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House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

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

S. 1052. An act to implement further the Act (Public Law 94–241) approving the Covenant to Establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in Political Union with the United States of America, and for other purposes.

MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 19, 1999, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member except the majority leader, the minority leader or the minority whip limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

PROMOTING LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, the issue of the livable communities will be one of the dominant themes in the year 2000 election.

It is not altogether clear to me that the pollsters, pundits, and consultants fully understand the depth of this issue and what it means to American families.

The reason it will be an issue is not because it is being driven by the national level, although I do appreciate the leadership of the administration and Vice President GORE. This is an issue that is being driven from the grassroots.

Many of us are aware that in 1998 there were over 240 State and local ballot measures nationwide that dealt with issues of open space, land use planning, and environmental protection and transportation.

Seventy-two percent of these measures passed involving spending of over $7.5 billion; even in the relatively quiet so-called off year of 1999, the drumbeat continued. There were 139 ballot measures with a 77 percent approval rating.

The media coverage of the term ''smart growth,'' which is probably the best proxy of livable communities, rose from 101 citations in 1996 to over 2,700 citations in 1999.

Why is this?

People know that the past patterns of development are simply not sustainable. From 1992 to 1997, we just learned a couple of weeks ago that over 16 million acres of farm and forest land were lost to development, an area larger than the State of West Virginia.

Mr. Speaker, we as a Nation are sprawling faster than we increase in population. In the last 5 years, the population grew by 5 percent, while developed land area increased 18 percent. In fact, we are seeing communities around the country that are actually losing population, yet are gobbling up land at a 10 percent, 20 percent, 30 percent rate in a decade. This means that wetlands in the United States are disappearing at a rate of 54,000 acres annually, despite our good intentions, despite some protections that are being built in.

At the same time, we are becoming increasingly dependent on foreign oil. Petroleum prices have tripled in the last few months. Drivers in the Washington, D.C. metro area waste 116 gallons of fuel each year simply waiting in traffic.

We know that we can do better than forcing the average commuter to spend more than 50 workdays a year behind the wheel of his or her car just to get to work.

Livability does not have to be a casualty of gridlock in Washington, nor does it have to become a partisan issue. There is no reason we cannot embrace as a Congress some of the administration's specific recommendations for livable communities, in transportation funding, for better America bonds.

We can as a Congress embrace the bipartisan legislation that is coming forward by the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) and the gentleman from Alaska (Chairman YOUNG) for the Land and Water Conservation Fund. There is no reason that we cannot see the enactment of terrific legislation, if I do say so myself, the two-floods-and-you-are-out of the taxpayer pocket that the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) and I are working on to reform our national flood insurance program, to help people and not promote and subsidize the degradation of our environment.

Mr. Speaker, at a time when the public knows we can do a lot better, it is time for the Federal Government to be a full partner in that effort of promoting livable communities.

I am looking forward to bringing to this floor proposals this year that will make our families safe, healthy, and economically secure, maybe something as radical as requiring the post office to obey the same land use, environmental and planning regulations as the rest of America.

Promoting livable communities is not rocket science. It is definitely our job. I urge the Congress to take a bit of a break from some of what occupies our attention day in and day out and think about ways that we can make our families safer, healthier, more economically secure, while saving money and protecting the environment.

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U.S. MILITARY READINESS: A DEEP CONCERN

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the President released his budget for fiscal year 2001, and with that begins another round of authorizations and appropriations.

This afternoon what I want to do is focus on the issue of military readiness, a concept which the administration, until recently, has failed to embrace. In fact, the President has consistently proposed defense budgets which were completely inadequate.

I am happy to see that the President has proposed a $11.3 billion increase in discretionary defense spending in recognition of the deplorable circumstances with which this administration has allowed our forces to deteriorate.

Since the end of the Cold War, the United States military has been forced to do more with less. The defense budget has decreased by 8 percent, or $24 billion, since 1990, and is the only major spending category to steadily decline since 1994. In contrast, the nondiscretionary spending and entitlements have increased nearly 60 percent, or $458 billion.

Despite the reduced spending and force reductions, the pace of operations, other than war, has increased dramatically. Our forces are engaged in humanitarian, peacekeeping, civil assistance, and other areas of non-combat operations. In addition, the United States continues to engage in combat operations over Iraq and the conflict in former Yugoslovia. In terms of commitments abroad, the United States has about 260,000 personnel in over 100 countries, according to the Department of Defense.

The Clinton administration has pursued a military policy of open-ended commitments to operations which have had no bearing on our national security at home or abroad. U.S. military forces have been deployed more times under this administration than they were throughout the entire Cold War period.

This pace and scope of non-combat operations, the time away from family, and substandard pay and benefits have led to recruitment and retention problems. In fact, the Marine Corps was the only service to meet its recruiting requirements for 1999. Our forces are now coping with the inability to recruit highly qualified individuals, while at the same time losing the most experienced soldiers. My office has received letters from constituents, many of whom having proudly served in our Armed Forces, saying they were inclined to discourage young Americans from joining today's military force.

Mr. Speaker, this is a demoralizing statement to hear. To add further emphasis, the Heritage Foundation, in its National Defense Report, concluded that our military is suffering the worst personnel crisis since the draft ended in 1973.

The problem extends beyond personnel. Operations and maintenance accounts have suffered, and the lack of funding has resulted in spare parts shortages and the cannibalizing of existing equipment. Cannibalizing for parts, once considered a last resort to maintain combat capability, is now a common practice.

Nations which may be potentially hostile to the United States are investing in advanced weaponry and technological upgrades to existing systems which can seriously impact our military superiority. For example, China in fact is working on a defense system that may be able to defeat stealth technology by monitoring radio and television waves for turbulence resulting from aircraft flight. In addition, smaller countries can invest in and upgrade highly capable and advanced surface-to-air missiles for a fraction of the cost of an offensive weapon platform. Such a high-volume air defense could spell disaster for current U.S. air forces.

Mr. Speaker, these are but a fraction of the concerns facing military readiness. Last year, Congress recognized the need to halt the decline of our military. We provided for an increase in pay, retention bonuses, procurement, research and development and operations and maintenance, over $4 billion above the President's request.

I look forward to examining the President's budget for 2001 to see exactly where his goals lie and how he plans to allocate the funding for our military. I sincerely hope he has realized inadequate funding leads to inadequate forces. I need not emphasize what drastic consequences inadequate forces would lead to.

INAUGURAL MEETING OF INTER-AGENCY GROUP ON INSULAR AFFAIRS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from Guam (Mr. UNDERWOOD) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, nearly 2 weeks ago President Clinton delivered his final State of the Union. It included the achievements of his administration, remarkable as they are, over the past 7½ years, rebuilding and returning America's economy to great posterity; over 20 million new jobs, the lowest unemployment rates in 30 years, the lowest poverty rates in 20 years, the longest period of economic growth in America's history. President Clinton also pointed out that we have crossed the bridge we have built to the 21st Century and that we must now shape a new 21st Century American revolution of opportunity, responsibility, and community for all Americans.

But, Mr. Speaker, there are many Americans who do not participate in this prosperity. There are thousands of Americans who do not enjoy the prosperity that most of America has felt across the Nation. Americans living in the U.S. Territories, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and American Samoa, often rely on economic factors and economies apart from the American mainland for their economic well-being.

U.S. Territories are unique because we are not fully incorporated with the U.S. Though we share many issues with our fellow Americans living in the U.S. mainland, our geography, our history and our political status present a number of economic challenges common amongst ourselves. Our commonalities, however, give this Nation and the President the opportunity to craft Federal policy that recognizes our status and extraordinary challenges to participate in the prosperity of the Nation.

Like no other President, Mr. Clinton has risen and has been responsive to the challenge and has created an Interagency Group on Insular Areas called IGIA to provide guidance on Federal policies towards the U.S. Territories. This initiative will include Governors and Delegates to Congress and other elected officials that will come together and bring together some coherence in Federal policy.

Next month, this inaugural meeting of the IGIA will take place. This will be an historic moment for the leaders of the territories, and I would like to take this opportunity to encourage the IGIA meeting and forum to address issues of economic development in Guam, particularly land and taxes, and, in light with that, to also remember the President's call to include all Americans in the prosperity of the Nation and to finally craft a policy which will bring the Territories into the prosperity of the Nation.

Many of the situations that we face in Guam in terms of land and taxes need reform so that we can economically grow. We still face problems on the return of excess Federal lands. We are a small territory, but over one-third of our land is held by the Federal Government and we need assistance in making sure that these valuable lands are returned to the people of Guam.

We are also trying to seek equity in the taxation of Guam, particularly for foreign direct investment. I have introduced a bill, H.R. 2462, which brings equity between Guam and other areas of the United States in terms of taxing foreign investment. Right now we are disproportionately taxed. In another related area, my colleague, the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN), has introduced a bill, H.R. 3247, which would make U.S. Territories eligible for empowerment zone designation. These are all resources that are a hand up, not a handout, and will go a long way towards bringing

much needed assistance towards the Territories.

There are many other programs, and we will discuss this as we go along, but the IGIA meeting early next month is the perfect vehicle through which to craft and review policy initiatives which will bring prosperity to those American communities which are offshore and have a very different relationship to Washington, D.C. than most Americans.

I call upon the administration to work with the representatives of the Territories here in Washington and the chief executives of the respective territories to craft a new economic policy which will make sure that no child in Pago Pago goes without the educational life chances that children in the U.S. mainland have, that no family in St. Croix or St. Thomas will not have the same access to health care that Americans everywhere deserve, and that bread winners in Hagatna, Guam, do not have to leave their homeland and travel 6,000 miles to find a decent job.

ENACT H.R. 6, MARRIAGE TAX ELIMINATION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. WELLER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, over the last several years, many of us have been asking a question that we hear time and time again back home. I have the privilege of representing the south side of Chicago and the south suburbs, communities like Joliet and Lancing and Morris and rural communities like Tonica and elsewhere; and they often ask me a pretty basic question. That question is, as we talk about taxes, they say, why? Why do married working couples, a husband and wife who are both in the workforce, why do they pay higher taxes when they get married? They ask, is it right, is it fair that under our Tax Code, married working couples pay higher taxes? On average, 25 million married working couples pay, on average, $1,400 more in higher taxes than identical couples who choose not to get married, but live together outside of marriage. That is not right.

The folks back home tell me that it is time that those of us here in Washington should do something about it, that we should work to eliminate what has been called the marriage tax penalty. Mr. Speaker, $1,400, the average marriage tax penalty, is a lot of money back home in Illinois. Mr. Speaker, $1,400 is one year's tuition for a nursing student at Joliet Junior College, our local community college; it is three months of day care for a working mom and dad with children. It is almost 4,000 diapers for a family with a newborn child.

It is real money for real people; and there are, of course, some here in Washington who say they would much rather spend that money here in Washington than bring about tax fairness by eliminating the marriage tax penalty.

Well, I am proud to say this House is doing something about the marriage tax penalty. Last year we passed and sent legislation to the President which would have wiped out the marriage tax penalty for over 25 million couples; and unfortunately, President Clinton and Vice President Gore vetoed that bill. They had a lot of excuses. They wanted to spend that money. But this year, there is no excuse. We have Valentine's Day approaching, and what better gift to give 25 million married working couples who suffer the marriage tax penalty than to pass legislation wiping out the marriage tax penalty.

This Thursday, we will be considering in the House legislation approved by the Committee on Ways and Means, H.R. 6, the Marriage Tax Elimination Act, which I am proud to say now has 236 cosponsors, including almost 30 Democrats who have joined with us in our effort to eliminate the marriage tax penalty. We help real people.

Let me introduce a couple here. This couple here, Shad and Michelle Hallihan of Joliet, Illinois, two public school teachers in Joliet, Illinois. They happen to make about $60,000 in combined income from their two teaching salaries, and Shad and Michelle suffer almost the average marriage tax penalty.

Well, under the legislation that the House is going to be considering this week, Shad and Michelle will benefit, because two public school teachers who chose to get married who now suffer the marriage tax penalty will essentially have their marriage tax penalty wiped out. Michelle told me the other day, she says, Congressman, tell your friends in the Congress, particularly those who believe it is not a good idea to eliminate the marriage tax penalty, what wiping out the marriage tax penalty would mean for them.

They say $1,000, which is essentially the marriage tax penalty, would buy 3,000 diapers for their newborn baby. That is money that is currently going to Washington that they could use to take care of their child. Frankly, if we want to be fair, it is their money. We should eliminate the marriage tax penalty.

This Thursday, H.R. 6, the Marriage Tax Elimination Act, will help couples like Shad and Michele Hallihan. We do it in several ways. We double the standard deduction. One-half of married couples do not itemize their taxes; they use the standard deduction, so we double it for joint filers. The marriage penalty is created when a married couple of course get married, they file their taxes jointly, their combined income usually pushes them into a higher tax bracket. That is what pushes Shad and Michelle into the 28 percent bracket.

What we want to do, of course, is for the nonitemizers, which is about half of the married couples who suffer the marriage penalty, to double the standard deduction for joint filers to make it twice that of singles. For those who itemize, who are the other half of married couples who suffer the marriage tax penalty, those who itemize are homeowners. The average middle-class family itemizes their taxes because they own a home. We want to help them and provide marriage tax relief as well. So we widen the 15 percent bracket, the basic tax bracket that every one of us pays. We are all in the 15 percent bracket, regardless of our income, for the lowest bottom bracket of our income. By widening the bracket so that joint filers, married couples, can earn twice as much as a single filer and be in that same bracket, we help those who itemize.

We also help the working poor. There is a marriage penalty for the earned income credit, and we provide tax relief for them.

This Thursday, let us have an overwhelming bipartisan majority. Let us work together. Let us eliminate the marriage tax penalty. There are no excuses. We want to be fair. Eliminate the marriage tax penalty.

EXTREMISM, RACISM AND XENOPHOBIA SWEEPING AUSTRIA: HOUSE RESOLUTION 417

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, last week I called the attention of my colleagues to the rise of neofacism in Austria. The deed is now done. The extremist, racist, xenophobic FPO party has entered the Government of Austria. I want to thank all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle who have joined me in supporting this resolution expressing our regret and dismay.

Joerg Haider, the leader of this party, had ample praise for Adolf Hitler and for SS veterans whom he described as ''decent people with character who stuck to their beliefs.''

I want to commend the European Union, all 14 nations, which have chosen to downgrade their diplomatic relations with Austria. I want to commend our own State Department for recalling our Ambassador to Austria and for promising to watch developments carefully.

At a time, Mr. Speaker, when the European Union, the United States, and other democratic nations are working actively to discourage ethnic hatred in the republics of the former Yugoslavia and elsewhere, Joerg Haider and his neofascist allies are appealing to racist sentiment and xenophobia. Haider learned this lesson early on. His father joined the Nazi Party in 1929. His mother was an active and enthusiastic Nazi Party member as a teacher. Haider has surely learned the lesson well.

We recognize the right of the Austrian people to elect anybody they choose. However, we reserve the right to express our views when people elect Communist totalitarian regimes or Fascist totalitarian regimes.

We are not there yet. This extremist xenophobic, far right-wing political party is only one of two parties of the Austrian coalition, and we will follow their activities with great care. They have made many commendable promises; but we will have to see how—in the unfolding of Austrian policy, domestic and international—these high-sounding promises are implemented.

The leaders of the European Union, all 14 nations, as well as other nations outside the European Union like Canada, Israel, and Norway, have expressed their deep concern about the new Government of Austria. One of the concerns that I shared in looking at this new far right-wing regime is the impact it is having in legitimatizing anti-democratic, racist forces in other countries of Europe.

This is an awful way to begin the 21st century. Therefore, we need to engage in a voluntary ban against tourism to Austria, the purchase of Austrian products, the use of Austrian airlines, and investments in that country. People need to understand that elections have consequences; and when 27 percent of the Austrian electorate chooses to support an extremist who has made complimentary remarks about Adolf Hitler and who has repeatedly expressed the most obnoxious, racist and xenophobic sentiments, the American people and the people of other civilized countries must respond.

We hope that this government will be better than the past record of Haider's party. There is always an opportunity for change, for reformation, for learning lessons. I call on all of my colleagues and I call on our administration to watch with the utmost care the actions of the new Austrian Government. It is important for us to realize that Adolf Hitler was voted into power, and the fact that people come to power through elections says nothing about their values. Democracy is not just elections; it is the sharing of a set of values of free and open societies.

I call on all of my colleagues to join me in cosponsoring this resolution so it can be the voice of the Congress in expressing our concern over political trends in Austria.

SUPPORT H. RES. 414 FOR STEM CELL MEDICAL RESEARCH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentlewoman from Maryland (Ms. MORELLA) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, last week I joined with my good friend and colleague, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY), in the introduction of H. Res. 414 to allow Federal funding of pluripotent stem cell research to help us further understand Parkinson's, cancer, blindness, AIDS, Alzheimer's, diabetes, Muscular Dystrophy, Sickle-Cell Anemia, brain and spinal cord injuries, heart, lung, kidney and liver diseases, strokes, Lou Gehrig's Disease, birth defects, and other life-threatening diseases and disabilities.

House Resolution 414 does not request a specific amount of money, nor does it direct disease-specific research. It simply asks that Federal money be allowed to be utilized for the next best chance science has, not only to treat, but to cure, debilitating and life-threatening illnesses that afflict millions of Americans.

Many people have confused pluripotent stem cell research with human embryo research. Stem cells are not embryos. In fact, there is a ban on the use of Federal funds for human embryo research in the United States. Pluripotent stem cells cannot develop into complete human beings; and, therefore, under the law, they are not embryos.

Pluripotent stem cells are the type of cell that can be turned into almost any type of cell or tissue in the body. The medical community estimates that human pluripotent stem cell research makes it a very real possibility that Parkinson's Disease will be cured within 5 years. The American Cancer Society strongly supports pluripotent stem research. In fact, cancer research has shown that injections of stem cells could revive the immune response of patients undergoing bone marrow transplants. With stem cell technology, transplantation of human retinal tissue may be the cure for blinding retinal degenerative diseases which affect more than 6 million Americans.

Stem cell research holds the key; it holds the key to solve the problem of the body's reaction to foreign tissue, resulting in dramatic improvements in the treatment of a number of life-threatening conditions such as burns and kidney failure for which transplantation is currently used.

While the potential medical benefits of pluripotent stem cell technology are unprecedented, the National Institutes of Health has proposed guidelines outlining that this area of research must be conducted in accordance with strict ethical standards.

□ 1300

NIH understands the ethical, legal, and social issues relevant to human pluripotent stem cell research and is sensitive to the need to subject it to oversight that is more stringent than that associated with the traditional NIH scientific peer review process.

Most importantly, Mr. Speaker, Federal funding would bring with it a level of oversight that will not be present if the work remains the sole province of the private sector.

Finally, the American people support stem cell research, as shown by a nationwide survey conducted by Opinion Research Corporation International last year. They found that 74 percent of those polled favored funding of stem cell research by NIH.

Federal funds are crucial to allow scientists to proceed with stem cell research, which offers hope to more than 100 million Americans who suffer from a myriad of deadly and debilitating diseases.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I want to urge my colleagues to support medical research in the search to find the cure for life-threatening disease and disability. I ask them to cosponsor House Resolution 414.

PAKISTAN'S PATTERN OF SPONSORING TERRORISM, PROVOKING CRISIS IN KASHMIR, AND THREATENING DESTABILIZATION OF REGION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss the latest episode in a troubling, ongoing pattern by the military regime in Pakistan to provoke a crisis in Kashmir and to essentially pick a fight with India with results that could be destabilizing and devastating to the entire region and the entire world.

The Pakistani government, a military junta that overthrew the civilian government in a coup last October, declared last Saturday, February 5, Kashmir Solidarity Day. Pakistan's military strongman leader, General Musharraf, visited the Pakistani-administered area of Kashmir and encouraged the terrorist forces there to continue their Jihad in the Indian states of Jammu and Kashmir.

That same evening, according to an account from the Indo-American Kashmir Forum, a band of gun-wielding terrorists sought out Kashmiri Pandits or Hindus in the village of Telwani and opened fire on two families belonging to the minority Hindu community. Three Pandits, including a 9-year-old girl, were killed and many others were injured.

Mr. Speaker, this is the true face of the so-called liberation campaign being waged by so-called freedom fighters for years in Kashmir. It is a violent terrorist campaign, pure and simple. Now Pakistan's support for this violent campaign has been laid bare for all the world to see.

Pakistan has always acknowledged its political and moral support for the insurgency in Kashmir, but evidence clearly shows that Pakistan's support runs much deeper. Now General Musharraf has spelled it out. He publicly pledged his support for the terrorist groups fighting in India's state of Jammu and Kashmir.

He was quoted in news accounts saying, ''All heads rise with pride when we

hear of the struggle of Kashmiri freedom fighters.'' These are the same freedom fighters who carried out the atrocity against the Pandit villagers, including the little girl, that same night.

Mr. Speaker, India and Pakistan have fought two wars over Kashmir. Last summer Pakistan initiated a border skirmish last year across the line of control that separates the two sides near the town of Kargil. Most news accounts indicate that General Musharraf and the other military coup leaders were behind the planning and execution of that disastrous campaign.

Fortunately, the United States and the rest of the world community recognize Pakistan as the aggressor. President Clinton prevailed on the civilian leadership of Pakistan, and I stress, civilian leadership of Pakistan at the time, because the civilian government was still in place, to withdraw its forces.

A few months later General Musharraf overthrew Pakistan's civilian government, and the government in Islamabad has been escalating the threatening rhetoric and destabilizing actions ever since.

Mr. Speaker, the U.S. has not done enough, in my opinion, to show its opposition to the military takeover in Pakistan. A House resolution that condemns the coup has come out of committee. The problem is that the military government has no legitimacy, and can only stay in power as long as it whips up hatred against India by citing Kashmir. That is why the generals started the Kargil war, and that is why they encouraged the hijacking of the India Airlines plane last December. That is why they continue the campaign against a multi-ethnic and religious state in Kashmir, and contribute to the murder of innocent Kashmiri Pandits. The end result of the generals' provocation would be another war with India over Kashmir. The problem is that the generals now control nuclear weapons they could unleash in such a war.

Mr. Speaker, the U.S. must send an unequivocal message that this continued provocation in Kashmir by the Pakistan military regime is unacceptable. At a minimum, the President should not visit Pakistan during his trip to South Asia in March. The State Department should declare Pakistan a terrorist state, and make it clear there will be no further contact with the Pakistani government until it stops its provocative actions in Kashmir and takes steps to restore democracy in Pakistan.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION TO IMPLEMENT THE EXECUTIVE ORDER ON FEDERAL WORKFORCE TRANSPORTATION IN THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing, along with the gentlewoman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. DAVIS), a bill which will require the President to issue the Executive Order on Federal Workforce Transportation in the National Capital Region.

No single action will do more to reduce traffic congestion and improve the quality of life of the people who live in the Washington metropolitan area. This Federal order, which has been held at the White House for over 6 months, would help alleviate traffic congestion in Washington, D.C., Maryland, and Virginia for all people, those who work for the government and those who work in the private sector.

The order would reduce traffic by requiring all Federal agencies to provide a monthly transit benefit to their employees. Currently less than 20 percent of the Federal work force is eligible to receive transit benefits. This action would encourage Federal employees to use mass transit, and could take thousands of cars off the street every day. The order would expand the use of telecommuting and telework for Federal employees, which would also take cars off the road, give Federal employees the opportunity to telework, where they can have more choices and opportunities, and make it a better environment.

Lastly, the order would increase carpool benefits, shuttle service between mass transit points and agency worksites, and allow for alternative work schedules.

Mr. Speaker, I think we all agree that the Federal government has a responsibility to help reduce air pollution, and that motor vehicle traffic is the major source of pollution in this region. This Executive Order would take cars off the road, help clean up the air, and yet the White House is sitting on it.

Let me read exactly what the Executive Order says about air pollution. It says, ''In furtherance of the purposes of the Clean Air Act and the Federal Employees Clean Air Incentives Act, the Federal government, as the largest single employer in the Nation's Capital Region, has a responsibility to reduce the traffic congestion and motor vehicle-generated air pollution. . . .''

This Executive Order for the most part is an environmental document, and yet the Clinton-Gore White House is refusing to approve it.

Mr. Speaker, allow me to read from the implementation requirements, which state, ''For several years, there have been increasingly dire warnings about the negative consequences of traffic congestion and air pollution in the Capital region. Studies show that adverse impacts on the economy, quality of life, energy resources, environment, and public health.''

Why is the White House sitting on the Executive Order which they know will benefit the health of the people who live in the region, but also give Federal employees control over their own lives, and also take automobiles and cars off the streets of Maryland and Virginia and the District of Columbia so people can get back and forth to work and spend more time with their families?

It is a quality of life issue there. The simple fact that this order would reduce traffic congestion in our region is reason enough to sign it. Now we learn it will help with regard to the environment.

The document is important. The action is needed for now. Yet, this has been sitting on the President's desk for over 6 months. The bill will go in today. We will attempt to pass this bill. But I would hope and ask the White House to sign the Executive Order so we can give Federal employees this opportunity, give them opportunities to telework, but also take cars off the streets whereby we can have a better quality of life in this region for everyone who drives.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 8 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

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

O gracious God, we remember with compassion and empathy those members of our community who have suffered great loss and have walked through the valley of the shadow of death.

In our grief we look to Your spirit, O God, for healing and hope, for strength and meaning, for peace and assurance.

May the bounty of Your love and the majesty of your whole creation ever remind us of the wonderful gifts of faith and hope and love and may these gifts continue to live in our hearts and minds now and evermore. This is our earnest prayer. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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.

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the Chair's approval of the Journal.

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

Mr. TRAFICANT. 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. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TRAFICANT) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. TRAFICANT 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.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE NEIL ABERCROMBIE, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable NEIL ABERCROMBIE, Member of Congress:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 3, 2000.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: This is to formally notify you, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that a staffer in my Honolulu, Hawaii district office has been served with a trial subpoena for testimony, directed to me and issued by the U.S. District for the District of Hawaii.

In consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I will determine whether compliance with the subpoena is consistent with the precedents and privileges of the House.

Sincerely,

NEIL ABERCROMBIE.

END THE MARRIAGE PENALTY

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

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, nearly a half century ago, Albert Einstein said that the hardest thing to understand in the world is the income tax. Since then, our income tax system has not gotten better; it has gotten worse.

Today, American taxpayers, including myself, just cannot understand why married couples must pay more in taxes simply because they are married.

Mr. Speaker, in my home State the marriage tax penalty robs over 290,000 Nevadans every April 15. While I welcome the President's support for marriage penalty relief, his proposal simply does not go to the heart of the problem. His proposal fails to help all of America's hard-working couples.

The Republican plan will provide over the next decade $180 billion in marriage penalty relief to 25 million couples, including millions of middle-class Americans hit hardest by this unfair tax burden.

Mr. Speaker, one thing is clear to me: it is time that we right this wrong and provide real marriage penalty relief for America.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back this corrupt burden of our Internal Revenue Code.

ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1996 TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACT

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

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, we all know that monopolies do not serve the public interest; they keep prices high, limit consumer choice, and fail to innovate. In 1996, in an effort to break up the entrenched local phone monopolies, Congress overwhelmingly passed the Telecommunications Act. I am happy to commemorate the 4-year anniversary of that Act.

The theory of the 1996 law is simple: in order to encourage local phone monopolies to open their local networks to competition, the Bells would be permitted to enter the long-distance market, but only when their local markets were open and competitive. Four years after its passage, there is substantial evidence that the 1996 act is working. But the local phone market is still not as competitive as we would like. There are competitive local carriers growing rapidly, both in terms of revenue and market capitalization; but they still compromise only 5 percent of the market. And worse still, the Bells even refuse to provide competitors with the necessary network access.

JOIN CONGRESSIONAL LIFE FORUM WEDNESDAY TO HEAR DR. JOSEPH BRUNER

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I direct the Members' attention to this photograph of the little hand of Samuel Armas and the larger hand of his surgeon, Dr. Joseph Bruner.

Samuel Armas was still unborn when this was taken. He suffered from spina bifida, a disabling illness that affects one or two of every thousand babies.

Look at Samuel as Dr. Bruner finishes this prenatal operation procedure that will help Samuel after he is born. While still in the womb, before the doctor sews up his mother's womb, he sticks out his arm and his little hand grasps the finger of the surgeon, Dr. Bruner.

When this picture was taken, Samuel was 21 weeks old. What an example of the humanity of the little unborn child, as if he is saying thank you, I am okay.

Samuel was born on December 2, a healthy little baby boy. Thanks to Dr. Bruner, he has a chance to live a full and productive life. Mr. Speaker, life is precious.

The man who showed us this picture a couple of years ago, Dr. Bernard Nathanson, is coming back tomorrow at noon to speak to the Congressional Life Forum and Cannon Caucus. Everyone is welcome to attend.

INNOCENT UNTIL PROVEN GUILTY SHOULD BE GOOD ENOUGH FOR IRS

(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, in 1997, the IRS seized 10,000 properties. After Congress changed the law and shifted the burden of proof to the IRS, last year, the IRS seized only 161 properties; 161 from 10,000. But guess what, the IRS wants the law changed back. They say it is too costly. Unbelievable.

If the IRS had their way, last year 9,840 American families would have lost their homes and their businesses. Beam me up.

Listen. If innocent until proven guilty is good enough for mass murderers, it is good enough for Mom and Dad, and it is good enough for the IRS.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the tears and whining over the IRS.

MARRIAGE TAX PENALTY

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

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I think my colleagues on both sides of the aisle would agree that we may never have a perfect tax code, but it should at least be fair. That is the essence of any voluntary tax system.

How can we in this body make our tax system more fair? We can start by passing the marriage tax relief bill. Last year, nearly 50 million Americans, including more than 200,000 of my fellow Arkansans, paid extra taxes just because they were married. These folks do not pay just a little bit more in taxes; they paid an average of $1,400 apiece.

Our government is discriminating against married couples by forcing them to pay an extra fine of more than $1,000. This is not fair, and it should end.

Whether it is in a church or in a courtroom, couples have to usually pay some type of a fee for the marriage ceremony. But while it may cost money to get married, it should not cost money to be married.

I hope all of my colleagues will join me in standing up for married couples and in voting yes on the Marriage Tax Penalty Relief Act.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska). Pursuant to the provisions of clause 8 of rule XX, 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 6 of rule XX.

Any record votes on postponed questions will be taken after debate is concluded on all motions to suspend the rules, but not before 6 p.m. today.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN BICENTENNIAL COMMISSION ACT

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill (H.R. 1451) to establish the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission.

The Clerk read as follows:

Senate amendment:

Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission Act''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Abraham Lincoln, the 16th President, was one of the Nation's most prominent leaders, demonstrating true courage during the Civil War, one of the greatest crises in the Nation's history.

(2) Born of humble roots in Hardin County, Kentucky, on February 12, 1809, Abraham Lincoln rose to the Presidency through a legacy of honesty, integrity, intelligence, and commitment to the United States.

(3) With the belief that all men were created equal, Abraham Lincoln led the effort to free all slaves in the United States.

(4) Abraham Lincoln had a generous heart, with malice toward none and with charity for all.

(5) Abraham Lincoln gave the ultimate sacrifice for the country Lincoln loved, dying from an assassin's bullet on April 15, 1865.

(6) All Americans could benefit from studying the life of Abraham Lincoln, for Lincoln's life is a model for accomplishing the ''American Dream'' through honesty, integrity, loyalty, and a lifetime of education.

(7) The year 2009 will be the bicentennial anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln, and a commission should be established to study and recommend to Congress activities that are fitting and proper to celebrate that anniversary in a manner that appropriately honors Abraham Lincoln.

SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT.

There is established a commission to be known as the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission (referred to in this Act as the ''Commission'').

SEC. 4. DUTIES.

The Commission shall have the following duties:

(1) To study activities that may be carried out by the Federal Government to determine whether the activities are fitting and proper to honor Abraham Lincoln on the occasion of the bicentennial anniversary of Lincoln's birth, including—

(A) the minting of an Abraham Lincoln bicentennial penny;

(B) the issuance of an Abraham Lincoln bicentennial postage stamp;

(C) the convening of a joint meeting or joint session of Congress for ceremonies and activities relating to Abraham Lincoln;

(D) a redesignation of the Lincoln Memorial, or other activity with respect to the Memorial; and

(E) the acquisition and preservation of artifacts associated with Abraham Lincoln.

(2) To recommend to Congress the activities that the Commission considers most fitting and proper to honor Abraham Lincoln on such occasion, and the entity or entities in the Federal Government that the Commission considers most appropriate to carry out such activities.

SEC. 5. MEMBERSHIP.

(a) NUMBER AND APPOINTMENT.—The Commission shall be composed of 15 members appointed as follows:

(1) Two members, each of whom shall be a qualified citizen described in subsection (b), appointed by the President.

(2) One member, who shall be a qualified citizen described in subsection (b), appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Governor of Illinois.

(3) One member, who shall be a qualified citizen described in subsection (b), appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Governor of Indiana.

(4) One member, who shall be a qualified citizen described in subsection (b), appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Governor of Kentucky.

(5) Three members, at least one of whom shall be a Member of the House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

(6) Three members, at least one of whom shall be a Senator, appointed by the majority leader of the Senate.

(7) Two members, at least one of whom shall be a Member of the House of Representatives, appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives.

(8) Two members, at least one of whom shall be a Senator, appointed by the minority leader of the Senate.

(b) QUALIFIED CITIZEN.—A qualified citizen described in this subsection is a private citizen of the United States with—

(1) a demonstrated dedication to educating others about the importance of historical figures and events; and

(2) substantial knowledge and appreciation of Abraham Lincoln.

(c) TIME OF APPOINTMENT.—Each initial appointment of a member of the Commission shall be made before the expiration of the 120-day period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act.

(d) CONTINUATION OF MEMBERSHIP.—If a member of the Commission was appointed to the Commission as a Member of Congress, and ceases to be a Member of Congress, that member may continue to serve on the Commission for not longer than the 30-day period beginning on the date that member ceases to be a Member of Congress.

(e) TERMS.—Each member shall be appointed for the life of the Commission.

(f) VACANCIES.—A vacancy in the Commission shall not affect the powers of the Commission but shall be filled in the manner in which the original appointment was made.

(g) BASIC PAY.—Members shall serve on the Commission without pay.

(h) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—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.

(i) QUORUM.—Five members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum but a lesser number may hold hearings.

(j) CHAIR.—The Commission shall select a Chair from among the members of the Commission.

(k) MEETINGS.—The Commission shall meet at the call of the Chair. Periodically, the Commission shall hold a meeting in Springfield, Illinois.

SEC. 6. DIRECTOR AND STAFF.

(a) DIRECTOR.—The Commission may appoint and fix the pay of a Director and such additional personnel as the Commission considers to be appropriate.

(b) APPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN CIVIL SERVICE LAWS.—

(1) DIRECTOR.—The Director of the Commission may be appointed without regard to the provisions of title 5, United States Code, governing appointments in the competitive service, and may be paid without regard to the provisions of chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of that title relating to classification and General Schedule pay rates.

(2) STAFF.—The staff of the Commission shall be appointed subject to the provisions of title 5, United States Code, governing appointments in the competitive service, and shall be paid in accordance with the provisions of chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of that title relating to classification and General Schedule pay rates.

SEC. 7. POWERS.

(a) HEARINGS AND SESSIONS.—The Commission may, for the purpose of carrying out this Act, hold such hearings, sit and act at such times and places, take such testimony, and receive such evidence as the Commission considers to be appropriate.

(b) POWERS OF MEMBERS AND AGENTS.—Any member or agent of the Commission may, if authorized by the Commission, take any action that the Commission is authorized to take by this Act.

(c) OBTAINING OFFICIAL DATA.—The Commission may secure directly from any department or agency of the United States information necessary to enable the Commission to carry out this Act. Upon request of the Chair of the Commission, the head of that department or agency shall furnish that information to the Commission.

(d) MAILS.—The Commission may use the United States mails in the same manner and under the same conditions as other departments and agencies of the United States.

(e) ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES.—Upon the request of the Commission, 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 responsibilities under this Act.

SEC. 8. REPORTS.

(a) INTERIM REPORTS.—The Commission may submit to Congress such interim reports as the Commission considers to be appropriate.

(b) FINAL REPORT.—The Commission shall submit a final report to Congress not later than the expiration of the 4-year period beginning on the date of the formation of the Commission. The final report shall contain—

(1) a detailed statement of the findings and conclusions of the Commission;

(2) the recommendations of the Commission; and

(3) any other information that the Commission considers to be appropriate.

SEC. 9. BUDGET ACT COMPLIANCE.

Any spending authority provided under this Act shall be effective only to such extent and in such amounts as are provided in appropriation Acts.

SEC. 10. TERMINATION.

The Commission shall terminate 120 days after submitting the final report of the Commission pursuant to section 8.

SEC. 11. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the bill, H.R. 1451.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1451, the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission Act, as amended by the Senate. As my colleagues will recall, this is the second time the House has considered H.R. 1451, which creates a commission to honor the life of Abraham Lincoln. Last October, this body overwhelmingly passed this legislation by a vote of 411 to 2 and sent it to the Senate for consideration.

I am pleased to have the opportunity today to manage H.R. 1451 for the second time. I congratulate the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD), my good friend and colleague, for authoring this fine bill.

Mr. Speaker, in 2009, America will celebrate the 200th anniversary of the birth of our 16th and perhaps greatest President, Abraham Lincoln.

Abraham Lincoln was born on February 12, 1809, in Hardin County, Kentucky. He was the son of a Kentucky frontiersman and struggled throughout most of his younger years in both Kentucky and Illinois to earn a living and to learn.

Abraham Lincoln once claimed he had been educated by ''littles,'' a little now and a little then. Yet for a man without what we would call a formal education, Abraham Lincoln embodied every character trait that we aspire to attain.

It is because Abraham Lincoln possessed these traits that his name is synonymous with all that is great and good in America. His name has come to symbolize commitment, freedom, honesty, bravery and vision: freedom because it was Abraham Lincoln who led the successful effort to free all slaves in the United States; honesty because of his untarnished character and impeccable integrity, which earned him the nickname ''Honest Abe''; bravery because he fought for and eventually gave his life to advance the principles that guided our Founding Fathers, including that ''all men are created equal''; and he had the vision to preserve a ''more perfect union'' by guiding this country through its most divisive period, the Civil War. When that war was drawing to a conclusion, Lincoln sought to bind up the Nation's wounds rather than punish those who had seceded from the union.

Tragically, an assassin's bullet not only took Lincoln's life, but with it killed any chance for a magnanimous peace.

Let me take a moment to inform my colleagues of the changes the Senate has made to H.R. 1451. Under both the House- and Senate-passed bills, the commission will consist of 15 members, individuals who possess a substantial appreciation of Abraham Lincoln's life. However, as amended by the Senate, the individual who chairs the commission will be appointed by the members of the commission, not by the President.

In addition, the Senate amendments reduce the number of commissioners appointed by the President from nine to five. The number of commission members appointed by congressional leaders is increased from six to 10, and the leaders are provided more flexibility in making those appointments.

Finally, the Senate amendments provide that three, rather than six, of the President's appointments will be individuals recommended by the governors of Illinois, Indiana, and Kentucky, States in which Lincoln spent most of his life. I believe these are appropriate changes and urge all Members to concur with their adoption.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to offer this legislation. I am also proud to be a cosponsor of the bill, and I encourage the support of all Members.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, this legislation before us today establishes a bicentennial commission to celebrate the life and accomplishments of this Nation's 16th President, Abraham Lincoln.

In many respects, Abraham Lincoln was an ordinary man who, throughout his life, did many extraordinary things. Mr. Lincoln was poor and struggled to educate himself. After completing his duties, he practiced law. He served in the military, holding the rank of captain during the Black Hawk War. Thereafter, he continued his public service by spending 8 years in the Illinois legislature. Then in 1836, he was elected to Congress and served two terms.

□ 1415

In 1832, when Abraham Lincoln was seeking his first seat in the Illinois General Assembly, he stated in his first political announcement, and I quote, ''Upon the subject of education, not presuming to dictate any plan or system respecting it, I can only say that I view it as a most important subject which we as a people can be engaged in. That every man receive at least a moderate education and thereby be enabled to read the histories of his own and other countries by which he may duly appreciate the value of our free institutions, appears to be an object vital importance.''

It is important that H.R. 1451 stipulates that the members of the commission be selected based on their demonstrated dedication to educating others about the importance of historical figures and events. It is through education that we learn about our pasts and prepare ourselves for our future. Abraham Lincoln made decisions and took actions that would forever change the course of America. The commission will be responsible for educating Americans, young and old, about the importance of the Lincoln legacy and contributions he made for a free and unified country.

In 1854, Lincoln took an unpopular stance and opposed the Kansas-Nebraska Act, which threatened to extend slavery to other States. Lincoln was elected president in 1860 when the United States was no longer united but was divided over slavery. Believing that secession was illegal, he was prepared to use force to defend the union and did so. The Civil War began in 1861 and would last 4 years costing the lives of over 500,000 Americans.

On November 16, 1863, in the midst of a war, on a battlefield near Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, President Lincoln not only acknowledged the sacrifice of thousands who had perished but presented his vision for the future of our Nation, conceived in liberty, where everyone is created equal. The speech known as the Gettysburg Address shaped the destiny of the United States of America; that government of the people and by the people should be for all the people, regardless of race or color. For this, Mr. Lincoln lost his life on the balcony of the Ford Theater in 1865 right here in Washington, D.C.

The Bicentennial Commission will recommend to Congress what activities and actions should be taken to celebrate the life of Abraham Lincoln. The commission's recommendations to this body should reflect how a man of humble roots rose to the office of the President of the United States of America.

The bicentennial anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln presents the opportunity for Americans to recommit ourselves to the principles extolled by Abraham Lincoln; honesty, integrity, loyalty and the pursuit of education. I urge all Members of this body to support H.R. 1451.

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

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD), the author of this bill.

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

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) for yielding this time to me, and also thank the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) for his remarks here today, his remarks in the committee, and his remarks when we previously considered this bill last year. They were most eloquent about President Lincoln.

Mr. Speaker, I am here today to celebrate the life and legacy of President Abraham Lincoln by asking for my colleagues' support of H.R. 1451, the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Act of 1999. The bill, which has passed the Senate,

will establish a commission, the purpose of which would be to make recommendations to Congress for a national program to honor President Abraham Lincoln in the year 2009, the bicentennial celebration of his birth.

For decades historians have acknowledged President Lincoln as one of our country's greatest presidents. As our 16th President, Lincoln served the country during a most precarious era. While most of the country looked to divide, President Lincoln fought for unity and eventually saved the Union.

With the belief that all men are created equal, President Lincoln led the charge to end slavery in America. Without the determination and wisdom of President Lincoln, our country as we know it may not exist today.

President Lincoln also serves as a national symbol of the American Dream. Born of humble roots on February 12, 1809 in Hardin County, Kentucky, Abraham Lincoln rose to the Presidency through a legacy of honesty, integrity, intelligence, and commitment to the United States of America.

In 1909, America celebrated the centennial of President Lincoln's birth in a manner deserving of the accomplishments. Congress approved placing the image of President Lincoln on the first-class stamp for the first time, made President Lincoln's birth a national holiday, and passed legislation leading to the construction of the Lincoln Memorial here in Washington, D.C. Further, President Theodore Roosevelt approved placing the image of President Lincoln on the penny.

As in 1909, I am pleased that Congress will again honor President Lincoln in 2009 by establishing the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission. Through this commission, Congress will be able to demonstrate its appreciation for Abraham Lincoln's accomplishments and ultimate sacrifice for our country.

The commission will identify and recommend to Congress appropriate actions to carry out this mission. And through the recommendations of this commission and subsequent acts of Congress, the American people will benefit by learning about the life of President Lincoln.

As an Illinoisan, I am proud of the fact President Lincoln considered Illinois his home for virtually all his adult life. In one of his most famous acts, President Lincoln enacted the Emancipation Proclamation, which went into effect January 1, 1863. Abraham Lincoln is remembered for his vital role as the leader in preserving the Union and beginning the process that led to the end of slavery in the United States.

He is remembered for his character, his speeches, his letters, and as a man of humble origin whose determination, preservation, perseverance led him to the Nation's highest office.

I would also like to acknowledge the assistance of a man named Peter Kovler, who actually came to me with this idea of establishing the commission. And it was he, as a private citizen, because of his interest in Lincoln, that this idea was brought forth in the form of a bill which will become law.

I would also like to thank Chuck Schierer of my staff and Chris Guidry of my staff for their help in drafting this bill.

I also want to acknowledge the fact that I have spoken to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. LEWIS), and we both have agreed that the commission should strongly consider holding their first meeting in Kentucky, the birthplace of Abraham Lincoln, as the site of its inaugural meeting. And we hope that will be accomplished.

I ask all my colleagues to join me today in honoring the memory of President Abraham Lincoln by supporting the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission Act of 1999.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS).

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to join my colleague, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD), and the entire Illinois delegation in supporting H.R. 1451 to create the Lincoln Bicentennial Commission.

As we near the 200th birthday of one of America's greatest presidents, it is important that we celebrate and commemorate his legacy. There can be no doubt that it was Abraham Lincoln's resolve that kept our Nation together during its most turbulent period. To forget or overlook that resolve and the sacrifices that President Lincoln and millions of others made, and many continue to make, would be wrong.

It is said that the 1700s were about creating a Nation, the 1800s were about preserving a Nation, and the 1900s about bringing a Nation together. Let us dedicate this next 100 years to building on the Lincoln legacy, to move our Nation forward as one people committed to freedom.

Lincoln said at Gettysburg that the world would not long remember and would soon forget what he and others were doing to preserve our Nation. Well, I say that we have not forgotten the sacrifices made and we will not take President Lincoln's legacy for granted. We thank him for his service and the example of the ends to which we must go to preserve this Nation and the rights of all citizens.

Happy birthday, Mr. Lincoln. I ask my colleagues for a favorable vote.

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

Mr. Speaker, when I look at what we are doing today, I think it is extremely important, and I certainly urge my colleagues to support this very important legislation; but I was considering something that Abraham Lincoln said that I think is just so telling about the man that we honor through this legislation. It is a quote I had not heard before, but I think it is one that perhaps all of us should give some serious consideration to.

He said, ''I desire to so conduct the affairs of this administration that if at the end, when I come to lay down the reins of power, I have lost every other friend on earth, I shall at least have one friend left and that friend shall be down inside of me.'' He really said something. The fact is that Abraham Lincoln stood for so much.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD) for his foresight in taking up the mantle of a constituent, which says a lot. I think a lot of times constituents think that they have little effect. But the fact is that here we are standing here today with this legislation because the gentleman took it upon himself to lift up the idea of a constituent. It goes to the same kind of thing, that one person can make a difference.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I again urge our colleagues to support the legislation, and I want to thank the gentlewoman for her cooperation and certainly the ranking member and the chair of our committee and subcommittee.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, let me close by reading to my colleagues a portion of the sermon given by Phineas D. Gurley at President Lincoln's funeral at the White House. The sermon and its message are powerful. They express the essence of Abraham Lincoln's character and why we seek to honor him today with this legislation.

I quote Dr. Gurley. ''Probably no man since the days of Washington was ever so deeply and firmly embedded and enshrined in the very hearts of the people as Abraham Lincoln. Nor was it a mistaken confidence and love. He deserved it well, deserved it all. He merited it by his character, by his acts, and by the whole tenor and tone and spirit of his life. He was simple and sincere, plain and honest, truthful and just, benevolent and kind. His perceptions were quick and clear, his judgments were calm and accurate, and his purposes were good and pure beyond a question. Always and everywhere he aimed and endeavored to be right and to do right.''

Let us do right by our 16th president by passing this legislation today.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I commend the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD) for introducing the bill. I also thank the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON), the chairman of the Committee on Government Reform, and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SCARBOROUGH), the chairman of the Subcommittee on Civil Service, for expediting its consideration, as well as the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) and the gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN) for their strong support. I urge all Members to support H.R. 1451.

Mr. ROEMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1451, The Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission Act recognizing the bicentennial of his birth. As a proud Hoosier, I call attention to the fact that Abraham Lincoln spent several key years of his life, his most formative years, maturing from youth to manhood while living in the State of Indiana.

Therefore, it is most fitting that this bill gives the Governor of Indiana the authority to appoint two members of the commission. Growing up in Indiana was a considerable influence in the life and development of Abraham Lincoln. He received his first exposure to politics and the issues that would later dominate his life in public service while living in Indiana. One of his first jobs was at a general store and meat market, which was owned by William Jones, whose family owned slaves in violation of the Indiana State Constitution. This was Lincoln's first introduction to slavery.

Abraham Lincoln firmly held to the highest ethical standards throughout his political career, appropriately earning the nickname Honest Abe. His vigorous work ethic and strong sense of morality are shining examples of selfless devotion to public service. His memory continues to serve as a guiding light for the future. He was fiercely devoted to his family, and he put the interests of his country above his own, which tragically led to his assassination. The Gettysburg Address and Second Inaugural Speech live on as two of the most important and best written speeches in American history.

Mr. Speaker, Indiana takes pride in its contributions to the life of President Lincoln, and we look forward to the work of the Commission in honoring him and reminding Americans of his legacy. All Americans, regardless of their state, take great pride in Abraham Lincoln. I encourage my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1451, the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission Act. First of all, I would like to thank Congresswoman JUDY BIGGERT of the Civil Service Subcommittee, who happens to represent Illinois, for speaking so eloquently on this important piece of legislation. Secondly, I commend Mr. LAHOOD, my colleague also from Illinois, for his sponsorship of this measure honoring President Abraham Lincoln. I also would like to mention Congressman RON LEWIS of Kentucky for his work on H.R. 1451, which ensured that President Lincoln's birthplace of Kentucky also had a legitimate role in this commission.

Mr. Speaker, in 9 years the United States will celebrate the bicentennial anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth. On this occasion we will certainly want to properly honor Abraham Lincoln for his immeasurable contributions to our Nation and to mankind. The Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission, established by H.R. 1451, will study and recommend activities and programs through which we, as a nation, can best remember and honor Abraham Lincoln, and rededicate ourselves to the ideals for which he fought and died.

At this time, I also would like to express my appreciation to my colleague from Indiana, Congressman MARK SOUDER, for his efforts on behalf of our home State. Indiana is proud to be the boyhood home of Abraham Lincoln. From age 7 to age 21, he lived on the frontier in southern Indiana. During his years in Indiana, he acquired his education, grew to his full height, and most important, developed his strong character which served our Nation so well during the crisis of the Civil War.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1451, and again thank all those involved for making this the exceptional piece of legislation that you see before you.

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to again voice my support for the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission Act. It is very fitting that we are considering this legislation today because this Saturday, February 12, will mark the 191st birthday of one of the greatest Presidents to ever serve our Nation.

Lincoln occupied the White House through 4 of our country's darkest years and was faced with the prospect of uniting our country torn asunder by civil war. Through his leadership and perseverance, Mr. Speaker, the Union was preserved.

While it is impossible to overlook his contributions to America from the White House, there is much more to the story of Abraham Lincoln that endures in the hearts and minds of his countrymen. Lincoln was born to humble roots in a log cabin in Hodgenville, Kentucky, located in the Second District. He was largely self-educated, yet became one of our country's greatest statesman with his eloquent use of the English language. He clung to the highest ethical standards throughout his political career, earning the nickname Honest Abe. He was fiercely devoted to his family, and he put the interest of his country above his own, which ultimately led to his assassination. He was born into obscurity but earned the gratitude and love of every American.

Lincoln's story is one of America, and should serve as an inspiration to all of us. It is a story posterity needs to learn, and it is incumbent on the Federal Government to use all available resources to preserve his legacy.

