This bill would put Congress on record as apologizing for all of our country and this institution and what they did to promote and sustain slavery and its terrible legacy.

This building we work in and revere as one of the world's monuments to freedom and democracy, it is a place where much good has been done, but it is also one of the sites of one of the history's great wrongs, and that is slavery.

Mr. Speaker, this building we revere was partly built by slaves, people who suffered terrible wrongs, people I believe our Nation owes an apology.

I was surprised to learn that, despite the Civil War and despite the landmark civil rights legislation, despite all that has happened in the 135 years since the last slaves learned they were free, our Nation has never apologized for the savage institution of slavery.

I urge all of our colleagues to look in their hearts and support this bill.

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COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, June 16, 2000.

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

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted to Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on June 16, 2000 at 9:12 a.m.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.J. Res. 101.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

JEFF TRANDAHL,
Clerk of the House.

□

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, June 16, 2000.

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

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted to Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on June 16, 2000 at 1:45 p.m.

That the Senate agreed to Conference Report S. 761.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

JEFF TRANDAHL,
Clerk of the House.

APOLOGY FOR UNWARRANTED TERM USED IN COMMITTEE HEARING LAST THURSDAY CONCERNING MERGER OF UNITED AND US AIRWAYS

(Mr. OBERSTAR asked and was given permission to address the House for 5 minutes and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, last Thursday, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure held a hearing on the proposed merger of United Airlines and US Airways. In the course of that hearing, I used an inappropriate and unwarranted term to describe the status of the spin-off carrier DC Air that would be created if the merger were to be approved.

Mr. Robert Johnson, CEO of Black Entertainment Television and proposed owner of DC Air, took justifiable exception of that characterization of the proposed new carrier. In a letter to me late Friday, Mr. Johnson said he is personally hurt and offended and called upon me to change my attitude.

I take the well today to apologize to Mr. Johnson and to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure for my careless, inappropriate, and offensive remark.

Madam Speaker, in my years of Congress, I have staunchly maintained an attitude of support for civil rights in the United States and human rights abroad. I will not detail that history today except to say that, in the most recent civil rights issue before my committee, TEA 21, I championed the inclusion of language to give a fair share of Federal transportation accounts to disadvantaged businesses. Before coming to Washington, I spent 3½ years working in Haiti. During my time of Congress, I worked to bring economic and political stability to that first black republic in the world.

I cannot let that record of 40 years be tarnished by one ill-chosen, inappropriate, offensive word.

In the spirit of Psalm 51, verse 19, ''My sacrifice, O God, is a contrite heart. A heart contrite and humbled, O God, you will not spurn.''

Madam Speaker, it is further my responsibility and that of my colleagues in Congress to stay focused on the main issue here, the effects of this proposed merger of United Airlines and US Airways on air service in Washington and throughout the country.

I have reviewed DC Air's business plan and am concerned it would be tied too closely to the newly merged United and not be an effective competitor. The concern is not based on Mr. Johnson's ownership of the airline, for I have great respect and appreciation for Mr. Johnson's abilities as a businessman and his success as an entrepreneur, but on the new carrier's dependence on its much larger partner. If the Justice Department sees fit to approve this deal, I would hope that it would require the merging airlines to divest additional assets to DC Air to make the start-up carrier a stronger, more viable competitor.

I am opposed to the United-US Airways merger on its merits. I believe it will diminish competition, spur additional consolidation in the airline industry, and result in fewer choices and poorer service to the flying public. It is a bad deal for aviation and for the consumer.

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ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the provisions of clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair announces that she 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 has concluded on all motions to suspend the rules, but not before 6 p.m. today.

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ABRAHAM LINCOLN INTERPRETATIVE CENTER

Mr. SOUDER. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3084) to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to contribute funds for the establishment of an interpretative center on the life and contributions of President Abraham Lincoln, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3084

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

SECTION 1. CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARD ESTABLISHMENT OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN INTERPRETIVE CENTER.

