

debate, we will vote on final passage of the Shays-Meehan substitute on Monday. Mr. Speaker, we also plan to continue consideration of H.R. 4276, the Commerce, Justice, State Appropriations Act on Monday, August 3.

On Tuesday, August 4, the House will take up several bills under suspension of the rules. Following suspensions on Tuesday and throughout the balance of the week, the House will consider the following legislation: continuing consideration of H.R. 4276, the Commerce, Justice, State Appropriations Act; H.R. 4274, the Department of Labor Appropriations Act of 1999; the District of Columbia Appropriations Act of 1999, and House Resolution 507, the Workforce Improvement and Protection Act of 1998.

Mr. Speaker, Members should be prepared to work late next week on these appropriations bills. We hope to conclude legislative business for the week by 2 o'clock p.m. on Friday, August 7.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague.

If the gentleman would entertain one question to him this afternoon, on several occasions the majority leader has repeated the commitment that the House will complete the campaign finance reform bill by the recess. As the gentleman knows, once we complete the vote, as the gentleman has indicated, on Monday on Shays-Meehan, we still have left in that bill 9 more substitutes, and an unlimited number of amendments to those substitutes.

My question to my friend, the gentleman from Texas, is since we only have 5 more days left before the recess, I want to make sure that the gentleman's commitment to finish this by the recess is firm, and that we will have this bill finished and back to the Senate so they can make a decision on what they want to do with it.

We are certainly hopeful that Shays-Meehan, on our side of the aisle, passes. We have sent it over there to defeat the other substitutes that are being offered, and we hope we get some action this year. But we know we cannot get any action out of the Congress unless we do this in a timely fashion.

Would the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY) like to make a comment with respect to the commitment to finish by this recess?

Mr. ARMEY. If the gentleman will continue to yield, Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman again for that inquiry. It is a matter of important concern. It weighs heavy on my heart.

Let me just encourage the gentleman from Michigan to understand that I do not know how, but we will have this completed before we leave town by 2 o'clock next Friday.

Mr. BONIOR. That means the bill?

Mr. ARMEY. I will get back with the gentleman later with the details, but we will have it done before we leave town; this bill, all consideration and final action on this bill will be done before 2 o'clock on Friday.

Mr. BONIOR. I thank my colleague for his reassurance.

Mr. DOOLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BONIOR. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. DOOLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, I would also like to address a question to the majority leader.

Yesterday in the Committee on Agriculture we had extensive hearings on the crisis that is occurring in many regions of the country as it is affecting farmers. Three weeks ago I joined with a bipartisan group of Members and the gentleman from Georgia (Speaker GINGRICH) on outlining some relief measures that we can move through Congress in order to address and minimize future damage to the agriculture sector.

On one of those which I think is most important to the agricultural sector, in fact, we have a coalition of 75 organizations that signed a letter supporting the funding of the International Monetary Fund. I did not hear, in the leader's identification of legislative action next week, any mention of the IMF.

I was hoping that the leader could shed some light on when we would consider funding of the IMF, in order that we might prepare and be able to assure the farmers that we are continuing to provide the export opportunities that are needed.

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Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for the inquiry. The gentleman may know, the consideration of the IMF is in the Foreign Operations appropriations bill. I understand that the committee has determined that they will take that bill up for full committee markup when we return from the August work recess period.

Mr. DOOLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, I would just hope that we would not delay any longer. Obviously, that is of critical importance to the ag sector, the funding of the International Monetary Fund.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, let me reiterate one more time about finishing campaign finance by the end of next week. May I also ask the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY), on Monday, what time do we expect to have the vote on Shays-Meehan? Will it be before the suspension votes are taken, or after?

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would again yield, the vote will be taken after the suspension votes, and I would guess that the vote on Shays-Meehan would be, if the gentleman will give me a large latitude on the "more or less," 8 o'clock, depending on how many votes are ordered.

Of course, the proponents on that bill want to have a little bit of time for wrapup debate. So, I would say probably between 8:00 and 9:00, is my best estimate.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for this information and for his courtesy.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER  
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GUTKNECHT). The Chair will entertain 1-minute speeches.

CONGRATULATIONS TO JOHN AND  
VERNA LESKERA ON THEIR 70TH  
WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I want to take a moment to recognize two very special constituents of mine, John and Verna Leskera of Vandalia, Illinois, who will be celebrating their 70th wedding anniversary on August 7 of this year.

John Leskera married the former Verna Bitzer on August 2, 1928 in, Hoopeston, Illinois. They raised one son, Jack, currently of Collinsville, Illinois, and are the grandparents of three, and great-grandparents of six.

Verna, the former schoolteacher, and John, the former business owner, have continued to lead very active lives since their retirement. John, in fact, just learned to water ski at the tender age of 75.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to join the friends and family members of the Leskeras in wishing continued health and happiness as they celebrate their 70th wedding anniversary, and in the many years to come.

UNCERTAINTY AND WORRY IN  
"OLD BELT" TOBACCO MARKETS

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

Mr. GOODE. Mr. Speaker, next week the "Old Belt" flue-cured tobacco markets open in Southside, Virginia, and the farmers have never faced greater uncertainty. Over the course of the last year, the tobacco farmers in the Fifth District of Virginia, and across the southeastern part of the United States, have been tossed around like a political football.

The farmers were not included in the original settlement, but throughout the debate over the proposed settlement, people on all sides have indicated that they want to protect the tobacco growers. Yet, we see legislation proposed in Congress that will cripple and ruin the American grower. We must fight such proposals.

Mr. Speaker, I just hope that as various political agendas go forward, the hard-working growers and their families and their communities do not end up busted, bankrupt, and broken.

The annual opening of the tobacco markets historically have been a time of optimism and hope. But this year, as the markets open in Southside, Virginia, the optimism is replaced by uncertainty and worry.