Lincoln has always been one of my heroes of history. In fact, his portrait, along with many other likenesses, graces my Washington and District offices and serves as a reminder to me of my duty to my country and responsibility to those who have elected me to serve.

I urge my colleagues to support the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission Act. As Edwin Stanton said upon the President's death, "Now he belongs to the ages." We have an opportunity today to make sure President Lincoln remains a man for the ages by passing this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, it is my hope that this commission will conduct its inaugural meeting in Hodgenville, Kentucky, the birthplace of Abraham Lincoln.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) that the House suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 1451.

The question was taken.

Mr. LAHOOD. 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.

□ 1430

POISON CONTROL CENTER ENHANCEMENT AND AWARENESS ACT

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 632) to provide assistance for poison prevention and to stabilize the funding of regional poison control centers.

The Clerk read as follows:

S. 632

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 "Poison Control Center Enhancement and Awareness Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Each year more than 2,000,000 poisonings are reported to poison control centers throughout the United States. More than 90 percent of these poisonings happen in the home. 53 percent of poisoning victims are children younger than 6 years of age.

(2) Poison control centers are a valuable national resource that provide life-saving and cost-effective public health services. For every dollar spent on poison control centers, $7 in medical costs are saved. The average cost of a poisoning exposure call is $32, while the average cost if other parts of the medical system are involved is $932. Over the last 2 decades, the instability and lack of funding has resulted in a steady decline in the number of poison control centers in the United States. Within just the last year, 2 poison control centers have been forced to close because of funding problems. A third poison control center is scheduled to close in April 1999. Currently, there are 73 such centers.

(3) Stabilizing the funding structure and increasing accessibility to poison control centers will increase the number of United States residents who have access to a certified poison control center, and reduce the inappropriate use of emergency medical services and other more costly health care services.

SEC. 3. DEFINITION.

In this Act, the term "Secretary" means the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

SEC. 4. ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL TOLL-FREE NUMBER.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall provide coordination and assistance to regional poison control centers for the establishment of a nationwide toll-free phone number to be used to access such centers.

(b) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed as prohibiting the establishment or continued operation of any privately funded nationwide toll-free phone number used to provide advice and other assistance for poisonings or accidental exposures.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section, $2,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2000 through 2004. Funds appropriated under this subsection shall not be used to fund any toll-free phone number described in subsection (b).

SEC. 5. ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONWIDE MEDIA CAMPAIGN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish a national media campaign to educate the public and health care providers about poison prevention and the availability of poison control resources in local communities and to conduct advertising campaigns concerning the nationwide toll-free number established under section 4.

(b) CONTRACT WITH ENTITY.—The Secretary may carry out subsection (a) by entering into contracts with 1 or more nationally recognized media firms for the development and distribution of monthly television, radio, and newspaper public service announcements.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section, $600,000 for each of the fiscal years 2000 through 2004.

SEC. 6. ESTABLISHMENT OF A GRANT PROGRAM.

(a) REGIONAL POISON CONTROL CENTERS.—The Secretary shall award grants to certified regional poison control centers for the purposes of achieving the financial stability of such centers, and for preventing and providing treatment recommendations for poisonings.

(b) OTHER IMPROVEMENTS.—The Secretary shall also use amounts received under this section to—

(1) develop standard education programs;

(2) develop standard patient management protocols for commonly encountered toxic exposures;

(3) improve and expand the poison control data collection systems;

(4) improve national toxic exposure surveillance; and

(5) expand the physician/medical toxicologist supervision of poison control centers.

(c) CERTIFICATION.—Except as provided in subsection (d), the Secretary may make a grant to a center under subsection (a) only if—

(1) the center has been certified by a professional organization in the field of poison control, and the Secretary has approved the organization as having in effect standards for certification that reasonably provide for the protection of the public health with respect to poisoning; or

(2) the center has been certified by a State government, and the Secretary has approved the State government as having in effect standards for certification that reasonably provide for the protection of the public health with respect to poisoning.

(d) WAIVER OF CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may grant a waiver of the certification requirement of subsection (c) with respect to a noncertified poison control center or a newly established center that applies for a grant under this section if such center can reasonably demonstrate that the center will obtain such a certification within a reasonable period of time as determined appropriate by the Secretary.

(2) RENEWAL.—The Secretary may only renew a waiver under paragraph (1) for a period of 3 years.

(e) SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT.—Amounts made available to a poison control center under this section shall be used to supplement and not supplant other Federal, State, or local funds provided for such center.

(f) MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT.—A poison control center, in utilizing the proceeds of a grant under this section, shall maintain the expenditures of the center for activities of the center at a level that is not less than the level of such expenditures maintained by the center for the fiscal year preceding the fiscal year for which the grant is received.

(g) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—The Secretary may impose a matching requirement with respect to amounts provided under a grant under this section if the Secretary determines appropriate.

(h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section, $25,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2000 through 2004.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. TOWNS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on S. 632.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to approve S. 632, the Poison Control Center Enhancement and Awareness Act.

This long-overdue legislation will provide a stable base of support for our Nation's threatened poison control centers and improve public education and awareness about these life-saving resources.

This Senate bill is the companion measure to the legislation that I introduced with my colleague and friend, the gentleman from New York (Mr. TOWNS), in the last session of Congress. I am pleased to note that our bill enjoys strong bipartisan support, it has more than 130 cosponsors; and that the Senate bill, this bill, was approved by unanimous consent under the leadership of our Ohio friend, Senator Mike DEWINE.

Poison control centers provide vital, very cost-effective services to the American public. Each year more than 2 million poisonings are reported to poison control centers throughout the United States. More than 90 percent of these poisonings occur in the home, and more than 50 percent of poisoning victims are children under the age of 16.

For every dollar spent on poison control center services, $7 in medical services are saved. But in spite of their obvious value, poison control centers are indeed in jeopardy.

Historically, these centers were typically funded by the private and public sector hospitals where they were located. The transition to managed care, however, has resulted in a gradual erosion of the funding. As this funding source has been drying up, poison control centers have only partially been able to replace the support by cobbling together other State and local and private funding.

The financial squeeze has forced many of the centers to curtail their poison prevention advisory services and their information and emergency activities and reduce the number of nurses, pharmacists, and physicians answering the emergency telephones. Currently, there are 73 centers. In 1978 there were 661.

The Poison Control Center Enhancement and Awareness Act will provide up to $28 million each year over the next 5 years to provide a stable source of funding for these centers, to establish a national toll-free poison control hotline, and to improve public education on poisoning prevention and poison center services.

The legislation is designed to ensure that these funds supplement, not supplant, other funding that the centers may be receiving and provides the Secretary of Health and Human Services with the authority to impose a matching requirement.

Further, to receive Federal funding, a center will have to be certified by the Secretary of Health and Human Services or an organizational expert in the field of poison control designated by the Secretary. I want to recognize especially Senator DEWINE's contribution and his leadership.

In addition to my colleague, the gentleman from New York (Mr. TOWNS), I would especially like to thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BLILEY), chairman of the Committee on Commerce; the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. DINGELL), the ranking member; and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS), the chairman of the Subcommittee on Health and the Environment; and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), his ranking member, for their interest and leadership on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, there is no greater pain or nightmare to watch a loved one suffer for something that we could cure.

I can remember, as a new dad, buying those little gadgets and putting them on my cupboards in my kitchen to make sure that my daughter and my son would not be able to open those up and find the detergent and bleach and other things that might be in those cabinets. But despite that foresight, it is not 100 percent foolproof. And when these things happen, we have to make sure that every family across this great country has access to an 800 number where they can immediately reach out to someone who knows what to do when that tragedy might strike.

That is what this bill does, Mr. Speaker. It provides that access so our kids and our loved ones can live. I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation. It is long overdue, and I look forward to its passage this evening.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleague and friend, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON), in supporting S. 632.

I also would like to thank the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. DINGELL), the ranking member of the full committee; and, of course, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS), the chairman of the subcommittee; and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BLILEY), the chairman of the full committee; and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN),

who is the ranking member on the Subcommittee on Health and the Environment. I would like to thank all of them for their outstanding leadership, along with the gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RUSH).

The Poison Control Center Enhancement and Awareness Act, we introduced virtually identical legislation, H.R. 1221, in March of last year. The poison control centers provide cost savings, effective preventive services to the American public. For every dollar spent on a center's services, $7 in medical costs are saved.

Yet, we have seen a dramatic decrease in the number of centers. They have actually decreased them by 588 from 1978 to 1999, when we introduced 1221. That is hard to understand.

When we talk to the nurses, they want it. When we talk to the doctors, they want it. Anybody that is involved in health care is asking that we fund these poison control centers and that we do it now. Because they are so important in terms of saving the lives of so many people, especially our children.

This legislation would authorize appropriations for $28 million over the next 5 years, which provides a stable source of funding. The Secretary of Health and Human Services is also directed under the legislation to improve public education about poisonings and to provide correlation and assistance to regional poison control centers for the establishment of a nationwide toll-free phone number to access these centers. This kind of effort is critical if centers are to provide the maximum level of service to our most vulnerable population, the Nation's children.

Children are disproportionately impacted. For example, 60 percent of poisonings involved children under the age of 6.

In hearings that we held during the 104th Congress, in the House Government Operations Subcommittee on Human Resources, suggested that the unintentional injuries and deaths that result from poisonings could be mitigated if we had a stable source of funding for poison control centers.

In other words, if we would just say that we were going to be committed to it and put forth a certain amount rather than continuing to do a piecemeal kind of thing, we would be able to save a lot of lives because people would know where to turn.

S. 632 provides us with the opportunity today to ensure a stable source of funding. I urge my colleagues, including the 130 cosponsors of our bill, H.R. 1221, to join me in voting for this measure. It passed the Senate by unanimous consent. We should do no less today to guarantee that poison control centers have the financial security they need to provide our citizens with life-saving information about these centers.

Mr. Speaker, let me just again commend my colleague, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON), for the outstanding job that he has done. Because when we walk the streets and we talk to people that have children and they talk about some of the incidents that have occurred and that they do not know where to turn, when we talk to physicians who are actually in the emergency rooms of these various hospitals who say that they look to these poison control centers to get information to be able to deal with the mother, or for a mother to be able to pick up the phone and call a center and for the center to tell her what to do on the phone, we are talking about saving money.

I cannot understand why we are so reluctant to do this in this day and age when we know that it is important that we cut costs. But we need to do it in a very reasonable fashion.

So I want to once again thank my colleague for having the foresight to say that this should be done. I think that we have to continue to work to make certain that we have that central number so that everybody knows that, once an incident occurs, that a person right away will know what to call by saying 1–800 and that mother would be able to be relieved of some of that tension that she might have if otherwise that information was not available.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, it is hard to think of an issue that the gentleman from New York (Mr. TOWNS) and I when we have tried to lead on an issue have not reached out to each other and sought some partisan support. And I again appreciate that friendship and hard work.

At the end of the day, at the end of this day, this Congress is going to follow through with what the Senate did and make sure that, in fact, these poison control centers are in place and that they are going to be funded.

There is an old movie that I remember, ''Ghostbusters.'' Remember that? ''Who are you going to call? Ghostbusters.'' I am not going to sing it. But when a parent has a problem, particularly a parent, but it could be anybody, there has got to be a number that they can call, whether it is their cell phone in their pocket or the phone in their kitchen. And this bill does that. Because they do not have time, they do not have a lot of time to react when someone might be writhing on the floor with some substance that they might have ingested and they have no idea what to do, particularly as a non-physician, as most of us in this body are.

This bill is going to save lives; and at the end of the day, it is going to save money too. I cannot think of a better promise to the American taxpayer, to the folks that we serve, as we have visited our day-care centers and we see those wonderful little kids that are playing. They cannot distinguish between a box of detergent and a box of cereal. They just know that it usually has got a pretty color.

We have got to make sure that, in fact, their lives are going to be saved when they do something that they really should not do if they had had some parental involvement during that tragic moment.

So again, Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to support this legislation. I would hope that we can pass it without any objections at all.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge you to support S. 632, the Poison Center Enhancement and Awareness Act of 1997. This important legislation authorizes Congress to provide assistance to poison control, information and treatment centers nationwide through a grant-funding program that would be administered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The funding will be used to educate the public about the benefits of poison prevention and treatment, primarily through the ''Mr. Yuk'' campaign.

The federal government should support poison control and treatment centers because they provide immediate, around-the-clock toxicity assessments and treatment recommendations over the telephone for all types of poisoning, overdoses and drug interactions affecting people of all ages. On a daily basis, parents, grandparents, child-care providers, teachers and health care providers consult these centers. Most calls are safely managed over the phone and referrals are made to health care facilities as appropriate. More severe cases are followed up so progress can be assessed and additional recommendations provided as necessary.

The Illinois Poison Center (IPC), which is located in my congressional district, is the nation's oldest and Illinois' only remaining poison control, information and treatment center. Since 1953, it was operated by a local Chicago hospital. By 1996, however, the hospital was no longer able to maintain the center's operation, largely because of a lack of funding. Also by that time, the four other poison centers located in Illinois had closed. Eventually, the IPC's operations were assumed by the Metropolitan Chicago Healthcare Council and, at the request of others around the state, the center was expanded to serve the entire state.

Unfortunately, the IPC's existence, like that of other poison centers around the nation, is jeopardized because of a lack of stable funding. There remains, however, a great need to support these centers and their education and treatment efforts. Studies also show that 90 percent of all poisonings happen in the home, and 53 percent of these cases involve children under six years of age. Also, a study conducted by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services found that for every dollar spent on a poison center saves $7 in unnecessary medical costs. In 1998 alone, more than 79 percent of all human exposures presented to the Illinois Poison Center were handled without a referral to a hospital emergency department or a private physician. This in turn saved more than $15 million in unnecessary emergency room and physician office visits.

Mr. BLILEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 632, The Poison Control Center Enhancement and Awareness Act. I ask my colleagues to consider that poisoning is the third most common form of unintentional death in

the United States. Every year, poisoning accounts for 13,000 deaths. It also leads to 285,000 hospitalizations and 1 million days of acute hospital care. The direct costs of poisoning are estimated at over $3 billion per year, which is more than our annual expenditures on gunshot wounds, burns and drownings combined.

S. 632 will provide a stable source of funding for poison control centers, establish a national toll-free poison control hotline, and improve public education on poisoning prevention and services. This assistance is needed because poison control centers have experienced a gradual erosion of funding as payments to hospitals (where they have typically been located) have been reduced. This financial squeeze has forced many centers to curtail their poison prevention advisory services and their information and emergency activities, and to reduce the number of nurses, pharmacists, and physicians answering the emergency telephones. Currently, there are 73 centers. In 1978, there were 661. And yet, such centers are very cost-effective. For every dollar spent on poison control center services, seven dollars in medical costs are saved.

Therefore, I encourage my colleagues to pass this bill, S. 632, which is being considered today under suspension of House rules. I join my Commerce Committee colleagues—Representatives UPTON, BILIRAKIS, and TOWNS—who are the original cosponsors of a very similar House Bill, in supporting its passage.

Mr. UPTON. 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 Michigan (Mr. UPTON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 632.

The question was taken.

Mr. UPTON. 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.

□ 1445

EXPRESSING SORROW OF THE HOUSE AT THE DEATH OF THE HONORABLE CARL B. ALBERT, FORMER MEMBER OF CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA

Mr. WATKINS. Mr. Speaker, I offer a privileged resolution (H. Res. 418) and ask for its immediate consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Oklahoma is recognized at this time to offer this resolution.

The Clerk will report the resolution.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 418

Resolved, That the House has learned with profound sorrow of the death of the Honorable Carl B. Albert, former Member of the House for 15 terms, and Speaker of the House of Representatives for the Ninety-second, Ninety-third and Ninety-fourth Congresses;

Resolved, That in the death of the Honorable Carl B. Albert the United States and the State of Oklahoma have lost a valued and eminent public servant and citizen.

Resolved, That the Clerk communicate these resolutions to the Senate and transmit a copy thereof to the family of the deceased.

Resolved, That when the House adjourns today, it adjourn as a further mark of respect to the memory of the deceased.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska). The gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. WATKINS) is recognized for 1 hour.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WATKINS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H. Res. 418.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WATKINS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, today I offer this resolution on behalf of myself and three fellow Oklahomans, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS), the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. ISTOOK), the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. WATTS), and the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON).

Mr. Speaker, I rise today with deep respect for and in honor of the life and service of my friend, Carl Albert of Oklahoma's Third Congressional District, a former Member and Speaker of this House.

It is also with great sadness that I record former Speaker Albert's passing last Friday evening, February 4, at the age of 91; but, let me quickly add though, 91 great and distinguished years. Only 21 Members remain in this House today who served with Mr. Albert prior to his retirement in 1977.

Carl Albert was an honorable man who was not tall in height, but was truly a giant of a man, whom I looked up to for his leadership to his country and his service to his fellow human beings.

Speaker Albert grew up in poverty in the small coal mining town of Bugtussle in Pittsburg County, and graduated from nearby McAlester High School, deep in the heart of my district of Southeastern Oklahoma, mainly called Little Dixie.

Through his intelligence, leadership and hard work, Carl Albert lifted himself from poverty to eventually hold the third highest office in the land, yes, Speaker of the House, and twice was a mere heartbeat away from the presidency.

My earliest memory of Carl Albert is his speech to my high school class in Bennington, Oklahoma during our eighth grade graduation ceremony. Even at that time, Mr. Albert was larger than life to me. He was a great orator, with amazing leadership qualities. His message to my classmates in the small poverty area of that southeastern Oklahoma town was that regardless of your circumstances as a young person, with hard work and perseverance you can rise up and make the most of your life and make a difference in the lives of others.

I remember Carl Albert as a great man of great humility, who did not seek power for power's sake. As Speaker, Carl Albert served as captain of the Congressional ship during some of our Nation's most difficult times, including the latter years, the closing years, of the divisive Vietnam War and President Nixon's impeachment proceedings and his resignation; and we all need to salute his steadfast leadership in this House during the civil rights movement of the 1960s.

During these times, Carl Albert never sought to advance his own agenda or to use these events for his own personal gain. Instead, he sought to unite our country, instead of divide it; and, as a result, we are a stronger and more united country today.

In 1977, Carl Albert stepped down after 6 years in the Speaker's Chair and returned to his home in the Bugtussle community in Pittsburg County, and, as his son David said to me last Saturday, began a new career as a grandpa.

Carl Albert always talked lovingly of his wife, Mary; his children, David and Mary Frances; and his four grandchildren, Katy, Michael, Carl David and Luke.

Carl Albert knew the value of family and friends and home. That is why it is no surprise to me that, even as a national and international leader, the Speaker and his wife Mary chose to retire to southeastern Oklahoma after 30 years in a Congressional career that saw him reach the pinnacle of power in this U.S. House.

1997 was also the year that I became a Member of this House succeeding the Speaker, Carl Albert. I also remember being introduced in 1977 as ''that young congressman who is replacing Carl Albert.'' As I said then, and still say today, I may have succeeded Carl Albert, but no one, no one, could ever replace him.

My wife, Lou, and I have firsthand experience and knowledge of the sacrifices that the Speaker and his family made during those years of service to this House; and our State and nation are very thankful for Carl Albert's service.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I ask that the House pay honor and tribute to Carl Albert, known as ''the Little Giant from Little Dixie.'' His service to this State and Nation and his fellow human beings provide a legacy unequaled in Oklahoma history, a legacy that will live together as a symbol of one man who overcame great adversity early in his life and then dedicated the rest of that life to serving others, including a highly successful 30-year Congressional career.

Yes, Oklahoma and the United States lost a great leader in Carl Albert, but his deeds and his works and the spirit of his legacy will never be lost in the history of America.

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

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the resolution and to thank the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. WATKINS) for having the foresight to come with this resolution to pay tribute to this great American, former Speaker Carl Albert. I join the Nation as I represent District 30 of Texas to express sincere sorrow regarding his passing.

Speaker Albert passed away last Friday, February 4, after a distinguished career, during which he shepherded the Nation through some of the most difficult years. Beginning in the 80th Congress, Speaker Albert spent the next 30 years representing the citizens of the Third Congressional District of Oklahoma in the U.S. Congress, and helped create a new era of American opportunity, supporting civil rights and anti-poverty legislation.

Speaker Albert provided invaluable leadership to the House of Representatives as Majority Leader during the 87th through 91st Congresses, and Majority Whip during the 84th through the 87th Congresses. As leader of this legislative body during the 92nd through the 94th Congresses, Speaker Albert fostered a lasting legacy. He successfully steered the Nation through difficult times and ensured a fair forum for democratic discussion on issues ranging from the impeachment of President Nixon to the War in Vietnam.

He provided the Nation with stability and security while he was first in line to succeed the President of the United States in 1973 and separately in 1974. Both times he turned down the opportunity to go to the White House in order to continue to represent the people in the Third Congressional District of Oklahoma.

He personified great American values throughout his life. He rose from childhood poverty to become a Rhodes Scholar, winner of the Bronze Star, and a distinguished U.S. Congressman.

During a time when we sometimes let partisanship get the better of us, we have but to look to Carl Albert as a symbol of the most esteemed values of the U.S. Congress. I join the Nation in paying tribute to an extraordinary and exemplary citizen who was, during his lifetime, and continues to be, an inspiration to the greatest traditions of democratic representation.

I think it speaks well for the type of leadership he offered when we see the congressman that followed him in the Congress that he left in 1977, being elected as a Democrat and returning as a Republican, still representing the same people and upholding the same values as Mr. Albert upheld during his time of tenure. I want to thank the gentleman for being here today to represent the people as well as the Nation in the Third Congressional District of Oklahoma.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman for her kind remarks. Let me say I hope that my remarks are accepted in the way I have given them, from the depth of my heart, because Carl Albert was a mentor, he was a friend.

Yes, I probably disturbed a lot of people's thinking when I left being a Democrat. I came here as a Democrat, I have been an Independent, and also as a Republican now. I told people, I stretch my friends a long way.

But let me say, to my knowledge, Carl Albert never had an unkind word, and I appreciate the fact he was that kind of human being. I think it is a great tribute to him that for all those years that he served, with kindness, and the respect he had for people from all backgrounds. He really is looked up to for trying to serve his fellow human beings around the world.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to my friend, the distinguished gentleman from the Sixth Congressional District of Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS).

Mr. LUCAS of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from the Third District for the honor and opportunity today to be here to discuss this most important person. I, too, respect the fine job that the gentleman does in carrying on that fine legislative tradition begun by Speaker Albert in the Third District of Oklahoma.

Let me say, Mr. Speaker, Speaker Carl Albert was an extraordinary man, coming from the humblest of roots in southeastern Oklahoma. He, much like the country he so diligently served, grew and evolved over the years to become a shining example of what Oklahoma has to offer.

The world he knew and the Congress he became a part of in 1947 were dramatically different from the Congress that he left 30 years later. From vacuum tubes to space travel, Speaker Albert's time here witnessed many changes; and throughout those years of change Speaker Albert represented his constituents with dignity and integrity, rising through the ranks to become a respected leader of this chamber.

With the death of Speaker Albert, Oklahoma has lost a valued son. I am pleased that the House is taking time to honor a man whom we all respect. He will be greatly missed.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, let me rise and thank the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. WATKINS). I hope that the gentleman takes it as a compliment when I refer to having served with the label of both parties, and I hope all of us can see that it is something that is bigger than all of us when we speak about a giant in history as we are speaking about Congressman Albert. So I thank the gentleman for the opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I again want to thank the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) for her remarks.

Let me state that the funeral for former Speaker Carl Albert will be tomorrow, Wednesday, February 9th at 2 o'clock in McAlester, Oklahoma, in Pittsburg County. Carl Albert grew up right outside of McAlester, in Bugtussle, a small settlement, very much in poverty, in very humbling surroundings.

Mr. Speaker, I think you were busy when I stated his son David told me Saturday when I called and expressed my sadness, ''You know, we are blessed, because daddy retired in '77 and came home and had 23 years for another career, being Pa-Pa.''

□ 1500

I think you are heading home, Mr. Speaker, at the end of this term; and I remember your remarks that you would prefer to get up each morning, and instead of hearing the term ''Mr. Congressman,'' you would rather hear the term ''pa-pa.'' Let me say as being a pa-pa myself I understand what you and Speaker Albert feel very, very much.

Mr. Speaker, I yield (such time as he may consume) to the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) .

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Oklahoma for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, it is with deep regret that I join our colleagues in paying tribute to an outstanding former Member of this body, our former Speaker of the House, Carl Albert of Oklahoma. Speaker Albert began his second term as Speaker the same day that I first came to this body. Accordingly, in many ways, his style of leadership in the Speaker's chair left with me an indelible impression of the role of the Speaker in this Congress.

Carl Albert worked his way up to the Speaker's chair the old fashioned way. After 8 years of serving the people of his congressional district in Oklahoma, he served first as majority whip from 1955 to 1962 and then as majority leader from 1962 to 1971 and finally as Speaker of the House from that date until his retirement in 1977.

The then Speaker of the House, the legendary Sam Rayburn, was asked back in 1955 why he took Congressman Albert under his wing urging his colleagues to elect him whip. Mr. Sam's reply was, and I quote, ''I can tell big timber from small brush.''

Carl Albert's life story is a typical example of the American dream. Born the son of a poor coal miner in one of the most rural and backward parts of the Nation, Carl never experienced living in a home with running water or

electricity until he was 16 years of age. Nevertheless, he managed to graduate phi beta kappa from the University of Oklahoma and then went on to attend Oxford University in England under a Rhodes scholarship. Carl Albert served with distinction during World War II, being discharged as a lieutenant colonel in 1946.

Upon Carl's return to his hometown in Bugtussle, Oklahoma, the incumbent Congressman announced his retirement and Carl ran for that vacant seat and won both the primary and the runoff. He joined Congress at the same time as many other World War II veterans who came to make their mark on America, including John Kennedy and Richard Nixon.

Throughout his career in Congress, Carl Albert steered a middle course that brought him a great deal of criticism from both the extreme liberals and from the doctrinaire conservatives. But no one ever criticized his patriotism or his integrity.