(a) GRANTS AUTHORIZED.—Subject to subsections (b) and (c), the Secretary of the Interior shall make grants to contribute funds for the establishment in Springfield, Illinois, of an interpretive center to preserve and make available to the public materials related to the life of President Abraham Lincoln and to provide interpretive and educational services which communicate the meaning of the life of Abraham Lincoln.

(b) PLAN AND DESIGN.—

(1) SUBMISSION.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the entity selected by the Secretary of the Interior to receive grants under subsection (a) shall submit to the Secretary a plan and design for the interpretive center, including a description of the following:

(A) The design of the facility and site.

(B) The method of acquisition.

(C) The estimated cost of acquisition, construction, operation, and maintenance.

(D) The manner and extent to which non-Federal entities will participate in the acquisition, construction, operation, and maintenance of the center.

(2) CONSULTATION AND COOPERATION.—The plan and design for the interpretive center shall be prepared in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior and the Governor of Illinois and in cooperation with such other public, municipal, and private entities as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(c) CONDITIONS ON GRANT.—

(1) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—A grant under subsection (a) may not be made until such time as the entity selected to receive the grant certifies to the Secretary of the Interior that funds

have been contributed by the State of Illinois or raised from non-Federal sources for use to establish the interpretive center in an amount equal to at least double the amount of that grant.

(2) RELATION TO OTHER LINCOLN-RELATED SITES AND MUSEUMS.—The Secretary of the Interior shall further condition the grant under subsection (a) on the agreement of the grant recipient to operate the resulting interpretive center in cooperation with other Federal and non-Federal historic sites, parks, and museums that represent significant locations or events in the life of Abraham Lincoln. Cooperative efforts to promote and interpret the life of Abraham Lincoln may include the use of cooperative agreements, cross references, cross promotion, and shared exhibits.

(d) PROHIBITION ON CONTRIBUTION OF OPERATING FUNDS.—Grant amounts may not be used for the maintenance or operation of the interpretive center.

(e) NON-FEDERAL OPERATION.—The Secretary of Interior shall have no involvement in the actual operation of the interpretive center, except at the request of the non-Federal entity responsible for the operation of the center.

(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of the Interior a total of $50,000,000 to make grants under subsection (a). Amounts so appropriated shall remain available for expenditure through fiscal year 2006.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SOUDER) and the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SOUDER).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SOUDER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 3084.

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

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3084, as amended, introduced by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS). This bill authorizes the Secretary of Interior to contribute up to $50 million in matching funds for the construction of an Abraham Lincoln Interpretative Center. H.R. 3084 assures that every dollar of Federal contribution must be matched by at least $2 from the non-Federal side.

The center would consist of a museum and an archive library which would house the world's largest collection of Lincoln material. H.R. 3084 allows 18 months from the time of enactment for the entity selected by the Secretary of Interior to submit the design, method of acquisition, and estimated cost of the center.

□ 1415

The selected entity is also responsible for describing the manner and role that non-Federal entities will participate for this center.

Madam Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 3084, as amended.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mrs. CHRISTENSEN asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Madam Speaker, H.R. 3084 authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to make available $50 million in grants as a contribution of funds for the establishment of an interpretive center on the life and contributions of President Abraham Lincoln.

The center is to be operated by a non-Federal entity, which would have to submit to the Secretary a plan and design for the interpretive center within 18 months of enactment. The legislation specifies that Federal funds would have to be matched on the basis of at least double the amount of any grant made by the Secretary. The bill also specifies that no grant funds may be used for maintenance or operation of the interpretive center, and that the Secretary would have no involvement in the operation of the center except at the request of the non-Federal entity.

We are all aware of the important role President Lincoln has had in American history. That role has been honored in five national park system units alone. H.R. 3084 would expand on that recognition by making funds available for a new interpretive center to be built by State and local entities in Springfield, Illinois.

There appears to be significant interest in such an interpretive center, and we have no objection to the legislation.

