

more microenterprises grow. Providing additional technical assistance to businesses will enable entrepreneurs who are on the threshold of moving forward the opportunity to do so.

The microloan program has proved invaluable in helping America's small businesses grow. I am glad that we are moving quickly to pass this crucial legislation and that we are looking for ways to improve this important program.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I wish to acknowledge again the work of the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) and the work of the chairman of our committee, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. TALENT), on this important piece of legislation. I urge the support of our colleagues for its passage.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PEASE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 440.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PEASE) that the House suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 440.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the Senate amendment was concurred in.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING FOR CONCURRENCE BY HOUSE WITH AMENDMENT TO SENATE AMENDMENTS TO H.R. 98, EXTENSION OF AVIATION WAR RISK INSURANCE PROGRAM

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 135) providing for the concurrence by the House with an amendment in the Senate amendments to H.R. 98.

The Clerk read as follows:

*Resolved*, That upon the adoption of this resolution the House shall be considered to have taken from the Speaker's table the bill H.R. 98, with the amendments of the Senate thereto, and to have—

(1) concurred in the amendment of the Senate to the title; and

(2) concurred in the amendment of the Senate to the text with the following amendment:

At the end of the Senate amendment, add the following:

Page 2, line 3, strike "March" and insert "May".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. PETRI) and the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. PETRI).

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

Mr. Speaker, last month the war risk insurance program was reauthorized by the House, but only through the end of next month. We need to quickly move to reauthorize the program for a longer period of time and do it in a way that is acceptable to the Senate.

This program has operated successfully for over 47 years.

The bill would reauthorize the war risk insurance program through December 31, 2003. Insurance is an essential feature of any commercial airline operation, but ordinary business insurance operations are normally not willing, and certainly not at normal rates, to insure flights to high-risk areas such as countries at war or on the verge of war.

In many cases, flights into these dangerous situations, however, are required to further our Nation's foreign policy or national security objectives. On many occasions in the past, commercial airlines, rather than military planes, have been used to move material and troops into war-type areas including, for example, most recently during Desert Storm-Desert Shield operations and other conflicts.

Without the war risk program, commercial airlines would not have flown these military flights, and therefore the Department of Defense would have had to grant or purchase aircraft at a cost to the taxpayers of millions of dollars, if not billions.

Although the program is not currently being used in Kosovo, it could be needed at any time and, therefore, we cannot afford to allow the program to lapse. The bill before the House now is virtually the same as the bill that we passed last February, but the Senate dropped a provision in the bill involving unrelated technical changes to the centennial of flight commission. Therefore, we need to pass this bill and send it back to the Senate. I would urge support for the resolution.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 135, a bill to extend the war risk insurance program through 2003. This program allows the Federal Aviation Administration to issue insurance to airlines flying into war zones when it is in the national interest for the airlines to do so and commercial insurance is not available on reasonable terms.

The war risk insurance program was first authorized in 1951 and it has served the country well. Since 1975, the nonpremium option under the war risk insurance program alone has been activated over 5,000 times. Recently it has been used in support of Operations Desert Shield and Storm in the Middle East, Operation Restore Hope in Somalia, Operation Uphold Democracy in

Haiti and Operation Joint Endeavor in Bosnia.

As Members can see from its scope, it has been an active part of our Nation's foreign policy and national security efforts.

In March, we extended this program for only 2 months until May 31, 1999. With the continuing activities in the Persian Gulf and the current situation in Kosovo, it would be unfortunate to allow this program to expire. I would hope that we could quickly pass this legislation to avoid any lapse in this crucial program.

I want to thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) and the gentleman from California (Mr. DUNCAN), the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI) for their leadership, and I urge my House colleagues to support H. Res. 135.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. PETRI) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, House Resolution 135.

The question was taken.

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

AUTHORIZING USE OF CAPITOL GROUNDS FOR OPENING CEREMONIES OF SUNRAYCE 99

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 48) authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the opening ceremonies of Sunrayce 99.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 48

*Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring).*

SECTION 1. USE OF CAPITOL GROUNDS FOR OPENING CEREMONIES OF SUNRAYCE 99.

The organizers of Sunrayce 99 (in this resolution referred to as the "sponsor") shall be permitted to sponsor a public event, with solar-powered cars, on the Capitol Grounds on June 20, 1999, or on such other dates as the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate may jointly designate, to conduct opening ceremonies for Sunrayce 99.

SEC. 2. TERMS AND CONDITIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The event authorized by section 1 shall be free of admission charge to the public and arranged not to interfere with the needs of Congress, under conditions to be prescribed by the Architect of the Capitol and the Capitol Police Board.

(b) EXPENSES AND LIABILITIES.—The sponsor shall assume full responsibility for all expenses and liabilities incident to all activities associated with the event.