Regrettably, the image many people may have of Carl Albert is that of his presiding at the 1968 Democratic National Convention. As we recall, the events of that convention over which Congressman Albert had no control left an indelible black eye for his party. In retrospect, however, Carl conducted himself with dignity and grace in a situation where others may have allowed their passions to overcome their good common sense.

Throughout our history, many Speakers of the House found themselves in the position of being one heartbeat away from the presidency. Carl Albert, however, is the only one who found himself in that position twice, the first time when Spiro Agnew resigned as Vice President of the United States and the position remained vacant for some months. The second time Carl Albert was one heartbeat away from the presidency when Richard Nixon found himself resigned from office, again leaving the vice presidency vacant.

According to James Cannon's biography of President Ford, it was President Nixon who actually offered the vice presidency to Carl Albert at the time of Agnew's resignation; and he stated, and I quote, ''No, Mr. President,'' Speaker Albert replied. ''I came to Washington to be a Congressman.'' According to this book, it was Speaker Albert who then proposed to President Nixon the name of Gerald Ford as the next Vice President of the United States.

Although the number of Members of this body who have personal memories of Speaker Albert have been dwindling, his legendary status as a superb leader is familiar to many of us. We all join in extending our condolences to his widow, the former Mary Sue Green Harmon, to his son and to his daughter, his brother, his sister, his four grandchildren, and all of the others who have come to love, to respect and appreciate this truly great American.

The name of Speaker Carl Albert will long live in memory as one of the outstanding legislative leaders of the second half of the 20th century.

Mr. WATKINS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York for those wonderful remarks. I know Mr. Albert was a friend, and I know he cherished that friendship.

I would like to reflect on what the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JOHNSON) stated about him being such an extraordinary man. He had a hunger for knowledge. Yes, he was phi beta kappa and he was a Rhodes scholar from this small rural area from this one-room schoolhouse. But let me share with my colleagues something about such an extraordinary man.

It is my understanding, he could speak more than 10 languages; and let me say to my colleagues, he was studying on another language at the age of 91. That is the kind of extraordinary intellect, but yet common sense, that this man had who came out of poverty conditions. As Sam Rayburn said, a lot of giants come from that area; and let me say he was one that distinguished himself above all.

The gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. WATTS), who had an uncle that lived in McAlester, Oklahoma, was deceased just a few months ago. I know that many times during the civil rights movement in those times, he turned and sought the advice of Wade Watts, the uncle of the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. WATTS). We also lost our friend Wade Watts just a few months ago to diabetes, primarily. And I know that leaders throughout our area, not only the State of Oklahoma, turned to Wade Watts as a tremendous counsel knowing he would never mislead us. I can assure my colleagues that Carl Albert relied a great deal on Wade Watts's advice and counsel.

I know my colleague from Oklahoma, (Mr. J.C. WATTS) definitely wants to share a few remarks with our Members.

Mr. Speaker, I grew up in a small community in the deep southeast part of the State of Oklahoma, and I will never forget Carl Albert's sense of humor. As I mentioned, Carl Albert was small in height, but he was a giant of a man whom I looked up to for his leadership and for his achievements. I will never forget how he told the story about coming to a small community where I lived and talked about just being a Congressman. And in this community, after he finished talking to this graduating class and being the great orator that he was, we were all motivated, when he finished up his speech, this long, lanky country boy who came out of the rafters down to where Speaker Albert was on the stage. He was all enthused and all excited about Mr. Albert's talk about being a Congressman. Mr. Albert had this young kid so motivated. Mr. Albert said I need to find out what I said. This tall, lanky country kid looked at Mr. Albert and said Mr. Congressman, it was not anything you said. He said, Mr. Congressman, I figured if a short man like you could make Congress, I should be able to make President.

Mr. Speaker, Carl Albert only stood about 5 feet 4, but he was one of the greatest orators, a dynamic motivator, and one whom I feel will go down in history, as one of the great leaders of our time.

I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) for such time as he may consume.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, it came to mind, I recall one incident during the State of the Union message, I am not certain who the President was, I think it was President Ford, when Carl Albert had just returned from a lengthy trip to China, flew all night and came to preside as the Speaker does at the State of the Union message. And I remember how he struggled to keep his eyes open, but he managed to do it most of the time. Once in a while his eyes closed. But my heart went out to him, because I know how he felt, traveling that distance and having to preside at the State of the Union message. But that was Carl Albert, always willing to fulfill his duties as the Speaker, and he fulfilled them well in all of the days he presided.

Mr. WATKINS. Again, Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York, because I know they had a very close relationship. Carl Albert had a working relationship across the aisle, as the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) stated.

I was just reflecting on my colleague from Oklahoma (Mr. WATTS), who had an uncle that lived in McAlester. I was just reflecting on the fact that I know Speaker Carl Albert turned to Wade Watts on so many occasions for his advice and counsel during the civil rights movements; he was one of his number one advisors from back home during that time.

I yield to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. WATTS).

Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague from Oklahoma yielding. I am delighted to have seen so many people come to the floor this afternoon to honor former Speaker Carl Albert.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor former Speaker Carl Albert who represented southeast Oklahoma, the district of the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. WATKINS), and served as the majority leader and also, as we know, Speaker of the House.

Born into humble beginnings in the hills of southeast Oklahoma, Speaker Albert proved that all things are possible through hard work and determination. Speaker Albert grew up actually about 40 miles from my hometown of Eufaula, Oklahoma, the son of a coal miner. Speaker Albert was inspired as a child to run for Congress when a Congressman came to speak to a small rural school in Bugtussle, Oklahoma. Little did anyone know that at that time he would rise to become Speaker of the United States

House of Representatives, an Oklahoma icon and a national treasure.

Speaker Albert did love public life, however; and he counted hundreds of other officials, Democratic and Republican, as his friends. I recall here, I believe about 3 or 4 years ago, he had President Bush come to Carl Albert Junior College and give the commencement address.

Mr. WATKINS. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, he has had what seems to be all of the Presidents down to Carl Albert Junior College, and a lot of them may be at his funeral tomorrow.

Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. Yes. Mr. Speaker, he was quite a fellow. During his tenure in this House, he also helped lead our Nation through several troubled times: as has been mentioned this afternoon, the assassination of President Kennedy, the fight for civil rights, the Vietnam War, the Watergate scandal that brought the resignation of President Nixon.

Speaker Albert's contributions to his home State of Oklahoma were numerous, but none was more important to our country than the statesman-like manner in which he presided over the Speaker's chair during the Watergate scandal. By his leadership and bipartisan approach, he is a man that truly deserves the title of statesman, a title he had earned well before the time of his death this past weekend.

□ 1515

His legacy of dedicated leadership undoubtedly has and always will leave a lasting impression on our Nation's history. Former Speaker Albert is one of Oklahoma's greatest gifts to our Nation, and he will truly be remembered for his commitment to public service to Oklahoma and his country.

We all send our condolences to his family, and we are all delighted and proud, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. WATKINS) and I and the Oklahoma delegation are quite proud to call former Speaker Albert an Oklahoman.

Mr. WATKINS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, the gentleman from Oklahoma, for his comments. As he indicated, actually between McAlester and Eufaula, the birthplace of the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. WATTS), is Bugtussle, so Carl Albert grew up between McAlester and Eufaula, in that small area.

I would like to note to a lot of people who are historians of this House that also in Oklahoma, in the name of Carl Albert, there is a Carl Albert Center for for Congressional Affairs there at the University of Oklahoma, his alma mater. I think without question it probably houses more documents concerning the activities and the operations of this House than anyplace in this great Nation, maybe with the exception of the Library of Congress across the street. But we have that at his alma mater. It is a great honor and distinction for him to have it there.

Also, he has a college in the Third Congressional District, the Carl Albert Junior College. It is so fitting, because he is a man who had a tremendous hunger for knowledge and great intellectual capacity, probably more so than any person that we have ever had in public service in Oklahoma.

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my sincere condolences to the family of my respected colleague, the Honorable Carl B. Albert, who passed away this past Friday. I join my fellow Members of the U.S. House of Representatives in paying tribute to former Speaker Carl Albert's service in the Congress and to our nation.

I served with Speaker Albert in the House from 1965 through 1976. During these 12 years, I witnessed his dedication to his constituents, his sense of fair play, and his concern for the well being of the poor and disadvantaged. He was a strong, effective Majority Leader and played an important role in the passage of civil rights and poverty legislation. As Speaker, from 1971–1976, Carl Albert presided over a tumultuous period when the Vietnam War and the Watergate scandal divided our country. Throughout this difficult period, Carl Albert was a principled and effective leader, vigilant to the demands of conflicting viewpoints and to the civil strife that accompanied these crises.

Carl Albert, who rose from poverty to high national office, demonstrated that talent, hard work, and perseverance could overcome the humblest beginnings. He knew that not everyone shared his ability to overcome adversity. His compassion and concern for the most vulnerable members of our society was a hallmark of his 30 years in Congress.

I vividly recall how, on July 13, 1975, he took the well as Speaker to call for a re-vote on a damaging amendment to an appropriations bill (H.R. 5901) that would have left the historic Title IX provision deeply weakened. I was the floor manager of that debate on Title IX but was called away because my daughter had been severely injured in an automobile accident in Ithaca. Speaker Albert called the House together the next day to express concern for my daughter's recovery and saved Title IX as well in a call for a re-vote. I will always remember Speaker Albert for this noble and inspiring action, as should all women today who have enjoyed equity in educational opportunity.

I join my colleagues in giving profound thanks for the life of Carl B. Albert. Aloha, Carl, and thank you for your legacy of service to our nation.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska). Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the resolution.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6 p.m.

Accordingly (at 3 o'clock and 18 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 6 p.m.

□ 1802

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON) at 6 o'clock and 2 minutes p.m.

REAPPOINTMENT AS MEMBER OF BOARD OF FEDERAL JUDICIAL CENTER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, and pursuant to 28 U.S.C. 629(b), the Chair announces the Speaker's reappointment of the following member on the part of the House to the Board of the Federal Judicial Center for a 5-year term:

Ms. Laurie E. Michel of Virginia.

There was no objection.

APPOINTMENT AS MEMBER TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF NATIONAL URBAN AIR TOXICS RESEARCH CENTER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, and pursuant to section 112 of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7412), the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following member on the part of the House to the Board of Directors of the National Urban Air Toxics Research Center to fill the existing vacancy thereon:

Mr. Thomas F. Burks II, of Texas.

There was no objection.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HON. W.J. ''BILLY'' TAUZIN, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable W.J. ''BILLY'' TAUZIN, Member of Congress:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 7, 2000.

Hon. DENNIS J. HASTERT,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: This is to formally notify you, pursuant to rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that a staffer in my Chalmette, Louisiana district office has been served with a subpoena duces tecum, directed to me and issued by the U.S. District for the Eastern District of Louisiana.

In consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I will determine whether compliance with the subpoena is consistent with the precedents and privileges of the House.

Sincerely,

W.J. BILLY TAUZIN.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair

will now put the question on each motion to suspend the rules, House Resolution 418, and the approval of the Journal, on which further proceedings were postponed earlier today, in the order in which that question was entertained.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

Concurring in the Senate amendment to H.R. 1451, by the yeas and nays;

Senate 632, by the yeas and nays;

House Resolution 418, by the yeas and nays; and

Approval of the journal, de novo.

The Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the time for any electronic vote after the first such vote in this series.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN BICENTENNIAL COMMISSION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and concurring in the Senate amendment to the bill H.R. 1451.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) that the House suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill H.R. 1451, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 385, nays 9, not voting 40, as follows:

[Roll No. 8]

YEAS—385

Abercrombie
Aderholt
Allen
Andrews
Archer
Armey
Baca
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Baldacci
Baldwin
Ballenger
Barcia
Barrett (NE)
Barrett (WI)
Bartlett
Barton
Bass
Bateman
Becerra
Bentsen
Bereuter
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop
Blagojevich
Bliley
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bonior
Bono
Borski
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brown (FL)
Bryant
Burr
Burton
Buyer
Callahan
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canady
Cannon
Capuano
Cardin
Carson
Castle
Chabot
Chambliss
Clay
Clement
Clyburn
Collins
Combest
Condit
Cook
Cooksey
Costello
Cox
Coyne
Cramer
Crane
Crowley
Cummings
Cunningham
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
Davis (VA)
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
DeLay
Deutsch
Diaz-Balart
Dickey
Dicks
Dingell
Dixon
Doggett
Doolittle
Doyle
Dreier
Duncan
Dunn
Edwards
Ehlers
Ehrlich
Emerson
Engel
English
Eshoo
Etheridge
Evans
Everett
Ewing
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Fletcher
Foley
Forbes
Ford
Fossella
Fowler
Frank (MA)
Franks (NJ)
Frelinghuysen
Frost
Gallegly
Ganske
Gejdenson
Gephardt
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gilman
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Goss
Graham
Granger
Green (TX)
Green (WI)
Greenwood
Gutierrez
Gutknecht
Hall (OH)
Hall (TX)
Hansen
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Herger
Hill (IN)
Hill (MT)
Hilleary
Hilliard
Hinchey
Hobson
Hoeffel
Holden
Holt
Hooley
Horn
Hostettler
Houghton
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Hutchinson
Hyde
Inslee
Isakson
Istook
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jenkins
John
Johnson (CT)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kasich
Kelly
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind (WI)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kleczka
Klink
Knollenberg
Kolbe
Kucinich
Kuykendall
LaFalce
LaHood
Lampson
Lantos
Larson
Latham
LaTourette
Lazio
Leach
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Lofgren
Lowey
Lucas (KY)
Lucas (OK)
Luther
Maloney (CT)
Maloney (NY)
Manzullo
Markey
Martinez
Mascara
Matsui
McCarthy (MO)
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHugh
McInnis
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinney
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Menendez
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Minge
Mink
Moore
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Morella
Murtha
Napolitano
Neal
Nethercutt
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nussle
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Ose
Owens
Oxley
Packard
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pease
Pelosi
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Phelps
Pickering
Pickett
Pitts
Pombo
Pomeroy
Porter
Portman
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Quinn
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Reyes
Reynolds
Riley
Rivers
Rodriguez
Roemer
Rogan
Rohrabacher
Rothman
Roukema
Roybal-Allard
Ryan (WI)
Ryun (KS)
Sabo
Sanchez
Sanders
Sandlin
Sawyer
Saxton
Schakowsky
Scott
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Sherman
Sherwood
Shimkus
Shows
Shuster
Simpson
Sisisky
Skeen
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (MI)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Souder
Spence
Spratt
Stabenow
Stark
Stearns
Stenholm
Strickland
Stump
Sununu
Sweeney
Talent
Tanner
Tauzin
Taylor (MS)
Terry
Thomas
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Thune
Thurman
Tiahrt
Tierney
Toomey
Towns
Traficant
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Velazquez
Visclosky
Vitter
Walden
Walsh
Wamp
Waters
Watkins
Watt (NC)
Watts (OK)
Waxman
Weiner
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Wexler
Weygand
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson
Wise
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Young (FL)

NAYS—9

Chenoweth-Hage
Coble
Hoekstra
Paul
Royce
Sanford
Schaffer
Sensenbrenner
Tancredo

NOT VOTING—40

Ackerman
Barr
Brown (OH)
Capps
Clayton
Coburn
Conyers
Cubin
Danner
Deal
DeFazio
DeMint
Dooley
Gekas
Gonzalez
Goodling
Hinojosa
Jefferson
Largent
Lipinski
McCrery
McIntosh
McNulty
Metcalf
Millender-McDonald
Moakley
Mollohan
Myrick
Nadler
Rogers
Ros-Lehtinen
Rush
Salmon
Scarborough
Serrano
Stupak
Tauscher
Taylor (NC)
Vento
Young (AK)

□ 1827

Mr. COBLE and Mr. HOEKSTRA changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

So (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the Senate amendment was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for electronic voting on each additional question on which the Chair has postponed further proceedings.

POISON CONTROL CENTER ENHANCEMENT AND AWARENESS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and passing the Senate bill, S. 632.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 632, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 378, nays 16, not voting 40, as follows:

[Roll No. 9]

YEAS—378

Abercrombie
Aderholt
Allen
Andrews
Armey
Baca
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Baldacci
Baldwin
Ballenger
Barcia
Barrett (NE)
Barrett (WI)
Bartlett
Barton
Bass
Bateman
Becerra
Bentsen
Bereuter
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop
Blagojevich
Bliley
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bonior
Bono
Borski
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brown (FL)
Bryant
Burr
Burton
Buyer
Callahan
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canady
Cannon
Capuano
Cardin
Carson
Castle
Chabot
Chambliss
Clay
Clement
Clyburn
Collins
Combest
Condit
Conyers
Cook
Cooksey
Costello
Cox
Coyne
Cramer
Crane
Crowley
Cummings
Cunningham
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
Davis (VA)
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
DeLay
Deutsch
Diaz-Balart
Dickey
Dicks
Dingell
Dixon
Doggett
Doyle
Dreier
Dunn
Edwards
Ehlers
Ehrlich
Emerson
Engel
English
Eshoo

Etheridge
Evans
Everett
Ewing
Farr
Filner
Fletcher
Foley
Forbes
Ford
Fossella
Fowler
Frank (MA)
Franks (NJ)
Frelinghuysen
Frost
Gallegly
Ganske
Gejdenson
Gephardt
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gilman
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Goss
Graham
Granger
Green (TX)
Green (WI)
Greenwood
Gutierrez
Gutknecht
Hall (OH)
Hall (TX)
Hansen
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Hill (IN)
Hill (MT)
Hilleary
Hilliard
Hinchey
Hobson
Hoeffel
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Hooley
Horn
Hostettler
Houghton
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Hyde
Inslee
Isakson
Istook
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jenkins
John
Johnson (CT)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kasich
Kelly
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind (WI)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kleczka
Klink
Knollenberg
Kolbe
Kucinich
Kuykendall
LaFalce
LaHood
Lampson
Lantos
Larson
Latham
LaTourette
Lazio
Leach
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Lofgren
Lowey
Lucas (KY)
Lucas (OK)
Luther
Maloney (CT)
Maloney (NY)
Manzullo
Markey
Martinez
Mascara
Matsui
McCarthy (MO)
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHugh
McInnis
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinney
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Menendez
Metcalf
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Minge
Mink
Moore
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Morella
Murtha
Napolitano
Neal
Nethercutt
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nussle
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Ose
Owens
Oxley
Packard
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pease
Pelosi
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Phelps
Pickering
Pickett
Pitts
Pombo
Pomeroy
Porter
Portman
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Quinn
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Reyes
Reynolds
Riley
Rivers
Rodriguez
Roemer
Rogan
Rohrabacher
Rothman
Roukema
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ryun (KS)
Sabo
Sanchez
Sanders
Sandlin
Sawyer
Saxton
Schakowsky
Scott
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Sherman
Sherwood
Shimkus
Shows
Shuster
Simpson
Sisisky
Skeen
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (MI)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Souder
Spence
Spratt
Stabenow
Stark
Stearns
Stenholm
Strickland
Stump
Sweeney
Talent
Tancredo
Tanner
Tauzin
Taylor (MS)
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Thune
Thurman
Tiahrt
Tierney
Towns
Traficant
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Velazquez
Visclosky
Vitter
Walden
Walsh
Wamp
Waters
Watkins
Watt (NC)
Watts (OK)
Waxman
Weiner
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Wexler
Weygand
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson
Wise
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Young (FL)

NAYS—16

Archer
Chenoweth-Hage
Coble
Doolittle
Duncan
Herger
Hutchinson
Johnson, Sam
Paul
Ryan (WI)
Sanford
Schaffer
Sensenbrenner
Sununu
Thomas
Toomey

NOT VOTING—40

Ackerman
Barr
Brown (OH)
Capps
Clayton
Coburn
Cubin
Danner
Deal
DeFazio
DeMint
Dooley
Fattah
Gekas
Gonzalez
Goodling
Hinojosa
Jefferson
Largent
Lipinski
McCrery
McIntosh
McNulty
Millender-McDonald
Moakley
Mollohan
Myrick
Nadler
Petri
Rogers
Ros-Lehtinen
Rush
Salmon
Scarborough
Serrano
Stupak
Tauscher
Taylor (NC)
Vento
Young (AK)

□ 1837

So (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the Senate bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD. Mr. Speaker, I was not present today due to illness, therefore missing votes on H.R. 1451 and S. 632. Had I been present I would have voted "yea" on these rollcall votes.

EXPRESSING SORROW OF THE HOUSE AT THE DEATH OF THE HONORABLE CARL B. ALBERT, FORMER MEMBER OF CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). The pending business is the question of agreeing to the resolution, House Resolution 418, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 390, nays 0, not voting 44, as follows:

[Roll No. 10]

YEAS—390

Abercrombie
Aderholt
Allen
Andrews
Archer
Armey
Baca
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Baldacci
Baldwin
Ballenger
Barcia
Barrett (NE)
Barrett (WI)
Bartlett
Barton
Bass
Bateman
Becerra
Bentsen
Bereuter
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop
Blagojevich
Bliley
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bonior
Bono
Borski
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brown (FL)
Bryant
Burr
Burton
Buyer
Callahan
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canady
Cannon
Capuano
Cardin
Carson
Castle
Chabot
Chambliss
Chenoweth-Hage
Clay
Clement
Clyburn
Coble
Collins
Combest
Condit
Cook
Cooksey
Costello
Cox
Coyne
Cramer
Crane
Crowley
Cummings
Cunningham
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
Davis (VA)
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
DeLay
Deutsch
Diaz-Balart
Dickey
Dicks
Dingell
Dixon
Doolittle
Doyle
Dreier
Duncan
Dunn
Edwards
Ehlers
Ehrlich
Emerson
Engel
English
Eshoo
Etheridge
Evans
Everett
Ewing
Farr
Filner
Fletcher
Foley
Forbes
Ford
Fossella
Fowler
Frank (MA)
Franks (NJ)
Frelinghuysen
Frost
Gallegly
Ganske
Gejdenson
Gephardt
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gilman
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Goss
Graham
Granger
Green (TX)
Green (WI)
Greenwood
Gutierrez
Gutknecht
Hall (OH)
Hall (TX)
Hansen
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Herger
Hill (IN)
Hill (MT)
Hilleary
Hilliard
Hinchey
Hobson
Hoeffel
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Hooley
Horn
Hostettler
Houghton
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Hutchinson
Hyde
Inslee
Isakson
Istook
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jenkins
John
Johnson (CT)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kasich
Kelly
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind (WI)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kleczka
Klink
Knollenberg
Kolbe
Kucinich
Kuykendall
LaFalce
LaHood
Lampson
Lantos
Larson
Latham
LaTourette
Lazio
Leach
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Lofgren
Lowey
Lucas (KY)
Lucas (OK)
Luther
Maloney (CT)
Maloney (NY)
Manzullo
Markey
Martinez
Mascara
Matsui
McCarthy (MO)
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHugh
McInnis
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinney
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Menendez
Metcalf
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Minge
Mink
Moore
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Morella
Murtha
Napolitano
Neal
Nethercutt
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nussle
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Ose
Owens
Oxley
Packard
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Paul
Payne
Pease
Pelosi
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Phelps
Pickering
Pickett
Pitts
Pombo
Pomeroy
Porter
Portman
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Quinn
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Reyes
Reynolds
Riley
Rivers
Rodriguez
Roemer
Rogan
Rohrabacher
Rothman
Roukema
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Ryun (KS)
Sabo
Sanchez
Sanders
Sandlin
Sanford
Sawyer
Saxton
Schaffer
Schakowsky
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Sherman
Sherwood
Shimkus
Shows
Shuster
Simpson
Sisisky
Skeen
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (MI)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Souder
Spratt
Stabenow
Stark
Stearns
Stenholm
Strickland
Stump
Sununu
Sweeney
Talent
Tancredo
Tanner
Tauzin
Taylor (MS)
Terry
Thomas
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Thune
Thurman
Tiahrt
Tierney
Toomey
Towns
Traficant
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Velazquez
Visclosky
Vitter
Walden
Walsh
Wamp
Waters
Watkins
Watt (NC)
Watts (OK)
Waxman
Weiner
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Wexler
Weygand
Whitfield
Wilson

Wise	Woolsey	Wynn
Wolf	Wu	Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—44

Ackerman	Gekas	Nadler
Barr	Gonzalez	Rogers
Brown (OH)	Goodling	Ros-Lehtinen
Capps	Hinojosa	Rush
Clayton	Jefferson	Salmon
Coburn	Largent	Scarborough
Conyers	Lipinski	Scott
Cubin	McCrery	Serrano
Danner	McIntosh	Spence
Deal	McNulty	Stupak
DeFazio	Millender-McDonald	Tauscher
DeMint	Moakley	Taylor (NC)
Doggett	Mollohan	Vento
Dooley	Myrick	Wicker
Fattah		Young (AK)

□ 1846

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

Mrs. CUBIN. Mr. Speaker, on February 8, 2000, I was unavoidably detained and missed rollcall vote numbers 8, 9, and 10. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yes'' on H.R. 1451, the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission Act; ''yes'' on S. 632, the Poison Control Center Enhancement and Awareness Act; and ''yes'' on H. Res. 418, honoring former Speaker Carl Albert.

□ 1845

JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the pending business is the question de novo of agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal of the last day's proceedings.

The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

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

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. Speaker, had I been able to attend the session of Congress last week, had I been present, I would have voted present on the quorum call; yes on House Concurrent Resolution 244; yes on H.R. 2130; yes on H.R. 764; yes on H.R. 1838; no on H.R. 2990, and yes on H.R. 2005.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

THE INSTALLMENT TAX CORRECTION ACT OF 2000

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. SWEENEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SWEENEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to thank my colleagues, the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER) and the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. TANNER), for joining me today as we introduce the very important piece of legislation, the Installment Tax Correction Act of 2000.

This is indeed important legislation, as I said, introduced earlier, which is intended to correct an egregious error committed as part of the tax reconciliation legislation passed last year.

This matter affects hundreds of thousands of small business owners throughout America, and makes it a high priority for this coming congressional legislative session. That is evidenced by the fact, Mr. Speaker, that over 70 of our colleagues have already joined as cosponsors in this legislation.