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

Mr. SOUDER. Madam Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS), who has been a tireless leader in this effort; along with the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD); our speaker in the chair today, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT); and the Speaker of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT). And many of us from Kentucky are also happy to support the efforts of those from Illinois, but I thank this gentleman for his leadership.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SOUDER), for yielding me this time, and I too am excited about this opportunity.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3084, legislation that would authorize the establishment of an interpretive center on the life and contributions of President Abraham Lincoln. This is a project I have been working on, with my colleagues from Illinois, for the last 2 years. And I want to particularly also thank all my colleagues on the committee, along with my colleague who shares the City of Springfield, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD); and the Speaker of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT), who have been very helpful in pushing this forward.

As my colleagues know, the entire Illinois delegation is also as supportive of H.R. 3084. In the House, my legislation has all 19 Members of the Illinois delegation as cosponsors. The companion legislation in the Senate has the solid support of both our Senators, Senator DICK DURBIN and Senator PETER FITZGERALD. Back home in Springfield, this legislation has the full support of both the City of Springfield, in which this project will be located, and that of the governor of the State of Illinois, George Ryan.

In fact, the State of Illinois has already appropriated $10 million and in the very near future will appropriate an additional $40 million for the project. In addition, the City of Springfield has committed $10 million for this project through local tax incentives.

With an eye towards fiscal integrity, we have placed a matching requirement in this legislation, which ensures that the Federal Government is only responsible for funding one-third of the entire project's cost. The remaining two-thirds is required to come from State, local, and private organizations.

We have also clearly stated in the legislation that Federal funds may not be used to operate this facility. We view this project as a one-time expenditure to the Federal Government, not a long-term funding initiative that needs continual funding year after year. Mr. Speaker, the bill authorizes $50 million for the project and makes these funds available for expenditure through 2006.

Abraham Lincoln's name is familiar to people all over the world. More than 100 nations have honored him through the issuance of stamps, bringing his name to millions of people and keeping his memory and message alive.

It is very common for many of us, especially in the State of Illinois and the surrounding States, to attend annual Lincoln Day dinners, whether they are dinners or lunches. In fact, I counted 15 that I had celebrating the birth of Abraham Lincoln from January through April. And many times, when we get a chance to reminisce on President Abraham Lincoln, we almost raise him up to a deity status, and we do that in an attempt not to forget history. It is very important to remember history.

I did that in my last year's worth of speeches, talking about Abraham Lincoln and how he secured America's future by preserving the union and by freeing the slaves. But I want to focus on a column written by Clarence Page from the Chicago Tribune, and I will be submitting this for the RECORD.

In his column Mr. Page mentions that there are still naysayers. Lerone Bennett, Jr., is one, in his book ''Forced Into Glory: Abraham Lincoln's White Dream.'' At the end of the column, however, Clarence Page writes, ''Like Thomas Jefferson and other heroic figures in American history, Lincoln set a higher standard for human brotherhood and sisterhood than even he was able to meet. Still, we can admire Lincoln, as I still do, inasmuch as

he set that high standard during his better moments and acted on it. Lincoln is important, not only to Americans, but around the world, as a symbol of how an ordinary man from very humble beginnings can rise to high office and lead his country through its worst crisis and all-out war against itself. If he was 'forced into glory' against his will or not, he has worn the glory remarkably well.''

Mr. Page's column really emphasizes why we need the Lincoln Library. We need it to remember the past. And we need to remember that Abraham Lincoln was not a God, but he was an average person called upon at a very historical time in our history. We need to focus on the fact that with all his foibles, he rose to the challenge.

And not only in remembering Abraham Lincoln, but we need the Library to bring our documents together so that future scholars and, more importantly, the children, who are trying to get a grasp of this history, the Abraham Lincolns of the future, the Thomas Jeffersons of the future, the Douglas MacArthurs of the future, that they can see how America becomes great. America becomes great because the average men and women of this Nation, the average Joes on the battlefield who win the wars, those who wax philosophically and win the debates on the floor, who pass monumental legislation, that all these people come from the homes of the average citizens of this country. We need to continue to inspire our children so that they too can rise up and be the great leaders of this Nation.

Madam Speaker, I applaud the chairman of the committee, the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG), for allowing this legislation to move forward. I think it is in the best interest of our Nation and our children.

