: Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. KUCINICH, and Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 956: Mr. SHAYS, Mr. FROST, Mr. HAMILTON, and Mr. WHITFIELD.

H.R. 971: Mr. WALSH, Mr. FLAKE, Mrs. KENNELLY of Connecticut, Mr. GREENWOOD, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. GILCHREST, and Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 973: Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA and Mr. DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 978: Mr. PAUL, Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota, Mr. BISHOP, Mr. NEUMANN, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. BOYD, and Mr. MASCARA.

H.R. 981: Mr. FOGLIETTA.

H.R. 982: Mr. FOGLIETTA, Mr. BOEHLERT, and Mr. LIPINSKI.

H.R. 990: Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 991: Mr. BARCIA of Michigan and Mr. WISE.

H.R. 993: Mr. BOB SCHAFFER.

H.R. 1002: Ms. ESHOO, Mr. JEFFERSON, and Mr. WALSH.

H.R. 1032: Mr. SHAYS, Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut, Mrs. THURMAN, Mr. WISE, Mr. EDWARDS, Ms. MCCARTHY of Missouri, Mr. SAWYER, Mr. BENTSEN, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mrs. MORELLA, Mr. FROST, Mr. DOOLEY of California, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. WYNN, Mr. VENTO, Mr. SNYDER, Mr. FAZIO of California, Mrs. KENNELLY of Connecticut, and Mr. BOEHLERT.

H.R. 1033: Mr. SHAYS and Mr. WELLER.

H.R. 1046: Mr. FOGLIETTA.

H.J. Res. 28: Mr. LUTHER.

H.J. Res. 40: Mr. BARCIA of Michigan.

H.J. Res. 54: Mr. DOOLITTLE and Mr. KASICH.

H.J. Res. 55: Mr. WICKER.

H.J. Res. 62: Mr. LINDER, Mr. SKEEN, and Mr. TAUZIN.

H. Con. Res. 6: Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Ms. FURSE.

H. Con. Res. 10: Mr. SHAW.

H. Con. Res. 12: Mrs. KELLY, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. ROTHMAN, Mrs. KENNELLY of Connecticut, Mr. BORSKI, and Mr. MCDERMOTT.

H. Con. Res. 13: Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky, Mr. NADLER, Mr. TRAFICANT, Mr. ETHERIDGE, Mr. METCALF, Mr. COYNE, Mr. CONYERS, and Mr. DOYLE.

H. Con. Res. 38: Mr. DOYLE.

H. Res. 38: Mr. BILBRAY, Mr. BARRETT, of Wisconsin, Mr. ETHERIDGE, Mr. TAUZIN, Mr. FARR of California, Ms. DELAURO, Ms. FURSE, Ms. CHRISTIAN-GREEN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. DELLUMS, Mrs. CARSON, Mr. TORRES, Mr. ACKERMAN, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. EHLERS, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. CLEMENT, and Ms. SANCHEZ.