This legislation is intended to restore an important tax tool for small businesses, to allow small business owners to be able to transfer their businesses more correctly and equitably. Under the accrual method of accounting, owners of small businesses utilize installment payments to spread the capital gains tax burden of selling their business over a number of years, and are common for situations where the sellers continue to stay involved in the business.

In many instances, the current Section 536 adversely affects the sale of closely-held businesses. With many business sales, bank financing is either unavailable or not cost-effective, so often the seller will act as a bank for a portion of the total sales price and carry the note, receiving installment payments over a number of years.

Under Section 536, this is still possible, but the IRS requires the capital gains they realize on the sale to be reported in 1 year, rather than over the life of the note. Sadly, sales of businesses across the country have already been disrupted. Without the use of installment arrangements, small business owners who seek to sell or transfer their businesses have had to decrease their asking price. In many cases, the tax bill exceeds the first year's payment, and as a result, sellers cannot afford to pay, and often find themselves abandoning their sales entirely.

Mr. Speaker, many owners rely on the sale of their business to finance their retirement. Without the installment sales option, they have to postpone their retirement dreams. In fact, I know this firsthand. Immediately after we recessed last session of Congress, I received a number of calls from constituents complaining of this very effect.

Mr. Speaker, the loss of installment sales is not only detrimental to hundreds of thousands of small businesses in the country, or the tens of thousands of small businesses upon which my district is built, but it in fact has affected the real ability for those folks to transfer their businesses and move on with commerce.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, 90 percent of all businesses in my district are small businesses, including Mr. and Mrs. Long of Salt Point, New York, who currently feel the onerous effect of this provision.

Several months ago, Dorothy and George Long arranged for the sale of their resort, located in beautiful Lake George, New York. Unfortunately, they are now suffering the consequences of this provision in a real and immediate way.

Mr. and Mrs. Long were relying on this sale to finance their retirement, and are now faced with one of three options: one, they take a loan out in order to pay for the capital gains tax; or two, they break their contract and face a lawsuit; or three, they suffer the consequences of nonpayment of taxes. Talk about being put in between a rock and a hard place.

What my colleagues and I are proposing is a 556 fix. It is essential that we work together to stop the damage to our local economies, its effect on the hardworking people throughout America.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues here today for taking the first step with me towards fixing this inequity. I ask now that we move expeditiously so that the further damage that we have already caused on the small working businesspeople throughout America is mitigated.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. HERGER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. COLLINS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ALLOWING WHALE-HUNTING BY MAKAH INDIAN TRIBE WILL PROMOTE COMMERCIAL WHALING WORLDWIDE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. CHENOWETH-HAGE). Under a previous

order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. METCALF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. METCALF. Madam Speaker, last year I filed an appeal, along with several co-plaintiffs, to overturn the decision made by U.S. District Court Judge Franklin Burgess to allow whaling by the Makah Indian tribe.

Today a three-judge panel from the Ninth Circuit United States Court of Appeals in Seattle heard the case, and I hope they will make the correct decision and stop the outdated and unnecessary practice of whaling by the Makahs.

Everyone who understands this issue knows that this is the first step toward returning to the terrible commercial exploitation of these marine mammals. In the papers filed by the Makahs with NOAA, they refused to deny that this was a move toward renewal of commercial whaling.

It is important to understand that the International Whaling Commission has never sanctioned the Makah whale hunt. Under the International Whaling Convention, of which the United States is signatory, it has only been legal to hunt whales for scientific or aboriginal subsistence purposes. The tribe clearly has no nutritional need to kill whales.

In the face of strong IWC, the International Whaling Commission, opposition to the original Makah proposal, the U.S. delegation ignored years of opposition to whale-killing and cut a deal with the Russian government in a backdoor effort to find a way to grant the Makah the right to kill whales.

The agreement is to allow the Makah tribe to kill four of the whales each year, that is, to allow the tribe, the Makah tribe to kill four whales each year from the Russian quota, under the artifice of cultural subsistence.

Before this back room deal, the United States has always opposed any whaling not based on true subsistence need. Cultural subsistence is a slippery slope to disaster. It will expand whale-hunting to any nation with an ocean coastline and any history of whale-killing. Much to the delight of the whaling interests in Norway and Japan, who have orchestrated and financed an international cultural subsistence movement, America's historic role as a foe of renewed whaling around the world has now been drastically undercut.

In fact, there are hundreds of ethnic groups, tribes, and bands around the world who have a history of hunting whales. To allow a cultural past as a qualification for hunting whales would drastically increase the number of whales killed worldwide. Almost all cultures on seacoasts engaged in some whale-hunting historically.

The treaty signed by the Makah tribe in 1885 only gives them the right to hunt in common with the citizens of the territory, now the citizens of the United States. This provision was to ensure equal rights, not special ones. The Makah tribal government should not be allowed to kill whales when it is illegal for anyone else in the United States to do so. Besides, it is just plain dead wrong. It is shameful that the current administration supports a proposal that flies in the face of the values, interests, and desires of the majority of U.S. citizens.

As I have been saying for years, allowing the Makah tribe to continue whaling will open the floodgates to commercial whaling worldwide. Just count on it. Whales do have commercial value, and there are interests just waiting to cash in, as they did in the glory days of worldwide commercial whaling, when the whales were hunted practically to extinction.

Now that we have allowed whaling to begin again, what can we say to Japan and Norway, whose whaling we have opposed for years but who definitely have aboriginal rights going back many centuries?

I support the Makah elders and others who oppose this hunt, and will continue to fight in the courts and in Congress to stop the spread of the barbaric practice of killing whales.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SOUDER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SOUDER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

SPEAKING ON BEHALF OF THE 11,000 MEN AND WOMEN IN UNIFORM ON FOOD STAMPS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, I am on the floor tonight because we have approximately 11,000 men and women in uniform that are willing to die for this country on food stamps. Yes, Madam Speaker, we have passed legislation that will help increase their salaries, but still we have men and women in uniform on food stamps.

Members can see what I have before me is a Marine. He represents not only the Marine Corps, but every man and woman in uniform. Standing on his feet is his daughter Megan, who is 2 years old, and in his arms is a baby girl named Bridget.

I think about Megan and Bridget and all the children that are children of men and women in uniform, and the fact that when this Marine is deployed to go overseas to Bosnia for 6 months, there is no guarantee that he is going to come back. There is no guarantee that any of our men and women in uniform who are sent into harm's way will for sure come back.

I look at that little girl's face, and I am thinking, as she is looking at the camera when this photograph was made, how tragic it would be if the father did not come back. But almost as tragic is the fact that we have approximately 11,000 men and women in uniform that are on food stamps.

□ 1900

These are men and women, like this Marine, that are willing to die for this country when called upon. And yet we can't find $59 million over a 10-year period of time to give men and women in uniform on food stamps a $500 tax credit. Madam Speaker, I think that is a shame. I think that is unacceptable.

Last year in the tax bill, we as a Congress passed tax credits for the steel industry, the timber industry, and for the electric industry. There are other tax credits that we as a Congress passed. Of course, the President vetoed the bill.

I am calling on my colleagues in the House tonight, both Democrat and Republican, to join me in saying to the leadership, both Republican and Democrat, this year we are going to pass some type of legislation. Mine just happens to be the only one; it is H.R. 1055. It is called the Military Family Food Stamp Tax Credit Act.

Madam Speaker, you went on the bill today. I thank you for that. I can tell you and my colleagues in this body that it is unacceptable that men and women in uniform are on food stamps. We need to do everything that we can to say to them that we are going to work and try to make sure that no one that serves this great Nation is on food stamps.

Madam Speaker, I am planning on coming down about one night every week and bring this to the attention of my colleagues; we have legislation that we can do something about men and women on food stamps.

Real quickly, Madam Speaker, as I end my time, from 1982 to 1990, our United States Army and Marine Corps forces were deployed 17 times. From 1990 to 1999, they had been deployed 149 times. Can you think about how many times men and women in uniform were called away from their family and their children?

Madam Speaker, I thank you for being one of the Members who have joined us in supporting this legislation.

H.R. 3573, THE KEEP OUR PROMISES ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. CHENOWETH-HAGE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. NORWOOD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. NORWOOD. Madam Speaker, every year since coming to Congress in 1995, I have made a point to bring to our attention the sacrifices made by our veterans to defend our country. Each year, we call for our Nation to honor those who have served.

Yet each year, we continue to ignore the promises made to our veterans and military retirees concerning health care benefits. In my mind, it is impossible to honor someone while at the

same time refusing to honor commitments made to that person.

It is time to stop honoring our veterans with just words, ladies and gentlemen, instead let us honor them with action.

Retirees that entered the military prior to 1956 were promised that if they served 20 years, they would receive free health care for life for both themselves and their dependents. For those who signed up after 1956, they were told that they would receive free health care at military facilities or supplemental health insurance.

Today both groups are pushed out of the military health care system entirely and enrolled in Medicare, the same plan they would have received had they never served a day.

On September 28, I introduced the Keep Our Promises to America's Military Retirees Act, H.R. 3573, along with the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. SHOWS), as a nonpartisan restoration of the health care benefit we owe our retirees.

A companion bill, S. 2003 is being introduced by the Senator from Georgia (Mr. COVERDELL) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON).

The pre-1956 retirees would be enrolled in the Federal Employees Health Benefit Plan at no cost, just like we told them, no matching premiums, no deductibles, no copays. The post-1956 retirees would be enrolled under the same rules as civilian Federal retirees.

As we consider this legislation, we need to be keenly aware that there is more at stake than just these benefits. Today's young people take note of the level of importance we place on military service.

If we renege on our promises to veterans, we have stated in a very loud voice that we hold their sacrifices in contempt.

Why should anyone sacrifice life, limb, career or temporary personal freedom, when their reward will be the contempt of those that they defend? They will not. And when the next challenge to national existence erupts, there will be few or none willing to carry America's banner.

As of the State of the Union address, there are 236 Members of the House who have signed onto this legislation. It is the fairest, most practical means of any available to redeem the promises we made to our retired veterans.

We have a clear-cut majority, very evenly split between our two parties, ready to bring this bill forward.

There are certainly cost issues that have to be addressed. I urge leaders on both side of the aisle to move quickly to bring this bill up before all appropriate committees of jurisdiction.

Madam Speaker, we have an unanticipated budget surplus. If we cannot restore the promises we made to these men and women now, we never will.

Madam Speaker, let us pay off our past due promises before we take on any new spending. It is now our turn to defend the lives of the men and women who spent a lifetime defending ours.

CREATION OF A BICENTENNIAL COMMISSION TO CELEBRATE ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S BIRTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. OWENS. Madam Speaker, today's agenda for the Congress was quite a small one. I think it is one item that we ought to pay close attention to, that is the creation of a bicentennial commission for Abraham Lincoln to celebrate Abraham Lincoln's birth.

Madam Speaker, I think it is very important that we pass the bill today. We are going to have a chance to take a look at the age of Lincoln, the man Lincoln and all the things surrounding Abraham Lincoln.

Our country owes a great debt to the wisdom and the courage of Abraham Lincoln. There are people who try ranking the greatest Presidents, always starting with Lincoln, then they debate who the second, third and fourth might be. But Lincoln and Washington are clearly ranked first. I think that the Lincoln discussion would lead us into some very profound considerations of issues that need to be discussed that normally are not discussed.

The President had a commission on race that was created for just one year, a very limited budget; and they unearthed a few important items and just got started and then they had to stop. I think a discussion of Abraham Lincoln, the Civil War, the considerations of what went into holding the Union together and why it is considered such a moral high point for America needs to be thoroughly discussed.

There was a time when people stood for great principles, and I often talk to young people of African American descent who are always looking for the negative side of things who want to declare that Abraham Lincoln did not really care about black people, Abraham Lincoln was not our friend, and you would have a chance to show them how ridiculous that was. The same people say that white folks never are concerned with the welfare of black folks or white people in power are never concerned with other people at all, that principles of Judeo-Christian heritage and all that is a big laugh.

We will have a chance to examine that. We will see how white people on one side had great principles and cared a great deal about fighting slavery, while others, of course, took advantage of it and enjoyed it; but there were some who had great principles and who were not themselves affected.

White people, who were not slaves, were the people who determined that America should not have slavery. It is important to understand that in the battle of Gettysburg, the crucial battle in the Civil War, almost no blacks participated.

They were not allowed in the army of either the Union or the Confederacy at that time so it was not their fault; but it was a battle that really decided the war and it was white people fighting white people on the basis of principle, principle on the basis of understanding, some understanding, that the Nation would never be able to be a great Nation if half are slave and half are free.

At one point there were States that declared themselves slave States and other States that were free States and there were bloody clashes among the border States, the free States versus the slave States and all that history has gotten lost and nobody needs to hear and understand that history more than young African Americans. All Americans need to hear it and understand it, but young African Americans need to understand there are principles that have been fought for and large numbers of people died for them who did not have a vested interest. They could have all made a deal and if they did not stand for principle, if the Judeo-Christian ethic was not in place in the hearts of so many, the status quo would have prevailed.

So I think we cast a very important vote today and I would just like to note that in passing.

The real big issue of the day, however, is the budget. The budget was released by the President yesterday and there was a big hearing in the Committee on the Budget today; and I think that that is an item that not only is the biggest item for this Congress but also it may be the biggest item for the next 10 years, for this decade. The way we handle this budget this year may set the tone for the whole century.

Consider the year 2000. We are about to discuss a budget of the last and only superpower in the world; and unquestionably, the United States of America is a superpower, an economic superpower, to begin with. We cannot debate it. We are an economic superpower as a result of an appreciation of science and technology and genius and the art of government. We have governed in a way to maximize the advantages of science and technology. Our systems have allowed us to emerge at this particular time as the richest nation ever in the history of the world, by any relative standards, any way we want to try to create a scenario.

Rome, at the height of its greatness, was just a village compared to the wealth and might of the United States of America at this point in history. So our budget is a budget for a people, a nation, that is at the very center of the globe in terms of power and decision-making. Our budget is a budget for people who probably are at the center of the universe.

I also happened to read today that some of the leading scientists have reached agreement and have concluded that there is no other life anywhere in the universe. There cannot be any life similar to the life on Earth. They may continue to debate that and theories of physics and theories of the universe

have changed over time but right now all the evidence points to the fact that in this whole universe, which is so much larger than we ever imagined, with all kinds of galaxies and black holes and billions of stars, overwhelming in this great thing that exists there are no other living creatures, certainly nothing approaching mankind.

So we are not just at the heart of the globe but this Nation, the United States of America, at this point in history, is at the heart of a whole universe. The way we make decisions, and what we do can greatly determine the course of where mankind in the universe goes. That is an awesome, awesome thought, and I think that we trivialize where we are. We play it down.

In the State of the Union address, the President certainly was broad and encompassing in terms of the agenda for America; and also it addressed some issues in terms of the entire globe but it was really not looking at the fact that we are at the center of the universe and this is the beginning of the 21st Century and that not only is this Nation the last superpower, well governed with a tremendous economy but also all of that put together has created an enormous amount of wealth.

The amount of wealth that the government is able to make decisions about is just a tiny part of the total wealth of America.

□ 1915

But that tiny portion of the wealth that becomes revenue and comes under the decision-making powers of the Congress and the White House, that amount itself is still an enormous amount of money. We are talking about a budget past a trillion dollars; and more important than the budget that has passed a trillion dollars, we are talking about a budget surplus over the next 10 years which will be, by very conservative estimates, $1.9 trillion.

Over the next 10 years, the surplus, after we factor out Social Security surplus, the Social Security surplus will be in a locked box. Put that aside. In addition to the Social Security surplus, we have a $1.9 trillion anticipated surplus of revenue above expenditure.

That is an awesome position to be in, to be able to look, as a Nation, at a situation where money is not the problem. The problem is our capacity to make decisions about investments, our capacity to act in the most humane and compassionate way, at the same time we act in a most practical way.

The Romans, at one point in history, they did not earn it through science and technology and good government; they earned it through their savage conquests. Their savage conquests produced a lot of wealth. They had so much booty and treasure they brought in from the rest of the world until the Romans decided at one point that we are all so rich until every man in Rome shall not pay taxes, we shall give every man in Rome a certain amount of money every year. The government will give them a big amount of money because the treasury is so full.

That turned out to be an unwise way to invest their wealth because all of the surrounding countryside moved into Rome; all of the people in the surrounding countryside heard about the goodies in Rome. They began to move in, and of course the Romans were overwhelmed by having to pay out more and more money, and they had to bring that to a stop.

The great Roman empire would do it for a long, long time. They thought it would go on forever. Maybe there is a God, and he does look down on Earth. There are periods where certain people, he smiles upon and chooses them to try to lead us and create the kind of Earth, the kind of world below heaven that he would like to have. The Romans might have been selected for that purpose. They failed.

Before the Romans, there were the Greeks. Maybe God was smiling on them and hoping that they would do it. Maybe this God does not like to get involved. The joy of God is to watch us and see what mankind individually does or mankind collectively does. Maybe he smiled on Greece, the great age of Greece being celebrated now on public television.

The Greeks were great people in every way: in science, in literature, in architecture, militarily. They defeated opponents who had many more soldiers and far greater resources militarily. The great Greeks, the people we know so very well: Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, all three came right together. Aeschelus, Sophocles, Euripides, the great dramatist, and on and on it goes in medicine, architecture. There is a Greek related to the beginnings of western civilization, the great Greeks, and do it for a long time.

Then they got fascinated with military conquests under Alexander who had studied under Aristotle and understood some very important things that Aristotle taught him. Alexander started his conquests. The great secret of Alexander's ability to keep conquering was that the people that he conquered he looked upon as human beings, he absorbed them into the Greek culture. He tried to. He did not have to occupy the places that he conquered because the people became allies and friends.

But as his ego mounted, as his conquests increased and his ego rose, he forgot the secret of his success and became a cruel and inhuman tyrant, and eventually he spread out the Greek resources and Greek empire in such a way that, upon his death, things began to fall apart. So Greece failed.

Rome failed to live up to the possibilities of mankind, to spread their great civilization throughout the world. Greece failed.

Before that was Egypt. Egypt, we are still now digging up new tombs. Egypt, Nubia, as you move toward black Africa, they are discovering more and more pyramids, more and more tombs. They are discovering that Egypt's Egyptians were as black as they were brown.

As they dig up these tombs, they find new and more splendiferous treasures, gold and jewels and all kinds of things that evidently Egypt was, at that time, a place of unparalleled wealth. They had an organized society. Something was wrong, though, because the society chose to focus on death more than life. One can imagine how many millions died creating those pyramids and tombs and creating the treasures that went into those tombs.

They had an obsession with death. They had an elitist culture. They had people who, despite their great wealth, had no vision. Egypt failed too.

So here we are, the United States of America, unprecedented in terms of wealth and power. The great advantage we have perhaps over Egypt and Rome and Greece is that we have a modern democracy. Greece had a democracy. They did not have television. They did not have the Internet. One could not click on and give one's opinions. There is a whole lot that we have now that they did not have.

They did not have an ability to make wealth multiply as rapidly as Bill Gates is able to multiply his wealth or Ted Turner is able to multiply his wealth. They did not have this great contradiction where there were people in one part of the world who still do not have running water and who live on a dollar a day, and there are other people in the Fortune 500 who have millions and millions of dollars, more money than they will ever be able to spend.

The United Nations has put out a report and calculated that one could provide enough decent water, one could provide vaccinations and medical care for children, one could provide an elementary education, one could provide a way for youngsters to get a start in life with educational opportunity, one could provide a package for the poor and downtrodden of the world for $40 billion a year. All of the developing countries, all of the dirt-poor countries like Haiti, like the countries in Africa whose life is bleeding away from disease. All of those things could be brought under control with $40 billion of expenditure per year.

We have just proposed a budget of more than a trillion dollars just for the United States of America. We anticipate a surplus of $1.9 trillion over a 10-year period.

Bill Gates, according to estimates, is worth at least $40 billion. That is several months ago. They talked about $40 billion, one man whose net worth is $40 billion, and because it increases geometrically, it is far beyond that probably now. That estimate was made a few months ago.

So with all of that, we approach the budget for the year 2001 that is going to be debated and discussed here in the Congress and here in Washington. We are the dawn of a digital age. America

is leading the world very rapidly at an ever-escalating speed into what I call a cyber-civilization.

What drives the wealth of Bill Gates and new millionaires, the new billionaires is a cyber-civilization. It is the age of the ''e,'' the age of the dot.

If one watched the Super Bowl, one knows what I mean. Most of us watched the Super Bowl. It is not something which is elitist, esoteric. The ''dot'' is here. The ''dot'' is here because the great United States of America invested in the kind of science that produced the Internet.

It was the people of the United States through their military that created the Internet, just as the people of the United States through the military created radio, mass broadcasting, and television. If one looks at the history of all these great developments, they belong to the people. They would not exist if it had not been for a government that chose to make investments. Yes, they chose for military reasons. The Navy wanted to develop radio. For military reasons, we developed the Internet. The defense system needed to meet certain needs.

Whatever the reason, American taxpayers' dollars invested well, created the possibilities for the great cyber-civilization which we are contemplating now.

Now, what does all this have to do with the figures and the numbers, the priorities and the proposals released by President Clinton today as we start the budgeting process? The President released his budget. The President is a Democrat, so the Republicans in Congress in the majority received it with a statement that it is dead on arrival. That is the way the budget was treated last year, the year before. When we had the Republican Presidents, the Democrats in the Congress used to say the same thing.

We need to get away from that cliche, ''dead on arrival.'' Nevertheless, that is the way we start, dead on arrival. That means we are going to have a great debate.

I am trying to take a few minutes to appeal to my colleagues to get beyond the trivial, to get beyond the immediate and the myopic approach. We all are held very closely to reality.

We all know as Congresspersons that, when we go back to our districts, people expect us to have our feet on the ground. They do not want to know about the possibilities of a cyber-civilization. They do not want to know about the fact that we are at a point where the Romans first once stood and the Greeks once stood and the Egyptians. We are now the pivotal Nation, what President Clinton called in his inauguration address a few years ago, we are the indispensable Nation.

Once Rome was the indispensable nation. Once Greece was the indispensable nation. Once Egypt was the indispensable nation. Now the United States is the indispensable nation to determine the future of the world. Is that too ambitious a vision to project? I do not think so.

There was a time just a few years ago when people were predicting that the little island of Japan, because it was moving so rapidly in technology and overtaking the other industrial nations, that we would all be trailing in the wake of Japanese economic power.

There was a time when we looked at Europe and the wonderful and very much appreciated unifying factor there, the uniting of Europe, where, instead of wasting their resources and their genius on war, now they are uniting in economics and politics that they would surely be leading the world, and we would be following in their shadow.

But history has not developed that way. The fact that we are at the point that we are now is more than just luck. Some great decisions have been made, some immediate decisions in 1993 made by the Democrats on the floor of this House and in the Senate, and some long-term decisions made in terms of the investment in items which not only include the Internet, radio, television, but also the science that produced wonder drugs. We keep people alive longer, they are able to produce more scientific miracles. Wisdom, the longer one lives the greater the wisdom in general, and one is able to take advantage of that.

Just an item like that on the side, wonder drugs and the things that have helped people function throughout their lives for longer periods, all of it comes together, all of it is American, all of is part of what we have created by maximizing freedom and allowing all flowers to bloom, allowing the innovations and the ideas to come up from the bottom. All of this has led us to the point where we now have the prospects of a $1.9 trillion surplus over a 10-year period.

□ 1930

And we have a President who has proposed a budget of more than $1 trillion.

The Congressional Black Caucus has asked me to serve on the committee to develop an alternative budget, and I welcome the opportunity. In previous years I have helped to develop an alternative budget and found it to be an exhilarating experience, to take the President's figures, to take the parameters that are set by the White House and set by the majority party and to try to operate within those parameters.

Last year the Republicans were so parliamentary cruel that they banned other budgets from being offered on the floor. I hope that they will become more civilized and that we will go back to the tradition of the House of having alternative budgets offered by various groups. Let the Blue Dogs offer their budget, let the conservative Republicans offer their budget, let the moderate Republicans offer their budget, let the Congressional Black Caucus offer its budget, and the Hispanic caucus, and let us see what the alternatives are.

We would like to combine with people who are not just African American but people who care about others; what I call the caring majority. There is in America a caring majority. The caring majority is made up partially of people who are suffering from oppressive policies, who are suffering from the blindness of leadership, who are suffering from the blunders of leadership, from people who are not necessarily cruel but who do not understand what it means to force a welfare mother to go to work instead of taking care of a young child.

We have a whole bureaucracy related out there to putting that welfare mother to work and complicating the life of both the mother and the child because they like the idea of people going to work. In the process of creating the order to go to work, they have to create a decent day care center. And a day care center will not exist unless we have funding for that. But we do not provide decent funding for the day care centers, so we have inadequate salaries and people in day care centers who are going to be a negative influence on the children because they do not know what they are doing and they are bitter about their low wages.

We create bureaucracies and take away a child from the one most beneficial thing that they have: a parent. That is the kind of blunder that a lot of decent people fall into. That is the kind of reasoning that seems to be straight and logical but which is very, very crooked and harmful.

So we have the opportunity to seriously debate these parts of the budget and reach some conclusions that we should spend money in a way which allows what Thomas Jefferson stated in the Declaration of Independence to become a reality; that people really have not just the right to pursue happiness but the opportunity to pursue happiness. The right to the pursuit of happiness is important. Do not interfere with that, but let us also in the great America of the year 2000 create opportunities to pursue happiness.

We have had great debates over the past few years about race-based legislation; race-based programs. Some people have sweated, turned all kinds of colors at the thought of doing anything that is race based. I have said that if we are talking about race-based programs in the abstract, yes. But if we are talking about programs to compensate for the fact that for 232 years one group of people were held in a cruel bondage, where no wealth could be created, where laws were made which made it illegal to teach them to read, where all kinds of cruel things were done and now the descendants of those folks are behind the mainstream, it is not really race based, it is justice based to talk about scholarships just for African Americans, to talk about policies which force the end of gerrymandering which creates districts that keep African Americans out of power so they cannot help themselves, and on and on it goes. So the so-

called race-based phenomenon is offered as a first step towards some kind of justice.