Madam Speaker, I submit the article referred to above hereafter:

[From the Chicago Tribune, May 31, 2000]

WAS HE OR WASN'T HE?—DEFLATING LINCOLN TO A HUMAN SCALE

WASHINGTON.—Abraham Lincoln was the humbly born, self-educated ''Honest Abe,'' the Great Emancipator who freed the slaves in America.

Abraham Lincoln was a white supremacist, who said whatever the crowd wanted to hear, freed hardly any slaves, used the ''N-word'' frequently and, if he had his druthers, would have sent all blacks back to Africa.

Pick the history you prefer. Lerone Bennett Jr., prefers the second interpretation of Lincoln and elaborates on it in a 652-page assault, ''Forced Into Glory: Abraham Lincoln's White Dream.''

With the Confederate battle flag re-emerging these days as a lightning rod of controversy across the South (Is it a symbol of racism or a benign tribute to southern heritage?), Bennett, author, editor and acclaimed historian at Ebony magazine, could hardly have picked a better time to question another enduring symbol of the Civil War, Lincoln.

Bennett is not quite successful in his effort to convince us that Lincoln was an unrepentant white supremacist or that the Emancipation Proclamation was a ''ploy'' designed to perpetuate slavery rather than extinguish it.

But Bennett effectively instructs a broader audience in what Lincoln scholars have known all along, that Lincoln did not really free the slaves as commonly believed. He also was a more complicated man than the catchy slogans like Honest Abe and the Great Emancipator adequately describe.

The Emancipation Proclamation, Bennett pints out, did not free any slaves because it applied only to areas outside Union control. As an Illinois legislator and congressman before the Civil War, legislator and congressman before the Civil War, Lincoln actually opposed abolitionists. He supported the Fugitive Slave Act and supported Illinois' laws barring blacks from voting, serving on juries, holding office and intermarrying with whites.

Lincoln refused to free and arm slaves. He delivered anti-slavery speeches in northern Illinois and pro-slavery speeches in southern Illinois. Those who knew him well said he enjoyed minstrel shows, used the N-word in private conversations and sometimes in speeches.

Bennett's been here before. His 1968 Ebony article ''Was Abe Lincoln a white supremacist?'' sent ripples across the academic and cultural world of that politically volatile era. Much of this has been written about by other scholars. Bennett is not an academic historian. Yet his article, like his classic work ''Before the Mayflower,'' brought scholarly research to a broad audience and changed the national conversation about the early history of African-Americans, even among scholars.

As a descendant of African-American slaves, I appreciate Bennett's critique, for the insights it offers—not just on Lincoln but on those of us who admire and respect the impact he had on my family and millions of others of all races.

Since I don't know what was in Lincoln's heart, I have to judge him by his actions. Whether he intended to free the slaves or not, his actions served to have that effect over time.

He may not have been the Great Emancipator but he helped to emancipate.

Yes, as Bennett describes, Lincoln did allow the four slave states that remained in the Union to dictate his policy toward slavery. But, can anyone familiar with geography blame Lincoln for wanting to avoid secession by Maryland and Delaware? It would have left the District of Columbia surrounded by hostile states, which would not have been a happy situation.

The Emancipation Proclamation did not free many slaves, but it gave the Civil War a moral purpose that fended off potential foreign allies to the South and set a new course for American history.

Lincoln may have supported ''colonization'' of black slaves to Africa, but he was hardly alone, either among white or black leaders of the time. Yet, the proclamation repudiated colonization, in so many words and enabled the first large-scale enlistment of black soldiers in the Union army.

Once he issued the proclamation. Lincoln no longer could waffle on the slavery issue. His role as ''emancipator'' was assured and he did nothing to discourage it.

Lincoln held off radical Republicans who wanted him to further, but he also fended off reactionaries who wanted him to move backward, to modify his proclamation or abandon it altogether.

If Bennett overdoes his assault on Lincoln, it hardly matches the overzealous ways in which ol' Abe has been almost canonized over the years.

Like Thomas Jefferson and other heroic figures of American history, Lincoln set a higher standard for human brotherhood and sisterhood than even he was able to meet.

Still, we can admire Lincoln, as I still do, inasmuch as he set that high standard during his better moments and acted on it.

