

I came to the U.S. House as a freshman in 1978, in the election of 1978. I was sworn in in January of 1979, and the House was dark. Only in April of that year was television permitted in the House, and at the time there were many cries that it would permanently ruin the process. The Senate at that time refused to be televised.

Over a period of years, several things happened. We live in an electronic age. We live in an age where people use the Internet, they use television, they use radio, they surf the Net, they surf channels. And in that electronic age, Senators began to realize that, all of a sudden, the coverage which had historically been dominated by the Senate was shifting to the House because it was a more immediate, a more real, a more vivid institution.

I think today if someone were to come to the floor and say, let's repeal televising the House, let's close down C-SPAN, let's make it impossible to take televised debate off the floor of the House, people would look at them in wonderment. They would say, how could you think of that? Because the modern news is in large part an electronic news. It is a process of immediacy that is quite unusual.

Now we come to the question of committees. What is the purpose of holding a committee hearing? It is to learn the truth, to listen to opinions, to inform the Members and to inform the public.

We live in an age where murder trials are televised; we live in an age where television is virtually ubiquitous; we live in an age where people are pretty aware of and sensitive to the process of television. And what is the proposed change here? What is this dramatic, bold new breakthrough? It is to adopt the rules which are already in force in the Senate. That is right, exactly the same protections that already exist in the Senate.

Now, I have yet to hear any Senator suggest that the Senate should quit televising hearings. I have not heard a single Democrat or Republican suggest that there is anything wrong with any hearing on any topic, as long as it does not involve national security.

If it involves defamation of a person, if it involves something which could affect their livelihood, the committee in the House or the committee in the Senate has the right to close the hearing for good reason. If it involves national security, the committee has the right to exclude the media for good reason.

But the normal, standard set in the Senate is that a hearing is a hearing, and that this is the people's Congress, and, therefore, the people have a right to access; and in the modern era the most effective method of access is electronics, which means radio and television.

Now, what about the witnesses' rights? They are not changed at all. The witness arrives, accompanied by an attorney. The witness has all of the legal protections given them. The witness has every right to refuse to tes-

tify. The witness has every right to seek protection of the fifth amendment. The witness has every right to clarify. None of those protections for the witness are changed.

Our friends would suggest that there is somehow a magic difference between the same witness with the same attorney in the same hearing answering the same question, having it recorded by a newspaper in print and having it broadcast by radio or television.

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But I think that is to miss the entire revolution of our generation.

What is making the world different is the ability to have an electronic relationship that is real and vivid. At a time when the O.J. Simpson trial was available to every citizen; at a time when city councils are open to camera in Smyrna, Georgia; for example, every Monday night is city council night in Smyrna, and every citizen in Smyrna can watch, unless they are discussing a personnel decision that is sensitive. But to suggest that we should now retain a 1957 rule, at a time, by the way, when there was no television in the House; in Sam Rayburn's day, they did not have televised House proceedings. But now, in the modern era, I think it is wrong.

I would just pose this before any of my friends in the Democratic Party vote "no." I do not believe one can find a single Democratic Senator who would seek to go back and bar cameras and microphones from a Senate hearing. I do not believe one can find a single Member who has served in the Senate who would seek to go back and bar television and radio from a hearing. If, in the last 40 years, it has done no damage to witnesses in the Senate, what is it we are afraid of that it would do in the House?

The time has come to open the committees, just as when I was a freshman we opened up the House Chamber. Just as C-SPAN was good for the House Chamber, I believe the same coverage in the committees will be good, and I urge every Member to vote for this change, to bring the full light of complete news media coverage into the hearings of the United States House.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

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

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

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and yeas.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5 of rule I, further proceedings on this question are postponed.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the provisions of clause 5 of rule

I, the Chair announces that he will postpone further proceedings today on each motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 4 of rule XV. Such rollcall votes, if postponed, will be taken later.

#### SURFACE TRANSPORTATION EXTENSION ACT OF 1997

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 1519) to provide a 6-month extension of highway, highway safety, and transit programs pending enactment of a law reauthorizing the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991.

The Clerk read as follows:

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

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Surface Transportation Extension Act of 1997".

#### SEC. 2. ADVANCES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Transportation (referred to in this Act as the "Secretary") shall apportion funds made available under section 1003(d) of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 to each State in the ratio that—

(1) the State's total fiscal year 1997 obligation authority for funds apportioned for the Federal-aid highway program; bears to

(2) all States' total fiscal year 1997 obligation authority for funds apportioned for the Federal-aid highway program.

(b) PROGRAMMATIC DISTRIBUTIONS.—

(1) PROGRAMS.—Of the funds to be apportioned to each State under subsection (a), the Secretary shall ensure that the State is apportioned an amount of the funds, determined under paragraph (2), for the Interstate maintenance program, the National Highway System, the bridge program, the surface transportation program, the congestion mitigation and air quality improvement program, minimum allocation under section 157 of title 23, United States Code, Interstate reimbursement under section 160 of that title, the donor State bonus under section 1013(c) of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (105 Stat. 1940), hold harmless under section 1015(a) of that Act (105 Stat. 1943), 90 percent of payments adjustments under section 1015(b) of that Act (105 Stat. 1944), section 1015(c) of that Act (105 Stat. 1944), an amount equal to the funds provided under sections 1103 through 1108 of that Act (105 Stat. 2027), and funding restoration under section 202 of the National Highway System Designation Act of 1995 (109 Stat. 571).

(2) IN GENERAL.—The amount that each State shall be apportioned under this subsection for each item referred to in paragraph (1) shall be determined by multiplying—

(A) the amount apportioned to the State under subsection (a); by

(B) the ratio that—

(i) the amount of funds apportioned for the item, or allocated under sections 1103 through 1108 of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (105 Stat. 2027), to the State for fiscal year 1997; bears to

(ii) the total of the amount of funds apportioned for the items, and allocated under those sections, to the State for fiscal year 1997.