Reparations is something we do not want to talk about in connection with American slavery. The Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission will probably rule out any discussion of reparations for the descendants of African American slaves, rule it out of order. Oh, yes, we can discuss reparations for the Japanese who were interned during World War II in America, and we did discuss that and we did pass some legislation. I certainly, along with other members of the black caucus, welcomed that legislation and supported that legislation. We supported recognition that a government has responsibility, a present government has a responsibility for what past governments have done.

The Japanese day in and day out are fighting that notion. They refuse to apologize for what they did to the Chinese. They refuse to apologize for what they did to the Koreans. But let us applaud the fact that the Swiss have finally owned up to the fact that they swindled desperate people out of billions of dollars. The Swiss have finally said that, yes, we did take the money from the Jews fleeing the Germans, we did put their money away and refuse to allow anybody to claim it later, refused to come forward, so we will pay. The Germans are now creating a $5 billion fund, reparations for all those people they forced into slave labor in the industries. And maybe they have some kind of compensation for all those who died that they can pinpoint.

I do not want to get into details. I do not know the details. I just know that the concept of reparations, that a present government has a responsibility for what past governments did; that the people of a present Nation have a responsibility and should bear some responsibility for what the people did in the past. That has been established everywhere.

What does this have to do with the budget the President sent to Congress today? Throughout this budget there are opportunities to do things which would greatly facilitate the correction of some of the injustices that were done to the forefathers of African Americans. There are great opportunities in this budget to go forward and create programs which not only help the descendants of slaves but also help all poor people.

Yes, we have had this great debate. We have lost it. Those of us who wanted reparations, those of us who said we needed to have affirmative action, we basically lost ground. We have lost ground in the Supreme Court. The Voting Rights Act is being diluted. We have lost ground in the universities. They have ruled out giving scholarships on the basis of race. We have lost ground. Let us switch the concepts. If we have lost ground on the basis of reparations and the need to correct past injustices, let us talk about opportunity. Let us go for an opportunity budget.

In the President's budget we should create maximum opportunities not only for the descendants of slaves but for all people who are disadvantaged; for immigrants who came here from dirt poor countries who have problems assimilating, for other people who in some way have been disadvantaged, for the Native Americans who were driven off their land and treated cruelly. They fell for the trap of segregation and separated themselves out and have not been able to get a foothold in the power structure and, therefore, are suffering more than any other group probably of disadvantaged people in America.

Let us have an opportunity program which looks upon every child that is born. Let us not focus so much on what happens in the womb, let us focus on what happens after the child gets here. Let us say we will guaranty an opportunity that every child born in America will have an opportunity to get an education which maximizes their God-given talents; that no child shall be hungry from the time he is born until the time he gets to be 18 years of age or 21 years of age, finishing college; that every child should have an opportunity to go to a school which is a school that physically is better than his home. It does not threaten his health because at the school there is a coal burning furnace spewing fumes into the air which may ruin his lungs and create a situation where asthmatic conditions develop in that child.

Let us not send a kid to school which is so crowded that it forces him to eat lunch at 10 o'clock in the morning, which ruins his digestive system and his whole attitude toward eating because he just had breakfast. Because of the bureaucracy of the school and the fact they have so many kids to feed, in a cafeteria that was built for one-third of the number that they have to feed, they have to have three lunch periods and they have to start early. The children who eat lunch early at 10 o'clock are forced to eat lunch before their breakfast is digested. The children who eat lunch late are hungry, unusually hungry, and their systems are damaged. Let us not have an America that allows that.

Let us have an America that with a $1.9 trillion projection over a 10-year period decides to invest heavily in opportunity in various ways. Opportunity may involve health care or opportunity may involve housing. There are very few housing programs any more that are being driven by Federal initiative. We are barely hanging on to the programs that were created by the New Deal and by the Great Society. So we need to create decent housing for every child born; an opportunity not to have to live in a cold house that makes it difficult to sleep at night for a child or creates the possibility of many more illnesses so they will miss many more days of school and also develop many kinds of childhood illnesses which create difficulties later as an adult. On and on it goes. An opportunity to be free of that.

Why not look at the budget in the year 2000 as being an opportunity to get rid of all those impediments to children; an opportunity budget as we go into the great cyber civilization.

The cyber civilization needs brainpower. Brainpower drives America right now. Those nerds, those kids that everybody made jokes about in high school and in college, they now are in command. They are in command. They are the ones who drive the computers and the Internet and the e-commerce. It is not a passing phenomenon. We are going to need more and more of them. The projection is that right now we have 300,000 vacancies that are going unfilled in information technology? These are cyber technicians, people who can create the Internet; programmers, people who can merge a sense of the culture with what is possible in the digital world and come out with a product that is very useful and also very profitable. All of these developments require brainpower. We know that.

If brainpower drives the future, then let us invest in activities which create more brainpower. So the opportunity approach is not only the ethical approach, not only the moral approach, the opportunity approach is the most practical approach. If we want to keep America great, if we want to keep this economy going, if we want our military to remain the greatest military, the most effective military in the world, we have to have recruits that go into that military who are exposed to the digital revolution, who have come in understanding a great deal and can be trained to use our high-tech weapons.

There is no sector in American public life that is not affected by the digital revolution.

Madam Speaker, I began by saying that two great things happened today. One was that we voted to create a bicentennial commission in honor of Abraham Lincoln, and that commission and all the activity surrounding that is very beneficial to the American Nation as we examine where we are at the beginning of the 21st century.

□ 1945

I also said today we launched the most important budget in the history of the United States of America. I also said I think it is most unfortunate that we are casually launching this budget and trivializing the significance of this particular moment in history, that we are downplaying the fact that we have a $1.9 trillion budget surplus progression over a 10-year period.

We are trivializing the fact that this budget will definitely not have a deficit if we are going to have a budget that is certainly balanced, and we can do that without having to cut large numbers of programs.

The challenge before us is, when we have this kind of opportunity, when this kind of wealth exists unparalleled

in the history of the world, when we stand at the pinnacle of the rudder system that guides the world, and maybe we are the gyroscope that guides the entire universe at this point, that great responsibility will be taken seriously enough to utilize this budget for the sake of the entire world, starting with our own people who need health care, who need a greater investment in education and opportunity.

Why be too cautious? Why be cavalier? Why be uncaring? If we are cautious, cavalier, and uncaring at this moment in history, we may lose our opportunity, the way the Romans lost theirs and the way the Greeks lost theirs and the Egyptians and maybe the way the British Empire lost its opportunity to provide leadership that would create a heaven on Earth, a place where all human beings have an opportunity and a right to pursue happiness. It is possible.

The United Nations has said, as I repeat, that, with $40 billion expenditure per year, you could end most of the greatest hardships of the world, you could vaccinate children all over the world, you could provide a primary school of education, you could provide decent water for everybody in the world. It may be that they are off by a few billion dollars, but the fact that they have come up with a quantification of what the world needs is a great beginning.

I salute Ted Turner, the great American billionaire, when he decided that he would devote a billion dollars to helping people throughout the world. That is the kind of action that individual Americans with wealth can take, and we are probably going to see more of that. Let us applaud that.

I salute Bill Gates and his magnificent set of foundation projects, one of which is a billion dollar grant to the United Negro College Fund. The United Negro College Fund has been given a billion dollars to provide scholarships for students over a 10-year period. For college students, they are going to pay the entire college expense for 4 years. These students who are fortunate enough to be chosen will have their college expenses paid for 4 years. That is Bill Gates, the billionaire. There are other billionaires and other millionaires who have various kinds of projects of their own.

That is American. This is very American. Never in the history of the world have we had this kind of foundation approach to the utilization of wealth by individuals. I do not think the Greeks had any foundations or the Egyptians or the Romans. There is no evidence that they had centers of philanthropic operation run by ordinary citizens.

The governments did have certain programs, but probably the Greeks failed because they did not educate enough Greeks. It was an elitist process. The academy that was run by Aristotle probably only took the elite. Probably the Egyptians failed because the priest and the whole religious society of an elitist ran the culture and eventually ran the whole nation.

On and on it goes. Let us not make that mistake. We have a great democracy now. Let us invest in education so that the maximum number of people will be able to be fully developed and make their contribution.

The greatest natural resource in the universe is the human mind. That is not just a flowery phrase. It is reality. With the human mind, you open up vast caverns of possibilities and scientific miracles that have produced the technology and the medicine and the kinds of things that are happening in today's world. It all came out of human minds.

If you put to work twice as many human minds in 10 years as you have working now in the area of science and math and agriculture, producing music, drama, the kinds of things that create a culture, we take advantage of the opportunities that are created by technology and science. Because the human being is molded a certain way.

One of the problems with the Romans is that even while they were building vast architectural empires, they invented concrete, they were the geniuses in military strategies, at the same time the Romans had the coliseums. If you have ever been to Rome and been to the Coliseum, a fascinating thing to behold is that underneath the main arena are all these pits where the animals were kept, big animals, like lions and tigers. They were kept there because they are what they threw the Christians to. And Christians were not the only ones sent to the lions.

The Romans sat in these huge coliseums while watching animals eat people and watching gladiators kill each other. They were a culture out of sync with compassion and humanity. Even though they had the greatest military inventions and strategies and created Roman law and logic, the breadth of the Roman empire was so impressive they liked to watch people get eaten by animals.

That lack of development, that cruelty streak, whatever you want to call it, probably played a great role in the fall of the Roman Empire, the lack of compassion, the inability to make use of all their great wealth for everybody.

So we would like not to be an American people who watch the Super Bowl in millions. We would like not to be an American people who find that phoney wrestling on television is the most popular cable television programs, phony wrestling, watching people do crazy things to each other, knowing very well it is all staged.

Our culture, our minds are being shaped by that. Where might we be in 10 or 20 years if more of that keeps going on? Our science, our genius, our government all may not be able to save us if our culture is watching phony people throw each other around in the ring. That is our entertainment. Our minds may get affected and shrink as a result. I am laughing, but I really do not think it is funny.

If we enjoy that kind of cruelty, we may institutionalize cruelty. And we have to some degree institutionalized cruelty. We have vast expenditures by the Federal Government and by State and local governments in a prison system which now is the largest in the world. No industrialized nation has more people in prison than the United States of America.

Is that where we want our wealth to go, to build more prisons? We build a prison and keep a person in prison for no less than about $20,000 a year. The price to keep a man in prison costs a minimum of $20,000 per year.

In the New York City school system, people complain about the fact that we spend $8,000 a year per child for an education. But yet, we are willing to send that same child to prison and spend $20,000 a year. That is the kind of thinking that probably led to the downfall of the Roman Empire.

I am talking about the President's budget today. You might wonder why I am not reciting figures. You are going to hear a lot of figures. You are going to hear a lot of numbers.

Let us take time out to salute President Clinton for the fact that he has placed a great deal of emphasis in his budget on education, not enough, in my opinion. But where else in Washington, where else in the world will you find more emphasis being placed on education? Where else in the context of the American government systems, the States, the cities.

There are cities like New York City that have surpluses and had a surplus a year ago of $2 billion. The amount of revenue collected was $2 billion greater than expenditures. And yet New York City would not spend a single penny to remove the coal burning furnaces in its schools.

There are more than 200 schools in New York City that have coal burning furnaces. New York City spent several million dollars on an asthma project to educate school kids and their parents about asthma to try to do something about an asthma epidemic. Asthma is growing as a problem in New York City. And in the course of that asthma project, which got high visibility for city hall and the mayor, they did not mention a single time that the city, the Board of Education, was responsible for 200 coal burning furnaces spewing pollutants into the air very close to where young children were being educated.

If a child is sent to school from a house that burns oil or gas and the school is burning coal, that means that at school he is placed in jeopardy in a way that he is not placed in jeopardy at home. Going to school becomes harmful to children who at an early age are put into a school that is burning coal.

When I bought my first house, it was a coal burning furnace. We got a bargain. I could not afford it otherwise. And we tried very hard with filters and we worked very hard to keep it clean.

But no matter how hard you work, those tiny particles of coal dust get into the air and eventually in the lungs of young children.

We were glad when we could convert to gas, I assure you. Coal is used for many purposes but it should not be in a situation where children are being exposed day in and day out to the fumes and the dust that comes from coal.

But in New York City, we had $2 billion and not a single penny was spent to get rid of a single coal burning furnace. In New York City, $2 billion and not a single penny was spent to build a new school.

The mayor squirreled all that away. That is the kind of cruel and blind decision-making that we do not want to be guilty of in this budget.

The President has proposed, and I want to salute him for this breakthrough, the President has proposed in the area of school construction we go beyond what has been proposed in past years. He has proposed for the past few years that the only Federal involvement in school construction would be limited to a $25 billion program where the Federal Government would participate in the program where localities and States could borrow up to $25 billion across the country, the total would come to that much, and the Federal Government would pay the interest on the bonds.

And if that whole program went into motion and the whole program was utilized, the Federal Government would be paying $3.7 billion in interest and, therefore, its contribution to school construction in the entire country would be $3.7 billion.

Now, the General Accounting Office has said that in 1995 we needed $110 billion to repair and build schools in order to keep up with the population at that time. Without projecting additional children who would be going to school and therefore needing more classrooms, $110 billion was needed in 1995.

Bob Chase, who is the President of the National Education Association, made a speech at the Democratic Caucus retreat this weekend where he said that now we need $300 billion in order to stay even, that in order to have a decent school and classroom for every child that is going to school, you need to bring it up to $300 billion.

But the President is proposing, and he is way out ahead of everybody else, the Republicans propose zero, the President is proposing $3.7 billion to pay the interest. We need at least the amount that the General Accounting Office projected in 1995, more like $110 billion dollars.

I have a bill which, based on the General Accounting Office progression in 1995, proposes that we spend $110 billion for school construction, repair and modernization over the next 10 years. The President has at least gone beyond his $25 billion borrowing scheme and made a breakthrough in thinking in this administration and he has announced a new school construction initiative where $1.3 billion will be directly appropriated, directly appropriated, not borrowed, no interest, no principal, the Government of the United States will directly appropriate $1.3 billion for emergency school repairs.

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Mr. President, we thank you for that great breakthrough in logic. We thank you for joining the commonsense Americans.

We have made a first step. In fact, I sent out a ''Dear Colleague'' to all the Members saying we are winning. We are winning. This is a great step over where we were 2 years ago. We are winning because the commonsense logic of the American people is beginning to prevail.

The American people in survey after survey have indicated education should be the highest priority. When you ask them in great detail to tell you what items within the education budget need the most help, they say fixing schools. School repair, construction, renovation, security, all of those items relate to infrastructure, and rank highest in the minds of the American people according to several key polls.

Why do I single out school construction? Why do I walk around with this hat as a symbol, a trademark, to keep it in people's minds when we are talking about it? Why do you care about education and care about schools?

I have been on the Committee on Education and the Workforce now for my 18th year. I care about education. I asked to be placed on the Committee on Education and the Workforce when I came here, Education and Labor it was called then, because I saw education and jobs, education and employment, as being inextricably interwoven. You cannot separate them. If I was going to do anything about the high unemployment in my district, about the opportunity for the poor people, I needed to be on the Committee on Education and the Workforce. So education has been the one thing that I have considered most important in my life for a long time.

Why do I single out school construction among all the other items that relate to improving education? Because school construction, the physical infrastructure, they are so dilapidated, so rundown, such obvious symbols of a lack of commitment in certain areas. Not just the big cities, but even when you get outside of the big cities, you have schools in the suburbs with trailers all over the place, indicating that the commitment to build schools is not there, that the trailers were put there instead.

They are supposed to be temporary. Some places have had trailers for 20 years now. The trailers do not have indoor toilets. When the weather is bad you, you have to go out to the real building for that. Trailers are not symbols of education commitment to children.

So why do I see the physical infrastructure as being so important? If I am an intellectual, why do I not care about the books, the curriculum, the standards? Why do I not care about testing? Why do I not care about whole school reform?

I care about it all. It is all very important. I think it is dangerous to try to separate out any one part and say we do not need it all. We need it all. But there is such a thing as a core need, a kingpin need, a critical need, which, if it is not addressed, all of the attention to other needs is folly.

For example, let us consider school reform and investment in education as we would approach a patient that is very ill in a hospital. The patient is delivered to the doctors in the hospital and they are told that this man has heart congestion. Because of the heart condition, if something is not done about the heart very rapidly, very quickly, he is going to die. But he also has infected feet. He also has strange sores growing all over his skin. He also has some damage to one of his internal organs. Which shall the doctors address first if they care about keeping the man alive?

The school systems are no different. In order to keep the patient alive, you have to address the heart congestion first. If the heart stops beating, none of the other illnesses matter. If the heart stops beating, trying to cure the infected foot is a waste of time. If the heart stops beating, trying to cure the damaged organ internally is a waste of time.

If you do not address the school buildings, the infrastructure, which provides the place for the library and the laboratory, the physical symbol of commitment, if you do not address that, then the children will pass judgment immediately. Walking into a dilapidated school with a sagging roof, water dripping through the roof on the top floors, window panes out, coal burning furnaces. I went to one school, I had a town meeting, 7 o'clock in the evening, and under the chairs in the auditorium where we were holding the town meeting, mice were playing. No extermination was taking place, no effective cleaning services were taking place in that school.

What does that tell the children? What does that tell the teachers? It tells the children and teachers that there is a lack of commitment by the people that make decisions about the budgets to provide a decent education to those children.

We have gone from blaming the children, change the curriculum standards, test the children, blame the children, now we have come down to blaming the teachers. This is the year of blaming the teachers. We have dealt with curriculum standards out there. We tried to institute national testing. Some of us fought that. We said ''do not test the kids until you have more resources so they have a chance to learn before you test them.''

Now we have gone to focus on the teachers. If only the teachers were better prepared, if only more teachers were certified, if only more teachers understood what they are doing, then we could reform the school system.

Not for one moment will I disagree that we need quality teachers. We need systems that provide certified teachers, qualified teachers, right across the board.

In my district, one-third of the schools in my district, where the poorest children live, half the teachers are not certified. Each school has at least 50 percent not certified teachers, 50 percent unqualified teachers, because they have been given a chance, in some cases, 9 or 10 years, to get certified, and some have not wanted to care.

Recently the United Federation of Teachers, the teachers union, said to the uncertified teachers, if you want to go back to school, we will pay your tuition. We will make it possible for you to get certified.

They were shocked to find that the majority of the people they were addressing turned it down. When they turned it down, they said to the union people, ''This school system needs our bodies. We cannot be replaced. We are not worried about losing our jobs. You need our bodies.''

Mr. Speaker, I want to end by saying that at the heart of education reform, education investment, which should be the heart of this year's budget, should be $110 billion over a 10-year period for construction, because that is the way we show our commitment for education as we go into the 21st century as the leaders of the world and as the leaders on this whole globe. We ought to take this budget seriously. We ought to make the decisions that will carry our Nation forward, and not make the error that the Romans, Greeks, and Egyptians made when they were at the pinnacle of power and had the world in their hands.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 6, MARRIAGE TAX PENALTY RELIEF ACT OF 2000

Mr. DREIER (during the special order of Mr. OWENS), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 106–495) on the resolution (H. Res. 419) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 6) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to eliminate the marriage penalty by providing that the income tax rate bracket amounts, and the amount of the standard deduction, for joint returns shall be twice the amounts applicable to unmarried individuals, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

DEALING WITH THE BUDGET SURPLUS AND THE NATIONAL DEBT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GANSKE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GREEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to your attention a very important issue facing the American public, something that we dealt with today in the Committee on the Budget and something I talked about with the constituents I represent in the First Congressional District of Wisconsin throughout the past 2 months during the Christmas recess, and that is this: What are we going to do about our Social Security surplus, what are we going to do about our non-Social Security surplus, and what are we going to do about our national debt? These are the issues that are driving our Federal budget process now. In doing so, the President, as he is required by the Constitution, sent the budget that he is proposing to pass into law to Congress yesterday.

This morning we had a hearing in the Committee on the Budget where the President's budget director outlined the budget. I would like to share a few of those details with the viewing public tonight and my colleagues.

First, we finally have agreement, we have progress on the fact that all Social Security money should go to Social Security in paying off the debt we owe to the program.

If you recall, Mr. Speaker, last year in this well, before the Nation and before Congress, the President in his State of the Union address said he wanted to dedicate 62 percent of the Social Security trust fund to Social Security, thereby spending 38 percent on other government programs.

Last year this Congress said no, that is not enough. I actually authored the Social Security lockbox bill with the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH) which requires that from now on, if you are going to pay Social Security taxes, it goes to Social Security; that 100 percent of the Social Security taxes we pay, 100 percent of the Social Security surpluses actually go to the program, go to the trust fund and go to pay off our national debt so we can create more solvency in the Social Security trust fund.

So there was a difference last year. Congress was for protecting 100 percent of the Social Security trust fund last year; the President was for protecting 62 percent of the Social Security trust fund.

Now we have good news. The President has finally come around and agreed that, finally, for the first time in 30 years, we should pass legislation to protect 100 percent of the Social Security trust fund. I am very encouraged by this news.

However, I am a little concerned at what Jack Lew, the OMB Director, the President's chief budget writer, said this morning, and that was this: They support the idea of putting 100 percent of the Social Security surpluses back into Social Security and paying off our debt, but they are not in support of legislation to ensure that this happens. That is a little odd, I think. So I would like to see this administration walk the walk and not just talk the talk.

But then what happens when we look at the non-Social Security surpluses? Today in America people are overpaying their taxes. They are overpaying their taxes in two very fundamental ways: They are overpaying their taxes with Social Security taxes. That spending of the surplus has occurred for years. We have actually raided that fund for 30 years, this government has, to spend on other government programs.

For the first time in 30 years, last year this Congress stopped the raid on the Social Security trust fund. I am seeking to pass our lockbox legislation which will make sure we never go back to the days of raiding the Social Security trust fund.

But on the other side of the Federal Government ledger book, the non-Social Security part, millions of American taxpayers, hard-working families, are overpaying their income taxes. So we now have a non-Social Security surplus approaching $2 trillion over the next 10 years. That is astounding.

We were looking at deficits as far as the eye could see just a few years ago. Now we have the opportunity, now we have the good fortune, based on good discipline in spending and based on a great economy, to have a $4 trillion surplus; $2 trillion for Social Security, $2 trillion from an overpayment of income taxes.

Here is what the President is proposing to do. He is finally agreeing with Congress that we take the $2 trillion from the Social Security surplus and apply that back to Social Security, towards shoring up the program and paying off our National debt, which consequently is some money we owe back to Social Security.

But on this non-Social Security part, the income tax overpayment, the President in this budget is proposing to spend $1.3 trillion of that surplus. He is proposing to spend 70 percent of the non-Social Security surplus on new government programs in Washington.

Specifically, as we analyzed this budget in the Committee on the Budget as we did so this morning, the President is calling forth creation of 84 new Federal spending programs to be launched this year by the Federal Government, to be paid for by the income tax overpayments of the American taxpayer.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I held over 60 town hall meetings in the district I serve in southern Wisconsin, the First Congressional District, where I posed a lot of questions to my constituents to ask them about this. They said that if they are given a choice between tax reduction and debt reduction with this money, they were evenly split. But if they were given a choice between spending their income tax overpayments on new spending in Washington or reducing our national debt further

and reducing our tax burden on families, they would clearly side with reducing taxes and reducing the national debt.

Mr. Speaker, this budget will probably fall to a similar fate as last year's budget, which was a vote of 422 opposed and 2 in favor of the President's budget.

Mr. Speaker, I urge this administration to come back to the table, save these surpluses for paying down our national debt, shoring up Social Security and giving people their money back if they still overpay their taxes, instead of using it to spend $1.3 trillion on the creation of 84 new Federal Government programs.

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HEALTH CARE REFORM STILL MAJOR ISSUE FOR AMERICANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. GANSKE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GANSKE. Mr. Speaker, I am going to probably not take all of my allotted hour tonight, probably about half an hour or so. Any colleagues that may be following should have notice of that.

This weekend in Parade Magazine, February 6, 2000, on page 15, there is a cartoon. I do not have it blown up like I have made charts of many cartoons in the past as I have spoken here on patient protection legislation, so let me describe what this cartoon shows. It shows a doctor sitting at his desk holding a sheet of paper. There is a patient, a man, sitting in the chair in front of the desk. The doctor is saying, ''Your HMO won't cover any illness contracted in the 20th century.''

Well, Mr. Speaker, it is a truism that in order for something to be funny, in order for there to be a joke to be effective or a cartoon to be effective, the public has to understand what the punch line is and what the issue is. And the issue, of course, is that HMOs have not treated many people around this country fairly. They have come up with rules and regulations in byzantine and bizarre ways to deny necessary, medically necessary care for their patients. So of course when we see a cartoon like this where a physician is telling a patient sitting in front of him, ''Your HMO won't cover any illness contracted in the 20th century,'' it fits right in with what we think of as an unfairness of treatment by HMOs, along with the turn of the century, the new millennium.

I think that this cartoon and the jokes that we will frequently hear about HMOs indicate where the public is in their opinion on health maintenance organizations and whether they get treated fairly and whether, in fact, they think Congress ought to finally get something done to pass patient protection legislation.

I have been coming to the well of this House of Representatives for 5 years now. I started out with a bill that I had called the Patient Right to Know Act that would have banned gag clauses in HMO contracts that prevent physicians from telling patients all of their treatment options. I mean, the situation is such that some HMOs have tried to prevent physicians from telling a patient all of their treatment options because one of them might be an expensive one; and they have required physicians, for instance, to phone the HMO to get an authorization before they can even tell a patient what the treatment options are.

Before I came to Congress, I was a physician. It would be like me examining a lady with a lump in her breast knowing that there are three treatment options, and then because this HMO has this gag clause in a contract, having to excuse myself, go out into the hallway, get on the telephone and ask some bureaucrat at some HMO whether I can tell the patient about all three of her treatment options. I mean this issue has been here in Congress for too long, and the public feels that way.