Lincoln is important, not only to Americans but around the world, as a symbol of how an ordinary man from very humble beginnings can rise to high office and lead his country through its worst crisis, an all-out war against itself.

If he was ''forced into glory'' against his will or not, he has worn the glory remarkably well.

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

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

I said earlier that I was very excited to see this bill move forward, but there were a number of questions that I had as we first brought this up in the Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands and the Committee on Resources, which I believe have been very adequately addressed.

Any American who follows Abraham Lincoln realizes that he is a legend not only to Illinois but to many other States, and he has historic sites around the country. I do not think there is a young boy in America or a young girl in America who has not heard the story of Abraham Lincoln reading by the firelight and being told by our parents that we should be very appreciative of our life-styles, and how hard he worked, and worked all day, and then read by the light of his fire. Presumably he had very thick glasses, if they had been there at the time, because he was so committed to that. It inspired many young people, including myself. I have been a Lincoln fan most of my life, have 15 to 20 books of Lincoln that I have read; and I think many Americans have taken that inspiration.

When we walk through our capitol building or around the Nation's capital, we see many Lincoln sites. The Gettysburg address is arguably, along with the Declaration of Independence, is the most known and most moving document. This book by Gary Wills is a tremendous book, talking about, for example, the fact that it is amazing that an address this important, referring to the Gettysburg address, and one that most of us know and is so concise, at the same time the Gettysburg address does not mention Gettysburg, it does not mention slavery, it does not mention the union, and it does not mention the South. Yet he managed to communicate his points in a moving way that still moves Americans today.

He was a tremendous writer, in addition to being a person who could unify and keep our country together. This capitol building would be rent apart if we had not had a mild mannered man from the Midwest who listened to the people, and spent much of his life listening, to try to somehow keep a very divided North together, let alone manage his way through the Civil War.

I say all that because this site could have been in Kentucky, a national

presidential library. That is where he was born. It could have been in Indiana. We have a national Lincoln boyhood site in southern Indiana. We in Indiana like to say that Indiana made Lincoln and Lincoln made Illinois. It also could be at Gettysburg, where he delivered this address and where we have just taken sites into Federal possession, in the Wills House, the cemetery where he gave the address. We have Ford Theater as a national site.

But the fact is the first question is why Springfield. There are many more Lincoln sites in Springfield than anywhere else in the country, and I want to make sure the RECORD notes these. They have the Lincoln Home National Historic Site, where he and Mary Todd Lincoln lived. The Lincoln-Herndon Law Offices. They have the Lincoln tomb. The Lincoln Depot, where he left Springfield for Washington, D.C., which is still preserved. They have the Lincoln log cabin, where his father and stepmother lived. They have the Lincoln ledger, his financial records. The old State capitol where he served as a State legislator and delivered his famous house divided speech. They also have outside of Springfield and New Salem a recreation of a village of his time period.

There is no question that Springfield has more historic sites related to Lincoln than anywhere else in the country. They also, through the Henry Horner Collection that was given to the Illinois State Historical Society, have 1,500 documents that were either handwritten by Lincoln or were signed by Lincoln, in addition to all sorts of broadsides, prints and photographs, including the earliest known photo of Lincoln, taken in 1846, and the only known photo lying in state.

So, clearly, they have more documents, more photos, more actual buildings related to Lincoln than anywhere else in the country. They have Edward Everett's copy of his manuscript, handwritten out for him. They have the handwritten speech of the second inaugural address with the famous ''with malice toward none, with charity for all.''

I think there is a compelling case that, a, we need a national Lincoln museum and library, and that Springfield should be the center. One amendment that we had in committee, and I think is important as we work with the National Park Service on things like the Lewis and Clark trip to the West where we have many historic sites and where we have other underground railroad sites; as we work together it is important that a national museum, while it will focus on his Illinois years, because that is where most of the documents are, that it will also interrelate with the other Lincoln sites around the country. So as we see this boom in heritage tourism, as many young Americans and adult Americans try to learn more about their history, that they can go to one site and at that site be referred to other sites around the country that also bring out that heritage.

