I urge a rejection of the poison pill amendments, and to pass Shays-Meehan.

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

Mr. Speaker, it is important that campaign finance reform come to the floor and be voted on. For that reason, we will not oppose this rule, even though this is an unfair rule, an unusual rule, and a rule structured by the majority to provide the maximum opportunity for mischief and the maximum opportunity to deny the House a direct vote on Shays-Meehan.

This is not a good rule. This is not a fair rule. But the minority has no choice but to permit the process to go forward and attempt to frustrate the majority's mischief by uniting our side with Members on the other side who want true campaign finance reform.

We will support Shays-Meehan. We reluctantly agree that this rule should go forward so the debate may begin.

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

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

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I am happy, even though it is reluctant, to have the support of Members of the minority for this rule. But I have to tell the Members that they should be enthusiastically supporting it.

Why? Because it is in fact a very fair and balanced rule. In fact, the degree of fairness is greater than what it was when my friends on the other side gave when they were in the majority.

□ 1415

This is something called regular order. Now, our regular order, in fact, says that the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS), as chairman of the Committee on Administration, has allowed to move forward the one substitute that was reported favorably from his committee and have that considered as a substitute. We have also chosen to make two other substitutes in order.

As I said in my opening remarks, 26 amendments were submitted to the Committee on Rules. Of those, we have made in order 13. One amendment was offered by a Democrat, and that amendment was made in order. So my Democratic colleagues have had every amendment that they submitted to the Committee on Rules made in order under this measure.

So it is a very fair rule. It is what is known as regular order. There is no poison pill involved in here. We are following regular order, which is exactly what Speaker HASTERT said when he stood in this well on the opening day of the 106th Congress. So I urge my colleagues to support the rule.

I will say that I am one who does believe very, very strongly in the importance of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. I think that the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS) is right on target in trying to provide a wide array of information to the American people as they look at the prospect of choosing their leaders.

The issue of campaign finance reform is important. It is important for us to make sure that we do everything that we can to protect and nurture that First Amendment to the Constitution. That is the reason that I am supportive of the Doolittle substitute, and I will be supporting the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS) in his effort.

I know there has been a lot of talk about what the level of public interest is in this issue, and clearly there are some people who want to spend a lot of time focused on it. I do not think that we should be legislating based solely on what is the highest rated poll item. But I will say this, the issue of campaign finance reform is not quite as important as some of my colleagues have said.

When the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) talked about this being such an important issue, a decisive issue, as we juxtapose it to the Civil War, it seems to me that there are a wide range of important things that have taken place betwixt the Civil War and today, ranking all the way from the Second World War to the civil rights legislation, which was very, very important for our country. As the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS) has just reminded me, we had a man who walked on the moon 3 decades ago. So there are lots of things that are important.

We are, because of the level of interest that exists in this body, proceeding with consideration of this campaign finance reform measure under regular order, and I look forward to a free-flowing and stimulating debate.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION WAIVING POINTS OF ORDER AGAINST CONFERENCE REPORT ON S. 1059, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 1999

Mr. DREIER, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 106–316) on the resolution (H. Res. 288) waiving points of order against the conference report to accompany the Senate bill (S. 1059) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2000 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe personnel strengths for such fiscal year for the Armed Forces, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1655, DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, AND DEMONSTRATION AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 1999

Mr. DREIER, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 106–317) on the resolution (H. Res. 289) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1655) to authorize appropriations for fiscal years 2000 and 2001 for the civilian energy and scientific research, development, and demonstration and related commercial application of energy technology programs, projects, and activities of the Department of Energy, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1551, CIVIL AVIATION RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 1999

Mr. DREIER, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 106–318) on the resolution (H. Res. 290) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1551) to authorize the Federal Aviation Administration's civil aviation research and development programs for fiscal years 2000 and 2001, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

BIPARTISAN CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM ACT OF 1999

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BONILLA). Pursuant to House Resolution 283 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 417.

□ 1420

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. 147) to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to reform the financing of campaigns for elections for Federal office, and for other purposes, with Mr. HOBSON in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered as having been read the first time.

Under the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DAVIS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DAVIS).

Mr. DAVIS of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS) be permitted to control 11 minutes of my time and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MEEHAN) be permitted