I have here a survey done by Kaiser Family Foundation, the Harvard School of Public Health called National Survey on Health Care and the 2000 Elections, January 19, 2000. They were surveying a number of issues, but they said on patient rights, more consensus emerged on the issue of patient rights, even though, after nearly 2 years of debate, voters have decided that a Patients' Bill of Rights could increase the cost of their premiums. We will talk about that later, because the costs have been greatly overestimated by the managed care industry, and there are several studies that show that a cost increase in a person's premiums would be very modest, probably in the range of several dollars per month. That would then mean that one's insurance would actually mean something if one got sick.

Mr. Speaker, to go on of what the findings in the survey showed, about two-thirds of registered voters, of health care voters, because they divided this up into voters that were concerned about different issues, and education and health care, by the way, were way at the top of this survey, two-thirds of registered voters think health insurance premiums for people like them would go up if patient protections were enacted, but very few think their premiums would go up very much. And I say to my colleagues, they are right.

Now, 72 percent of registered voters favor patients' rights legislation versus only 17 percent that oppose it. In contrast to other health issues, there is more consensus between Democratic and Republican registered voters on patients' rights with 75 percent of Democratic registered voters and 68 percent, more than two-thirds, more than two out of three of Republican registered voters favoring patient protection legislation.

It goes on to say, one reason there may be greater consensus on patient rights is that many registered voters view patient protection legislation as a plus for them personally. Mr. Speaker, 45 percent say that it would make them better off, and only 7 percent say it would make them worse off. Mr. Speaker, 37 percent say they would not be much affected, but among health care voters, 52 percent say it would make them better off. As in past Kaiser-Harvard surveys, support for patients' rights does not fall when people believe health insurance premiums will go up.

Well, Mr. Speaker, maybe it is because the presidential candidates have looked at this issue; they are being asked about it constantly. Maybe it is because some of them have been told by all of the people that they are talking to around the country right now about what they feel about this. Maybe it is because they have looked at the polls. I do not know exactly why. But, Mr. Speaker, all of our major presidential candidates, whether we are talking about Democrats or Republicans, believe that we ought to pass patient protection legislation.

Let me just read to my colleagues a few of the statements from both Democrats and Republicans on this issue. One of these people will be our next President. Here is what Bill Bradley says: ''Health care decisions should be made by doctors and their patients, not an insurance company bureaucrat. A patient who feels that an HMO has denied needed care should have the right to an independent appeals process and should have the right to sue if harmed by an HMO decision. I support the Patients' Bill of Rights and I would push for a consumer right to know which would ensure that HMOs reveal important details of a plan that affect the care you receive.'' Democrat running for President.

How about a Republican running for President. Here is what the Republican who won the New Hampshire primary, Senator JOHN MCCAIN, has said on HMO reform. When asked whether patients should have the right to sue, the most contentious issue, Senator MCCAIN says yes. ''Once a patient has exhausted all options to obtain appropriate medical care that has been denied by an HMO, including going through a free and fair internal and external appeals process, that patient should have the right to seek redress in the courts. The right to sue should be limited to actual economic damages and capped noneconomic damages under terms that do not foster frivolous lawsuits.''

What does AL GORE, Vice President GORE, say about this? He says, ''I believe that we must pass a strong enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights to ensure that people insured by HMOs get the health care they need when they need it. For many people, the decisions HMOs make can be the difference between life and death, and no one should

have to worry about an HMO at a time when they are worried about their immediate survival. That is why I am calling for improved patient care by granting patients the right to an independent appeal when they are denied treatment, access to specialists, guaranteed coverage of emergency room treatment and the right to hold health maintenance organizations accountable for their actions.''

What does Governor George Bush say on the issue of patient protections? By the way, I believe all of these statements are in an AARP infomercial that has been broadcast around the country. Here is what Governor Bush says about this. Governor Bush has a lot of experience on this, because several years ago Texas passed a strong patient protection piece of legislation, several pieces of legislation, and here is what he says: ''I believe patients need access to a speedy and impartial forum to resolve disputes over health care coverage. Texas has a law that gives patients the right to seek legal action if they have been harmed. I allowed it to become law because we have a strong independent review process and other protections designed to encourage quick out-of-court resolutions instead of costly litigation. The process is working in Texas,'' Governor Bush says. He goes on and says, ''I would support similar protections at the Federal level, provided they do not supercede the patient protection laws Texas and many other States already have on the books.''

Well, Mr. Speaker, the bill that was passed here in the House last year, the bipartisan consensus Managed Care Reform Act of 1999 written by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. NORWOOD), the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. DINGELL), and myself, passing this House by a wide vote margin of 275 to 151, was modeled after the Texas law. Last week I gave a similar Special Order on this and I pointed out the many, many similarities between the bill that passed the House and what is currently in place in Texas.

As Governor Bush has told me personally and spoken on this vigorously, that bill is working. The HMO industry did not fall apart when it was passed. There were 30 HMOs in Texas; today there are over 50. There has not been a plethora of lawsuits; in fact, there have only been about four filed. We know that the filings are an accurate index of how well that law is working, because Texas has a 2-year state of limitation on filings.

So if there were any cases out there, we would know about it. But there have not been because they have a dispute resolution mechanism, an independent review panel, and because the HMOs know that if they do not follow the law, they are going to be liable; and of those cases, those few cases that have been filed in Texas, most of them have been because the HMOs did not follow the law. So they should be liable, especially if a patient goes out and commits suicide, as is one of those cases, because the HMO made an incorrect determination on medical necessity. They did not follow the Texas law.

I could go on and talk about others who have endorsed this, but I think for a minute we ought to talk about what is going on here in Congress now. Because a bill passed the Senate a year or so ago and as I mentioned, we passed a strong bipartisan bill here in the House of Representatives a couple of months ago. So once we have a bill that passes the Senate and a bill that passes the House, if they are not the same, then they go to what is called a conference committee.

Unfortunately, it looks as if the conference committee has been stacked against coming up with a strong, good piece of legislation that could have the support of the House of Representatives that was already voted on for strong legislation, and a bill that could get the President's signature. Why do I say that? Well, let me read from the Daily Monitor, Congressional Quarterly from Friday, February 4. It says, ''Although the House in October passed the patients' right portion of the overall managed care bill by 275 to 151 with 68 Republicans voting yes, House Speaker DENNIS HASTERT stacked the conference committee with foes of that measure. Only one Republican on that conference committee from the House voted for the bill that passed the House with 275 votes, and that one person voted for all of the alternatives.''

Well, I think that we are seeing here a foot-dragging, at least an appearance from naming of the conferees that there really is not a commitment to take the clear message that the House gave in that vote, but also in several motions to instruct for our conferees to stand up for the bill that passed this House of Representatives with a strong bipartisan vote.

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I mean, that vote only came after we had to jump over many hurdles during that debate that were put up by the opponents to passing patient protection legislation.

I think that House Republicans in particular fear that Democrats could leverage voter anger over this perceived foot-dragging in an election year. So we are seeing statements now coming out about, well, we should get a bill out, bring it back to the House, bring it back to the Senate from the conference.

But I just have a bit of recommendation for my Republican colleagues. If they bring back a bill that is not a strong bill, that plays games with the fine details, that does not address the issue of medical necessity, which continues to allow for Federal employee plans, the ability for HMOs to define ''medical necessity'' in any way that they want to, a bill that does not have a strong enforcement provision to make sure that HMOs follow the rules, then it cannot pass. That conference report cannot pass the House. We cannot get it to the President, and we are at a stalemate.

The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. NORWOOD) who wrote that bill, along with me on the Republican side, we stand ready and available to our leadership to help in terms of getting a strong piece of legislation that is a real piece of patient protection legislation to the House. I have made that offer to the Speaker on several occasions. We will continue to work to try to make sure that a bill that comes out of conference, that comes to the floor of the House, is worthy of the name ''patient protection legislation.''

Let me just point out a couple of areas where we could see some real problems. The patient protection bill was married to a bill on patient access to deal with the uninsured. I certainly think that we ought to deal with trying to decrease the number of uninsured. I think there are components in that access bill which could gain bipartisan support. I mean, moving to 100 percent deductibility for health insurance for individuals and making that effective January 1, 2000, would be one of those things that would get broad bipartisan support. I am certainly in favor of that.

Currently this year individuals who purchase their health insurance only have a 60 percent deduction, as versus a business getting a 100 percent deduction for health insurance for their employees. I do not think that is fair. We ought to fix that now. That is one of the items that could be the basis for a bipartisan agreement on access.

But there are some provisions in that other bill that got married to the patient protection bill which are really big problems. Let me give an example. The Congressional Budget Office just did a study on what are called association health plans, or are otherwise known as multiple employer welfare association plans, MEWAs; AHAs, MEWAs, all these acronyms.

What these are, an association health plan is where an organization, for instance, could offer a health plan to its members and be included under Federal law but be absolved from State insurance regulation for the health plan.

Multiple employer welfare associations are basically the same thing. Years ago when Congress first passed the Employee Retirement Income Security Act, ERISA, the piece of legislation which pulled insurance oversight away from the States and basically left nothing in its place for quality control, which is why we have this problem with HMOs as offered by employers today, years ago when that bill passed there was a loose definition of ''associations.''

We saw a number of bogus associations offer health plans. They were undercapitalized. In some cases they were simply fraudulent. They went bankrupt. People ran away with the profits, and a whole bunch of people,

hundreds of thousands of people, were left without insurance.

So Congress came back in the early 1980s and they tightened up the definition. They said, you can only offer an employer plan if you are a labor union or if you are an employer; an employer, not a grouping of employers or associations. Congress had to learn the hard way. A lot of people had to learn the hard way what the problem was. But some people now want to expand that definition again. I think the Clinton administration is correct on this, that it is not a good idea.

Let me give some reasons why. There was a study of association health plans just done by the Congressional Budget Office. This analysis by the CBO found that most small employers and workers would actually pay higher premiums if a preemption from State law for association health plans is brought back in this conference report, if it were enacted.

The report reveals that association health plans would save costs by skimming the healthy from the existing State-regulated small group market, thus making coverage more expensive for those who are left in that State coverage; i.e., the sick.

Specifically, this Congressional Budget Office report said that association health plans would not significantly reduce the number of uninsured. This is why a lot of people have said, well, we need to do association health plans that would decrease the number of uninsured.

But the Congressional Budget Office has looked at this and said, not so. Contrary to opponents' claims that AHPs would cover up to 8.5 million uninsured, the Congressional Budget Office estimated that coverage would only increase by 330,000 individuals, but also noted that the overall number of individuals insured would be lower, ''Because some of those who gained coverage through association health plans would have otherwise obtained coverage in the individual market.''

Then the CBO goes on to say, ''Four in five workers would be worse off under association health plans and health marts.'' According to the CBO report, 20 million employees and dependents of small employers would experience a rate increase under association health plans, while only 4.6 million would see a rate reduction.

Those do not sound like particularly great numbers to me. We are going to reduce the rate for about 4.5 million, but we are going to increase the premiums for 20 million. Does that make sense? Is that something we should be putting into a bill where we are trying to reduce the number of uninsured?

The CBO says, ''In addition, 10,000 of the sickest individuals would lose coverage if association health plans were enacted. Association health plans would save money primarily by cherry-picking.'' What does that mean? The CBO estimated that nearly two-thirds of the cost savings for association health plans would result from attracting healthier members from the existing insurance pool.

I come from one of the largest insurance centers in the United States, Des Moines, Iowa. I think it has more insurance companies than Hartford, Connecticut. I can say something about how insurance works. It works by making sure there is a large enough pool of the insured so we can spread out the risk, the cost of the risk.

But what association health plans would do is they would pull the healthy out of that larger market. Sure, the premiums might be lower for that group, but it would leave a sicker group behind. As the CBO said, we could see many, many people lose their insurance, because with that sicker pool, now the cost of premiums would go up dramatically. We would have a smaller pool but a sicker pool. Therefore, in order to not go bankrupt, the insurers who are covering that group that is left behind would have to raise their premiums a lot.

The CBO report goes on, ''Association health plans would eliminate benefits to cut costs.'' Think about that, association health plans would eliminate benefits to cut costs. Contrary to proponents claims that association health plans could offer generous benefits while lowering insurance costs, the Congressional Budget Office found that dropping State-mandated benefits would be the second major method the AHPs would use to reduce costs; i.e., cherry-picking. But they estimated that ''One-third of cost savings would come from eliminating benefits.''

Then the CBO went on to say, ''Association health plans would not reduce overhead costs. Contrary to claims that association health plans could reduce overhead by 30 percent, CBO assumed that cost savings arising from the group purchasing feature of association health plans and health marts would be negligible.'' They found no substantial evidence that joining a purchasing coop produced lower insurance costs for firms.

The CBO correctly points out that States with aggressive insurance reforms would see the most damage. The CBO report indicates that States with strict insurance reforms like Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, would be most attractive to the association health plans.

The report concludes that ''In States with more tightly compressed premiums, where the most cross-subsidization occurs, low-cost firms would face the greatest potential difference in price between traditional and association health mart plans.''

I mean, Mr. Speaker, if my colleagues want a full report, the report called ''Increasing Small Firm Health Insurance Coverage Through Association Health Plans and Health Marts,'' the study that I am talking about, it is available on the CBO web site www.cbo.gov, g-o-v.

I would recommend to my colleagues that they look this up, because it is very possible that we could see a conference report come back that has this provision in it that could actually increase the number of uninsured, rather than decrease it, and could undermine State efforts at providing insurance coverage.

I have here a letter from my Governor. I just got this. This is from Governor Vilsack of the State of Iowa. It is addressed to all of the Iowa Congressmen and Senators.

''Gentlemen, it has come to my attention that conferees from the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate will soon meet to consider the patient protection bills passed by each Chamber last year. I have been advised that the House version of this legislation contains provisions that would exempt multiple employer welfare arrangements and association health plans from a variety of State laws.''

Okay, that is the provision that was in the access bill that was married to the patient protection bill. So it does not deal as expressly with patient protection, but it is being folded into the patient protection legislation.

The Governor goes on to say, ''I would like to express my concern about these proposals for the following reasons.'' And I happen to believe, Mr. Speaker, that just about every Governor in this country will write a similar letter to us, whether they are Republican or Democrat, on this issue.

My Governor says, ''It is my view that the MEWA AHP provisions would render State small employer health insurance reforms unworkable by allowing groups to opt in and out of State regulation based on their medical needs. Furthermore, these provisions would lead to a siphoning of healthy workers from the State-regulated health insurance market, which would then become a dumping ground for high-cost groups. As premiums rise for those remaining in the State-regulated market, more small firms would drop out of health insurance coverage, and the number of uninsured in our State and across the Nation would increase. This seems contrary to efforts in our State to try to reduce the number of uninsured individuals.''

Governor Vilsack goes on: ''The legislation could also mean a Federal takeover of health insurance regulation by preempting traditional State regulatory authority.'' Let me just repeat this: ''The legislation could also mean a Federal takeover of health insurance regulation by preempting traditional State regulatory authority.''

I am a Republican. How many times have I heard my colleagues from my side of the aisle say, ''Hey, we need to devolve power back to the States.'' The States are the places where we ought to be doing insurance.

□ 2045

There is a bill that passed a long time ago called the McCarran-Ferguson Act, which basically says that insurance regulation should be done at the State level.

I would like to know how many of my Republican colleagues want to repeal the McCarran-Ferguson Act and take it over by the Federal Government. I am one of those Republicans who believe that the role of the Federal Government should be limited; that we should not be taking this over.

This was part of the original problem with the ERISA bill. We exempted oversight by the States and so we have had a lot of abuses.

The governor goes on to say, States would be powerless to enforce their insurance rules with regard to these federally-licensed health plans or to resolve problems for their residents quickly. Moreover, States could no longer move quickly to prevent the insolvency of a failing association health plan, or seize assets to assure payment of enrollees and local health care providers.

We are getting right back to what I was talking about before. Past experience has shown that some of these plans have gone insolvent.

Traditionally the State takes over to make sure that people are not left uninsured, but if they are under the Federal purview, what happens to those people whose plans then go bankrupt?

Governor Vilsack then goes on, ''For all those reasons,'' listen to this my colleagues, ''for all those reasons, the National Governors' Association, the Republican Governors' Association, the National Conference of State Legislatures, the National Association of Insurance Commissioners have opposed those provisions.''

My governor finishes by saying, ''I add my voice to theirs in asking you to reconsider such provisions so that we do not run the risk of increasing the number of uninsured in Iowa and in the country.

''Furthermore, I think it is important and necessary for States to be able to continue to regulate this important industry as we have successfully done for a number of years.

''Iowa has a reputation for a balanced regulation and it would be difficult to maintain that balance with these federally-imposed requirements. Sincerely, Tom Vilsack, governor of Iowa.''

I would again reiterate that I think that most of the Members are going to receive a similarly worded letter from their governors, whether they be Democrat or Republican, on this issue. So if the conference bill comes back to us with these association health plans or these multiple employer welfare associations, people need to think very, very seriously, if they are really serious about decreasing the number of uninsured, whether they can support a bill that would have this type of provision in it.

Now, another issue that is going to be very important is on the issue of medical necessity and who at the end gets to determine medical necessity. The bill that we passed here in the House basically says that that independent peer panel, if there is a dispute and a patient has gone through the internal appeals process through their HMO and is unhappy with the decision by the HMO, that the patient can take that denial to an independent peer panel, a group of doctors not paid for by the HMO or a part of the HMO, and get an independent review.

The House version says that unless you have a specific exclusion of coverage in the contract, for instance the HMO contract that you have specifically says we will not provide a bone marrow transplant, that unless there is a specific exclusion then that independent panel determines the medical necessity of the treatment, not the health plan.

Unfortunately, we have a situation with the bill from the other side of the capitol that does not address this issue. In fact, it is worse than the status quo. It would basically say that HMOs can define medical care in any way they want to.

What does that mean? Well, under Federal law now you have some HMOs that are saying we define medical necessity as the cheapest, least expensive care, quote/unquote.

For all of us who are concerned about health care costs, you might initially think, well, what would be wrong with that? Well, I can say what is wrong with that. As a plastic and reconstructive surgeon, I took care of a lot of kids who had cleft lips and palates. They were born with a deformity in the roof of their mouth, a big hole in the roof of their mouth, and they cannot eat without food coming out of their nose and they cannot speak properly.

The commonly accepted, standard treatment for that is a surgical repair to bring those tissues together and to recreate a roof of the mouth so that, A, they do not have food going up into their nose and coming out and, B, so that they can learn to speak properly or have the best chance to do that.

Under this definition that some HMOs have come up with, i.e., the cheapest, least expensive care, they could justify the treatment for a child with that birth defect as a piece of plastic, like an upper denture; we are just going to give him an upper denture to put in the roof of his mouth. That is a travesty, but that could exactly happen and people have lost their lives on the basis of decisions that HMOs have made on medical necessity where they have ignored their physician's advice and denied needed treatment.

Many times I have stood up here and told the story about a little boy from Atlanta, Georgia, who when he was 6 months old, in the middle of the night, had a temperature of 104, and his mother thought he needed to go to the emergency room and she phoned a 1–800 number for an HMO and was told, well, you can only take him to one emergency room. That is all we are going to authorize.

It was 60-some miles away. After they had passed several hospitals where the little boy could have been treated, he had an arrest, a cardiac arrest, before he got to the hospital. Partly as a result of that loss of circulation to his hands and his feet, he developed gangrene in both hands and both feet and they both had to be amputated.

That HMO made a medical decision and said we will let you go to the emergency room but only this one a long way away. If you go to any other ones, you have to pay for it yourself, and mom and dad were not medical professionals; they did not know how sick little Jimmy was until his eyes rolled back in his head and he stopped breathing en route to the hospital.

In my opinion, when an HMO makes a medical decision like that they ought to be legally responsible for that. Under current Federal law, if it is a health plan that you get through your employer, in that type of situation the health plan would be liable only for the costs of the amputations. I do not think that is justice.

Furthermore, none of the leading contenders for President, whether they be Republican or Democrat, think that that is justice. How can one defend a health maintenance organization that is making life and death decisions and say they should have a legal shield from their medical malpractice?

As a physician, I have never argued that physicians should be free of liability from their malpractice and I do not know of any physicians who do that, who make that argument. That is why we carry malpractice insurance. I do not know of any auto maker that has a legal liability shield like that. I do not know of any of our airplane manufacturers or airlines. I do not know of any business in this country that has that kind of legal immunity and, yet, because of a 25-year-old Federal law, HMOs that deny medically necessary care and provide that insurance through an employer they are not liable. They are only liable for the cost of care denied, and if the patient has died then they are liable for nothing.

I just don't think that that is fair. I do not think that one can justify that. I think one would be laughed out of any room in this country. That is why I find it very hard to understand how some colleagues of mine can oppose restoring responsibility.

I am a Republican. I have argued on this floor many times that people ought to be responsible for their actions. Many of my Republican colleagues have made the same comments. If somebody is a cocaine or a drug dealer, they ought to be liable for that. They ought to spend time in jail. If somebody commits murder, I bet an awful lot of my Republican colleagues would say if they are guilty of first degree murder they should get the death penalty. I know that when we passed the welfare reform bill, our thoughts were that if one is an able- bodied person and they get help and they have a period of time to get some training,

then it is their responsibility to get a job.

Responsibility has been a big word on this Republican side. But where do I see that type of responsibility being applied to HMOs? If it is not addressed by the conference committee, then that bill will not pass this House and we will end up with a big goose egg, a big zero, for addressing this major problem.

I started out this talk by saying I have been working on this for 4 years, 5 years. So has the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. Norwood), and many others on both the Republican and the Democratic sides. In the meantime, a lot of patients have been denied necessary care; a lot of patients who have ended up like that little boy from Atlanta, Georgia, with some significant deficits, if not loss of their life, as has been outlined by major magazines such as Time Magazine on feature cover stories.

It really is time, Mr. Speaker, that we addressed this issue; that we do not load up a conference report with bad ideas; that we take the bill that passed this House, a bill that could be signed into law tomorrow by President Clinton, a bill that tomorrow could be giving people around this country a fair shake by their HMOs. We ought to do it soon, and I sincerely hope that the motives of the members of the conference committee are to actually accomplish a piece of legislation and are not simply a face-saving measure because they know that this is an election year and the public is demanding that Congress take action.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. MCNULTY (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today on account of illness.

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today and the balance of the week on account of illness.

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. METCALF) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, for 5 minutes, today and February 9.

Mr. HERGER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. COLLINS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, February 9 and 15.

Mr. SCARBOROUGH, for 5 minutes, February 9 and 10.

Mr. METCALF, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SOUDER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. NORWOOD, for 5 minutes, today and February 14 and 15.

Mr. NETHERCUTT, for 5 minutes, February 9.

(The following Member (at his own request) to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin, for 5 minutes, today.

SENATE BILL REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 1503. An Act to amend the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) to extend the authorization of appropriations for the Office of Government Ethics through fiscal year 2003; to the Committee on Government Reform; 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.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GANSKE. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 418, I move that the House do now adjourn in memory of the late Hon. Carl B. Albert.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 57 minutes p.m.), pursuant to House Resolution 418, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, February 9, 2000, at 10 a.m., in memory of the late Hon. Carl B. Albert.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

6062. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting a request to make available appropriations for the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Disaster relief program; (H. Doc. No. 106–193); to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed.

6063. A letter from the Under Secretary, Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting the final report on the results of the Department of Defense demonstration project for uniform funding of morale, welfare, and recreation (MWR) activities; to the Committee on Armed Services.

6064. A letter from the Director, Office of Federal Housing Enterprise Oversight, transmitting the Office's final rule—Rules of Practice and Procedure (RIN: 2550–AA04) received January 5, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

6065. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, FDA, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule—Indirect Food Additives: Adjuvants, Production Aids and Sanitizers [Docket No. 98F–1201] received January 5, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

6066. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management, FDA, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule—Indirect Food Additives: Adjuvants, Production Aids, and Sanitizers [Docket No. 99F–1421] received January 5, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

6067. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Title V Operating Permit Deferrals for Area Sources: National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP) for Chromium Emissions from Hard and Decorative Chromium Electroplating and Chromium Anodizing Tanks; Ethylene Oxide Commercial Sterilization and Fumigation Operations; Perchloroethylene Dry Cleaning Facilities; Halogenated Solvent Cleaning Machines; and Secondary Lead Smelting [AD-FRL–6508–7] (RIN: 2060–A158) received December 10, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

6068. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Revisions to Guidelines for the Storage and Collection of Residential, Commercial, and Institutional Solid Waste [FRL–6505–6] (RIN: 2050–AE66) received December 10, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

6069. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—OMB Approvals Under the Paperwork Reduction Act; Technical Amendment [FRL–6505–8] received December 10, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

6070. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans and Part 70 Operating Permits Program; State of Missouri [MO 090–1090; 6508–4] received December 10, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

6071. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plan; Indiana Volatile Organic Compound Rules [IN114–1a; FRL–6500–9] received December 10, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

6072. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; California State Implementation Plan Revision, South Coast Air Quality Management District, El Dorado County Air Pollution Control District, Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District, and Ventura County Air Pollution Control District [CA 031–0202; FRL–6508–5] received January 7, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

6073. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; California State Implementation Plan Revision, Kern County Air Pollution Control District [CA172–0203, FRL–6513–9] received January 7, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

6074. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Maryland; Control of VOCs from Paper, Fabric, Vinyl, and Other Plastic Parts Coating [MD090–3041; FRL–6506–9] received January 7, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

6075. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans and Operating Permits Programs, Approval Under Section 112(1); State of Nebraska [NE 071–1071a; FRL–6521–6] received January 7, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

6076. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Tennessee; Adoption of Rule Governing Any Credible Evidence [TN–146–9934a; TN–156–9935a; FRL–6520–2] received January 13, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

6077. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Comprehensive Guideline for Procurement of Products Containing Recovered Materials [SWH–FRL–6524–2] received January 13, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

6078. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—State of Alabama; Underground Injection Control (UIC) Program Revision; Approval of Alabama's Class II UIC Program Revision [FRL–6516–7] received January 7, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

6079. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Adequacy of State Permit Programs Under RCRA Subtitle D. [FRL–6521–4] received January 7, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

6080. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Amendments to the Test Procedures for Heavy-Duty Engines, and Light-Duty Vehicles and Trucks and Amendments to the Emission Standard Provisions for Gaseous Fueled Vehicles and Engines [FRL–6523–7] received January 13, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

6081. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting the first report on the status of the ratification of World Intellectual Property Organization Copyright Treaty, the World Intellectual Property Organization Performances and Phonograms Treatyand related matters; to the Committee on International Relations.