□ 1430

I am excited about the efforts of the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS). I hope this also will continue to be funded through the appropriations process, and I am glad that we can move this bill forth.

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, and the members of the House of Representatives, I want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to submit my testimony on an issue that is very important to me, and to the 18th District of Illinois—authorization of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library.

A panel of world-famous historians recently voted Abraham Lincoln as the greatest American President. This comes as no surprise to those of us from the Land of Lincoln. For decades, people from all over the world have come to Illinois to learn about our 16th President, and to be inspired by his life and words. Lincoln's story is the quintessential American success story. In Lincoln, we have a man born into the most humble of circumstances overcoming hardship and repeated failures, through his own hard work and dedication, to emerge as one of the three most written about individuals in human history.

But even though Lincoln is considered by the world to be one of the nation's greatest leaders, there is no single location where the Lincoln story can be told. There are sites that interpret his pioneer days, has legal and political careers, his home life, and even his death. But there is not a facility dedicated to interpreting Abraham Lincoln's legacy and relevance to contemporary generations.

Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., one of the nation's most respected historians, recently termed it a ''tragedy'' that Abraham Lincoln does not have a Presidential Library.

The State of Illinois has the world's largest Lincoln collection—some 46,000 items so rare and valuable that the collection exceeds the combined Lincoln holdings of the National Park Service, the National Archives, and the Smithsonian Institution. Some of our nation's most significant artifacts are a part of that collection: five copies of The Gettysburg Address, which sets the stage for our nation's history after Civil War; the only signed copy of The Emancipation Proclamation, which echoed Lincoln's strong feelings against human bondage; and the only copy of Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address, which, while advocating malice toward none and charity for all, predicted benevolent policies for post war recovery. The Illinois collection also includes such diverse artifacts as Tad Lincoln's toy cannon, Mary Lincoln's wedding skirt, and the nameplate from the front door of Lincoln's Springfield house—treasures that belong to all Americans.

But, few of you have ever seen these items, and there is a reason for that. The State of Illinois has no adequate facilities to appropriately display and interpret these items. They are kept locked in a vault beneath the old State Capitol in downtown Springfield, to be brought out only for important research or the occasional exhibit at another location.

Abraham Lincoln's example of sacrifice for his ideals should not be kept locked behind a vault door. Lincoln's message of freedom and democracy should not be kept in obscurity in the basement of a building. The life of America's greatest President should not be hidden away from all but a select few.

The proposed Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library will be a beacon of freedom for the entire world. Anyone enjoying the benefits of democracy, and those who yearn to enjoy those benefits, will want to come to this new facility. The world looks to Abraham Lincoln as the highest example of freedom in a nation founded on that concept, and the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library will give the world a place to learn about, and be inspired by, that example.

Abraham Lincoln's message is especially relevant today, as the world's changing political situation has people searching for a champion of freedom and equality. We have that champion. He is an American who kept the United States united and demonstrated to the world that democratic ideals were not a mere abstraction, but a living reality. He is a human being who brought dignity to all human beings.

He is a martyr who died for his beliefs. He makes us proud to be Americans. Now, it's time to return the favor.

Abraham Lincoln's legacy belongs to all generations. His appeal transcends age, race, gender, class and partisan boundaries. He is one of our greatest Presidents and deserves this long overdue facility in his honor. It will be located in Springfield, Illinois, but it will be open to the world. Let's keep Lincoln's torch of freedom burning for all people. Let's help fund the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SOUDER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3084, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

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TAUNTON RIVER WILD AND SCENIC RIVER STUDY ACT OF 2000

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2778) to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate segments of the Taunton River in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for study for potential addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 2778

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 ''Taunton River Wild and Scenic River Study Act of 2000''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) the Taunton River in the State of Massachusetts possesses important resource values (including wildlife, ecological, and scenic values), historic sites, and a cultural past important to the heritage of the United States;

(2) there is strong support among State and local officials, area residents, and river users for a cooperative wild and scenic river study of the area; and

(3) there is a longstanding interest among State and local officials, area residents, and river users in undertaking a concerted cooperative effort to manage the river in a productive and meaningful way.