6082. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Management and Chief Financial Officer, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department of Treasury's Commercial Activities Inventory in accordance with the Federal Activities Inventory Reform (FAIR) Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

6083. A letter from the Under Secretary, Acquisition and Technology, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department of Defense inventory of non-inherently governmental functions as required by Section 2 of the Federal Activities Inventory Reform (FAIR) Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

6084. A letter from the Director, Retirement and Insurance Service, Office of Insurance Programs, Insurance Policy and Information Division, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting the Office's final rule—Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance Program: Life Insurance Improvements (RIN: 3206–AI64) received January 7, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Government Reform.

6085. A letter from the the Assistant Secretary (Civil Works), the Department of the Army, transmitting the authorization of a deep draft navigation and ecosystem restoration project for Oakland Harbor, California; (H. Doc. No. 106–191); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and ordered to be printed.

6086. A letter from the the Assistant Secretary (Civil Works), the Department of the Army, transmitting notification that the Secretary of the Army supports the authorization and plans to implement the flood damage reduction project along the Rio Grande de Manati at Barceloneta, Puerto Rico; (H. Doc. No. 106–192); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and ordered to be printed.

6087. A letter from the Assistant Secretary (Civil Works), Department of the Army, transmitting Volume II of the Annual Report on Civil Works Activities for Fiscal Year 1998; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6088. A letter from the Chief, Regulations Unit, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule—Qualified Zone Academy BONDs Allocations 2000 [Rev. Pro. 2000–10] received January 5, 2000, 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:

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 419. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 6) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to eliminate the marriage penalty by providing that the income tax rate bracket amounts, and the amount of the standard deduction, for joint returns shall be twice the amounts applicable to unmarried individuals (Rept. 106–495). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. DAVIS of Virginia:

H.R. 3582. A bill to restrict the use of mandatory minimum personnel experience and educational requirements in the procurement of information technology goods or services unless sufficiently justified; to the Committee on Government Reform.

By Mr. LINDER (for himself, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. BISHOP, Mr. NORWOOD, Mr. COLLINS, and Mr. ISAKSON):

H.R. 3583. A bill to amend the Clean Air Act to exempt mass transit projects from the conformity determinations required under section 176(c) of that Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce.

By Mr. BACA:

H.R. 3584. A bill to amend title 10 and 14, United States Code, to provide for the use of gold in the metal content of the Medal of Honor; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. BASS:

H.R. 3585. A bill to require the Attorney General and the Secretary of the Treasury to operate the land border port of entry located in Pittsburg, New Hampshire, as a full-time port of entry; to the Committee on Ways and Means, 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. CALLAHAN:

H.R. 3586. A bill to provide for a biennial budget process and a biennial appropriations process and to enhance oversight and the responsibility, efficiency, and performance of the Federal Government; to the Committee on the Budget, and in addition to the Committees on Rules, and Government Reform, 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. CAMPBELL:

H.R. 3587. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Defense to establish procedures to allow persons desiring to report an instance of suspected child abuse occurring on a military installation to submit such a report anonymously and to ensure that if such a report is not made anonymously the identity of the person making the report will not be disclosed without written authorization of that person; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. CAMPBELL (for himself and Mr. ISTOOK):

H.R. 3588. A bill to amend the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 to provide that the Act will not apply to employment performed in a workplace located in the employee's residence unless the employment involves hazardous materials or the workplace was created so that that Act would not apply to the workplace; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. COLLINS (for himself and Mr. TRAFICANT):

H.R. 3589. A bill to direct the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to require, as a condition of any financial assistance provided on a non-emergency basis by the Agency for a construction project, that the steel, iron, and manufactured products used in the project be produced in the United States; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. FOLEY (for himself and Mr. SHAW):

H.R. 3590. A bill to amend title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 to require, as a precondition to commencing a civil action with respect to a place of public accommodation or a commerical facility, that an opportunity be provided to correct alleged violations; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GIBBONS (for himself, Ms. DUNN, Mr. ARMEY, Mr. DELAY, Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. BACHUS, Mr. BAKER, Mr. BALLENGER, Mr. BARR of Georgia, Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska, Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland, Mr. BEREUTER, Mrs. BIGGERT, Mr. BILBRAY, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. BLILEY, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOEHLERT, Mr. BONILLA, Mrs. BONO, Mr. BOYD, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. BRYANT, Mr. BURR of North Carolina, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. BUYER, Mr. CALLAHAN, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. CAMP, Mr. CANADY of Florida, Mr. CANNON, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mrs. CHENOWETH-HAGE, Mr. COBLE, Mr. COBURN, Mr. COLLINS, Mr. CONDIT, Mr. COOK, Mr. COOKSEY, Mr. COX, Mrs. CUBIN, Mr. CUNNINGHAM, Ms. DANNER, Mr. DAVIS of Virginia, Mr. DEMINT, Mr. DEAL of Georgia, Mr. DOOLITTLE, Mr. DREIER, Mr. DUNCAN, Mr. EHLERS, Mr. EHRLICH, Mrs. EMERSON, Mr. ENGLISH, Mr.

EVERETT, Mr. EWING, Mr. FLETCHER, Mrs. FOWLER, Mr. FORBES, Mr. FOLEY, Mr. FRANKS of New Jersey, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, Mr. GALLEGLY, Mr. GEKAS, Mr. GILCHREST, Mr. GILMAN, Mr. GILLMOR, Mr. GOODE, Mr. GOODLING, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. GOSS, Mr. GRAHAM, Ms. GRANGER, Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin, Mr. GUTKNECHT, Mr. HALL of Texas, Mr. HASTINGS of Washington, Mr. HAYES, Mr. HAYWORTH, Mr. HEFLEY, Mr. HERGER, Mr. HILL of Montana, Mr. HOBSON, Mr. HOEKSTRA, Mr. HORN, Mr. HOSTETTLER, Mr. HOUGHTON, Mr. HULSHOF, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. HYDE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. ISTOOK, Mr. JENKINS, Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. JONES of North Carolina, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. KASICH, Mrs. KELLY, Mr. KING, Mr. KINGSTON, Mr. KNOLLENBERG, Mr. KOLBE, Mr. KUYKENDALL, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. LATOURETTE, Mr. LANTOS, Mr. LARGENT, Mr. LATHAM, Mr. LAZIO, Mr. LEACH, Mr. LEWIS of California, Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky, Mr. LINDER, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. MCCOLLUM, Mr. MCCRERY, Mr. MCINNIS, Mr. MCINTOSH, Mr. MCKEON, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. METCALF, Mr. MICA, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. GARY MILLER of California, Mr. MORAN of Kansas, Mrs. MORELLA, Mrs. MYRICK, Mr. NETHERCUTT, Mr. NORWOOD, Mrs. NORTHUP, Mr. OSE, Mr. OXLEY, Mr. PACKARD, Mr. PEASE, Mr. PETRI, Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. PHELPS, Mr. PITTS, Mr. POMBO, Mr. PORTER, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. PRYCE of Ohio, Mr. QUINN, Mr. RADANOVICH, Mr. RAMSTAD, Mr. REGULA, Mr. REYNOLDS, Mr. RILEY, Mr. ROGERS, Mr. ROGAN, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mrs. ROUKEMA, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. SALMON, Mr. SAXTON, Mr. SCARBOROUGH, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. SCHAFFER, Mr. SHADEGG, Mr. SHAW, Mr. SHAYS, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. SKEEN, Mr. SKELTON, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. SMITH of Michigan, Mr. SOUDER, Mr. SPENCE, Mr. STEARNS, Mr. STUMP, Mr. SUNUNU, Mr. SWEENEY, Mr. TALENT, Mr. TANCREDO, Mr. TAUZIN, Mr. TIAHRT, Mr. TERRY, Mr. THOMAS, Mr. THORNBERRY, Mr. THUNE, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. TRAFICANT, Mr. UPTON, Mr. VITTER, Mr. WALDEN of Oregon, Mr. WALSH, Mr. WAMP, Mr. WATKINS, Mr. WELLER, Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania, Mr. WELDON of Florida, Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. WICKER, Mrs. WILSON, Mr. WOLF, Mr. YOUNG of Florida, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, and Mr. HILLEARY):

H.R. 3591. A bill to provide for the award of a gold medal on behalf of the Congress to former President Ronald Reagan and his wife Nancy Reagan in recognition of their service to the Nation; to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

By Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin:

H.R. 3592. A bill to establish the permanent Joint Committee for Review of Administrative Rules to review rules of Federal agencies and to amend chapter 8 of title 5 of the United States Code; to the Committee on Rules, 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. HASTINGS of Washington:

H.R. 3593. A bill to amend the Agricultural Trade Act of 1978 to increase the amount of funds available for certain agricultural trade programs; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. HERGER (for himself, Mr. SWEENEY, Mr. TANNER, Mr. COLLINS, Mr. MATSUI, Mr. FOLEY, Ms. DUNN, Mr. RAMSTAD, Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut, Mr. ENGLISH, Mr. HOUGHTON, Mr. NUSSLE, Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky, Mr. CAMP, Mr. SHAW, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. HAYWORTH, Mr. MCCRERY, Mr. WATKINS, Mr. MCINNIS, Mr. CRANE, Mr. WELLER, Mr. ARMEY, Mr. DELAY, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mrs. NORTHUP, Mr. WALDEN of Oregon, Mr. FRANKS of New Jersey, Mr. GOODE, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. EWING, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mr. TANCREDO, Mr. CAMPBELL, Mr. REYES, Mr. OSE, Mr. MCHUGH, Mr. PAUL, Mr. KUYKENDALL, Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland, Mr. HILL of Montana, Mr. TERRY, Mr. LATHAM, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. BACHUS, Mr. KINGSTON, Mr. BURR of North Carolina, Mr. HOBSON, Mr. LATOURETTE, Mr. COOK, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. FORBES, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. MOORE, Mr. SISISKY, Mr. FROST, Mr. COMBEST, Mr. ISTOOK, Mr. SKELTON, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. SCARBOROUGH, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mrs. KELLY, Mrs. BONO, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. KOLBE, Mr. GEKAS, Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin, Mr. DEAL of Georgia, Mr. STENHOLM, Mr. TALENT, Mr. REGULA, Mr. CARDIN, and Mr. THUNE):

H.R. 3594. A bill to repeal the modification of the installment method; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California (by request):

H.R. 3595. A bill to increase the authorization of appropriations for the Reclamation Safety of Dams Act of 1978, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Resources.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 3596. A bill to authorize an annual Federal contribution to the District of Columbia for the costs incurred by the District in providing public safety services for demonstrations and other activities which occur in the District of Columbia because the District is the seat of the Federal Government; to the Committee on Government Reform.

By Mr. ROGAN:

H.R. 3597. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to increase the penalties for possessing or using a firearm in the commission of a felony crime of violence or drug trafficking crime, and to require juveniles age 14 or older who so possess or use a firearm to be tried as adults; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 3598. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a credit against income tax for businesses which provide free public Internet access; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SMITH of Michigan:

H.R. 3599. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to eliminate the earnings test; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. STARK (for himself, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. MATSUI, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. LANTOS, Mr. BECERRA, and Ms. WOOLSEY):

H.R. 3600. A bill to amend title XXI of the Social Security Act to prevent conflicts of interest in the use of administrative vendors in the administration of State Children's Health Insurance Plans; to the Committee on Commerce.

By Mr. STUPAK:

H.R. 3601. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Army to convey the lighthouse located at Ontonagon, Michigan, to the Ontonagon County Historical Society, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

H.R. 3602. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow distilled spirits to be produced in dwelling houses, other connected structures, and certain other premises; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. WOLF (for himself, Mr. DAVIS of Virginia, and Mrs. MORELLA):

H.R. 3603. A bill to expand Federal employee communting options and to reduce the traffic congestion resulting from current Federal employee commuting patterns, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. LEACH:

H.J. Res. 87. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States regarding regulations on the amounts of expenditures of personal funds made by candidates for election for public office; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. THURMAN (for herself, Mr. CANADY of Florida, Mr. SNYDER, Mr. BILBRAY, Mr. MATSUI, Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut, Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. TANNER, Mr. NETHERCUTT, Mrs. NORTHUP, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. MOAKLEY, Mr. SANDERS, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. PELOSI, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. STARK, Mr. FOLEY, Mr. RAMSTAD, Mr. BARRETT of Wisconsin, Mr. COBURN, Mr. SHAYS, Mr. COOK, Mr. FRANKS of New Jersey, Mr. GOSS, Mr. DUNCAN, Mr. POMEROY, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. KLECZKA, and Mr. BAKER):

H. Con. Res. 247. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress regarding the importance of organ, tissue, bone marrow, and blood donation and supporting National Donor Day; to the Committee on Commerce.

By Mr. LANTOS (for himself, Mr. HORN, Mr. GEJDENSON, Mr. CROWLEY, Mrs. MORELLA, Mr. WEINER, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. ACKERMAN, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. GUTIERREZ, and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY):

H. Res. 417. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives concerning the participation of the extremist FPO in the government of Austria; to the Committee on International Relations.

By Mr. WATKINS:

H. Res. 418. A resolution expressing the condolences of the House on the death of the Honorable Carl B. Albert, former Speaker of the House of Representatives; considered and agreed to.

PRIVATE BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

Mr. WEXLER introduced a bill (H.R. 3604) to provide for the liquidation or reliquidation of certain entries in accordance with a final decision of the Department of Commerce under the Tariff Act of 1930; which was referred to the Committee on Ways and Means.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 175: Mr. DEMINT.

H.R. 363: Mr. BILBRAY and Mr. SMITH of Washington.

H.R. 380: Mr. NETHERCUTT and Mr. LARGENT.

H.R. 460: Mr. REYES.

H.R. 488: Ms. STABENOW.
H.R. 568: Mr. OWENS.
H.R. 623: Mr. LAHOOD and Mr. SHIMKUS.
H.R. 731: Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas.
H.R. 792: Mr. MICA and Mr. TOOMEY.
H.R. 826: Mr. GILMAN.
H.R. 827: Mr. WATT of North Carolina, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, and Mrs. CLAYTON.
H.R. 860: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.
H.R. 923: Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. LAMPSON, Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD, and Mr. BORSKI.
H.R. 937: Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland and Ms. MCKINNEY.
H.R. 1046: Mr. SANDLIN.
H.R. 1055: Mrs. CHENOWETH-HAGE, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. BURR of North Carolina, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. SCHAFFER, Mr. CANNON, and Mr. BACHUS.
H.R. 1082: Ms. KAPTUR.
H.R. 1095: Mrs. MINK of Hawaii.
H.R. 1111: Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. BORSKI, and Mr. POMEROY.
H.R. 1115: Mr. BOYD.
H.R. 1187: Mr. KOLBE, Mr. BERRY, Mr. HORN, Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota, Mr. WYNN, and Mr. KANJORSKI.
H.R. 1221: Mr. RUSH, Mr. FRANKS of New Jersey, Mr. LAZIO, and Mr. BORSKI.
H.R. 1322: Mr. KOLBE, Mr. BAKER, and Mr. ISTOOK.
H.R. 1325: Mr. ABERCROMBIE and Mr. COMBEST.
H.R. 1329: Ms. BERKLEY.
H.R. 1342: Mr. JACKSON of Illinois.
H.R. 1367: Ms. RIVERS.
H.R. 1388: Mr. FRANKS of New Jersey, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. FOLEY, Mr. CANADY of Florida, Ms. SLAUGHTER, and Mr. COOKSEY.
H.R. 1456: Mr. BISHOP.
H.R. 1461: Mr. LATOURETTE.
H.R. 1532: Mr. SANDERS.
H.R. 1592: Mr. WYNN and Mr. COOK.
H.R. 1598: Mr. GIBBONS and Mrs. NORTHUP.
H.R. 1621: Mr. ENGEL, Mr. TERRY, Mr. PASTOR, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. WYNN, and Mr. BLAGOJEVICH.
H.R. 1650: Mr. GIBBONS, Mrs. MEEK of Florida, Mr. MICA, Mr. NETHERCUTT, and Mr. THOMAS.
H.R. 1686: Mr. FOLEY.
H.R. 1708: Mr. COX.
H.R. 1747: Mrs. MORELLA.
H.R. 1760: Mr. ISAKSON.
H.R. 1775: Mr. LANTOS.
H.R. 1816: Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. BONILLA, and Mr. LIPINSKI.
H.R. 1839: Mr. GUTKNECHT.
H.R. 1870: Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi, Mr. HILLEARY, and Mr. BOEHLERT.
H.R. 1890: Mr. MARTINEZ.
H.R. 1967: Mr. BURR of North Carolina.
H.R. 1997: Mrs. MORELLA.
H.R. 2059: Mr. STABENOW, Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon, Mr. MCINTYRE, and Mr. LATOURETTE.
H.R. 2100: Mr. SHAYS and Mr. HOLDEN.
H.R. 2102: Mr. MARTINEZ.
H.R. 2136: Mr. NORWOOD.
H.R. 2244: Ms. PRYCE of Ohio and Mr. HALL of Texas.
H.R. 2263: Mr. STUPAK.
H.R. 2342: Mr. SKEEN.
H.R. 2366: Mr. CHABOT, Mr. TANCREDO, Mr. WATT of North Carolina, and Mrs. MYRICK.
H.R. 2372: Mrs. CUBIN.
H.R. 2382: Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. LARGENT, and Mr. COOK.
H.R. 2420: Mr. WEYGAND, Mr. HULSHOF, Mr. KANJORSKI, Mr. STENHOLM, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. SUNUNU, and Mr. EWING.
H.R. 2451: Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 2457: Mr. LAFALCE, Mr. MATSUI, Mr. OWENS, Mr. OBERSTAR, Mr. CROWLEY, and Mr. BORSKI.
H.R. 2498: Mr. LEVIN.
H.R. 2573: Mr. MASCARA.
H.R. 2623: Mrs. TAUSCHER.
H.R. 2641: Mr. PICKERING.
H.R. 2655: Mr. UPTON.
H.R. 2660: Mr. SNYDER, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. NORWOOD, Ms. CARSON, Mr. DEFAZIO, and Mr. FOLEY.
H.R. 2696: Mr. GILMAN.
H.R. 2738: Mr. FILNER, Mr. OBERSTAR, Mr. VISCLOSKY, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. STARK, and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H.R. 2749: Mr. NUSSLE and Mr. EHRLICH.
H.R. 2776: Mr. LEACH and Ms. WOOLSEY.
H.R. 2842: Mr. BERMAN and Ms. MCKINNEY.
H.R. 2883: Mr. INSLEE, Mr. EHLERS, Mr. BLAGOJEVICH, and Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 2899: Mr. FILNER, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. STARK, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. BLAGOJEVICH, Ms. PELOSI, and Mr. SHAYS.
H.R. 2906: Mr. UDALL if Colorado and Mr. GUTIERREZ.
H.R. 2916: Mr. WYNN, Mrs. JONES of Ohio, Mr. OWENS, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California.
H.R. 2917: Mr. WYNN.
H.R. 2985: Mr. OXLEY.
H.R. 3003: Mr. CUNNINGHAM and Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 3011: Mr. VITTER.
H.R. 3043: Mrs. KELLY.
H.R. 3100: Mr. KUCINICH and Mr. MINGE.
H.R. 3103: Mr. BENTSEN.
H.R. 3143: Mr. BOEHLERT.
H.R. 3193: Mrs. CLAYTON, Mr. MEEHAN, Ms. STABENOW, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, and Mr. MURTHA.
H.R. 3221: Mr. MCHUGH, Mr. PITTS, and Mr. Gekas.
H.R. 3224: Mr. GREEN of Texas, Mr. HILLIARD, Mr. FORBES, Mrs. MYRICK, and Mr. KUCINICH.
H.R. 3235: Mr. LATOURETTE, Mr. ETHERIDGE and Mr. FILNER.
H.R. 3252: Mr. GARY MILLER of California.
H.R. 3295: Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mrs. MORELLA, and Mr. ENGEL.
H.R. 3308: Mrs. JONES of Ohio, Mr. VITTER, and Mr. BAKER.
H.R. 3315: Mr. STUPAK, Mr. BACA, Mrs. CLAYTON, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. KOLBE, and Ms. MCKINNEY.
H.R. 3374: Mrs. ROUKEMA and Mr. BEREUTER.
H.R. 3390: Mr. FOLEY.
H.R. 3392: Mr. CUNNINGHAM, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. TRAFICANT, and Mr. MALONEY of Connecticut.
H.R. 3399: Mr. STUMP and Mr. HILLEARY.
H.R. 3405: Mr. ENGLISH, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. STEARNS, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. HOEFFEL, Mr. WEINER, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, and Mr. HOYER.
H.R. 3449: Mr. BASS and Mr. ENGLISH.
H.R. 3485: Mr. HOEFFEL.
H.R. 3518: Mr. GEKAS, Mr. SUNUNU, and Mr. SMITH of Texas.
H.R. 3525: Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. PETRI, Mr. COX, Mr. CUNNINGHAM, Mr. STENHOLM, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. ISTOOK, and Mr. LATOURETTE.
H.R. 3539: Mr. KOLBE and Mr. ARMEY.
H.R. 3540: Mr. ENGEL, Mr. GILCHREST, Mr. GILMAN, Mr. MASCARA, and Mr. KING.
H.R. 3543: Mr. FATTAH and Mr. FRANKS of New Jersey.
H.R. 3544: Mr. WALSH, Mr. WOLF, and Mr. DAVIS of Virginia.
H.R. 3552: Mrs. MEEK of Florida, Mr. LATOURETTE, and Ms. KAPTUR.
H.R. 3557: Mr. TALENT, Mr. BUYER, Mr. KLECZKA, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mrs. FOWLER, Mr. MASCARA, Mr. FOLEY, Mr. HASTERT, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. LEACH, Mr. ARMEY, and Mr. DEMINT.
H.R. 3570: Mr. ENGLISH.
H.R. 3573: Mr. ALLEN, Mr. BECERRA, Mr. BURR of North Carolina, Mr. CANNON, Mrs. CAPPS, Ms. CARSON, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. DAVIS of Virginia, Mr. DEAL of Georgia, Mrs. FOWLER, Mr. GEJDENSON, Mr. GILMAN, Mr. HAYES, Mrs. KELLY, Mr. KUYKENDALL, Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky, Mr. LINDER, Mr. LUCAS of Oklahoma, Mr. MASCARA, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mr. MCINTOSH, Mr. MORAN of Kansas, Mr. NETHERCUTT, Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota, Mr. PHELPS, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. STEARNS, Mr. TALENT, and Mrs. WILSON.
H.R. 3575: Mr. SANDERS.
H.J. Res. 64: Mr. DOOLEY of California and Mr. VITTER.
H.J. Res. 77: Mr. BARR of Georgia.
H.J. Res. 86: Ms. STABENOW, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mrs. THURMAN, Mr. SANFORD, Mr. BALDACCI, Mr. PASTOR, Mr. KOLBE, and Mr. BECERRA.
H. Con. Res. 62: Mr. BILBRAY and Mrs. LOWEY.
H. Con. Res. 63: Mrs. NORTHUP.
H. Con. Res. 76: Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. GALLEGLY, and Mr. ROTHMAN.
H. Con. Res. 115: Ms. PELOSI, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. FARR of California, and Mr. MASCARA.
H. Con. Res. 119: Mr. SKELTON, Mr. GUTKNECHT, and Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island.
H. Con. Res. 134: Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN and Mr. BERRY.
H. Con. Res. 215: Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland.
H. Con. Res. 220: Mr. GILCHREST, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. COX, and Mr. MEEKS of New York.
H. Con. Res. 238: Mr. FILNER, Mr. OWENS, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. EVANS, and Mrs. MORELLA.
H. Res. 416: Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD and Mrs. JONES of Ohio.

AMENDMENTS

Under clause 8 of rule XVIII, proposed amendments were submitted as follows:

H.R. 2086

OFFERED BY MR. HOEFFEL

AMENDMENT NO. 2: Page 2, line 13, insert ''It is important that access to information technology be available to all citizens, including elderly Americans and Americans with disabilities.'' after ''responsible and accessible.''.

At the end of the bill, insert the following new section:

SEC. 10. STUDY OF ACCESSIBILITY TO INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY.

Section 204 of the High-Performance Computing Act of 1991 (15 U.S.C. 5524) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (d), as amended by section 3(d) and (e) of this Act, as subsection (e); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (c) the following new subsection:

''(d) STUDY OF ACCESSIBILITY TO INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY.—

''(1) STUDY.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of the Networking and Information Technology Research and Development Act, the Secretary of Commerce, in consultation with the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, shall enter into an arrangement with the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences for that Council to conduct a study of accessibility to information technologies by individuals who are elderly, individuals who are elderly with a disability, and individuals with disabilities.

''(2) SUBJECTS.—The study shall address—

''(A) current barriers to access to information technologies by individuals who are elderly, individuals who are elderly with a disability, and individuals with disabilities;

''(B) research and development needed to remove those barriers;

''(C) Federal legislative, policy, or regulatory changes needed to remove those barriers; and

''(D) other matters that the National Research Council determines to be relevant to access to information technologies by individuals who are elderly, individuals who are elderly with a disability, and individuals with disabilities.

''(3) TRANSMITTAL TO CONGRESS.—The Secretary of Commerce shall transmit to the Congress within 2 years of the date of enactment of the Networking and Information Technology Research and Development Act a report setting forth the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the National Research Council.

''(4) FEDERAL AGENCY COOPERATION.—Federal agencies shall cooperate fully with the National Research Council in its activities in carrying out the study under this subsection.

''(5) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Commerce $900,000 for the study described in this subsection.''.