

There was no objection.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION WAIVING POINTS OF ORDER AGAINST CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1654, NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2000

Mr. REYNOLDS (during debate on H. Con. Res. 368) from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 106-844) on the resolution (H. Res. 574) waiving points of order against the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 1654) to authorize appropriations for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration for fiscal years 2000, 2001, and 2002, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

SCOUTING FOR ALL ACT

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4892) to repeal the Federal charter of the Boy Scouts of America.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4892

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 "Scouting for All Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds the following:

(1) Federal charters are prestigious distinctions awarded to organizations with a patriotic, charitable, or educational purpose.

(2) Although intended as an honorific title, a Federal charter implies Government support for such organizations.

(3) In 1916, the Federal Government granted a Federal charter to the Boy Scouts of America.

(4) Although the Boy Scouts of America promotes the social and civic development of young boys through mentoring, it also sets an example of intolerance through its discriminatory policy regarding sexual orientation.

(5) Federal support for the Boy Scouts of America indirectly supports the organization's policy to exclude homosexuals.

(6) A policy of excluding homosexuals is contradictory to the Federal Government's support for diversity and tolerance and should not be condoned as patriotic, charitable, or educational.

SEC. 3. REPEAL OF FEDERAL CHARTER OF BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA.

(a) REPEAL.—Chapter 309 of title 36, United States Code, which grants a Federal charter to the Boy Scouts of America, is repealed.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis at the beginning of subtitle II of title 36, United States Code, is amended by striking the item relating to chapter 309.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HUTCHINSON) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HUTCHINSON).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Mem-

bers may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 4892.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, while I do not support this bill, I do believe it is appropriate that it be brought up for consideration at this time. I rise in opposition to H.R. 4892.

This legislation that has been offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is a bill to revoke the 80-year-old Federal charter of the Boy Scouts of America.

Tonight, scouts and scout leaders all across this great country are watching these proceedings. They are watching with amazement that the Congress of the United States is debating a bill to revoke their charter.

Now, why is this bill being offered? Why should it be considered to revoke the charter of the Boy Scouts? It is hard to figure.

First of all, there are no appropriated Federal funds that are used to support the Boy Scouts of America. It is simply a Federal charter that is granted to other patriotic-type organizations that allow them to protect the emblems and symbols that they have.

The Boy Scouts have worked for over 80 years with the youth of our Nation, building leadership and molding character. The charter of the Boy Scouts, granted by this Congress, states that they will promote patriotism, courage, self-reliance, and kindred virtues, virtues that we desperately need in this country.

Millions of scouts are trained under the leadership of this great organization. They provide over 3 million boys and young adults the opportunity to participate in educational programs. In 1998, the Boy Scouts contributed over 52 million community service hours to our Nation and is committed to providing an additional 1 million service hours to preserving the environment at our national parks.

Another reason that this bill is ill-advised is that the Supreme Court of the United States affirmed the first amendment freedom of the Boy Scouts to exclude scout masters who do not support the values of the Boy Scouts of America. We should adhere to the opinion of the United States Supreme Court.

Finally, the Attorney General of this country has given an opinion that the use by Federal lands of the Boy Scouts does not convene even in any executive order of this administration.

Mr. Speaker, the Boy Scouts of America today are under attack by this legislation and by others in America. I believe an organization that supports our values and our freedoms and builds leadership among young people should be supported and we should defend the Boy Scouts of America.

This legislation that is being offered is punitive in nature to revoke their charter, it is ill-advised, and should be defeated.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today under some very confusing circumstances. I would like to refer to the manager of the bill, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HUTCHINSON). I thought I heard him say that he was moving to suspend the rules and pass a bill that he is now saying that he is opposed to.

I thought he was the one that caused this bill to be brought to the floor and that it was him that is urging its passage.

Did I hear him correctly?

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. CONYERS. I yield to the gentleman from Arkansas.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation being offered by Members on their side is being brought under the Suspension Calendar, and in order to debate it and provide the sponsors of the legislation an opportunity to explain their reasons why the Boy Scouts charter should be revoked, is being brought up. And so I procedurally asked that the rules be suspended for its consideration.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I see. I thank the gentleman for that information.

Now, we are both on the Committee on the Judiciary. Did this bill go through the committee?

I continue to yield to the ranking member on the Republican side.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

The legislation has not been reported by the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank you.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the gentleman, have there been any hearings in the Committee on the Judiciary?

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, as the ranking member, I think the gentleman is fully aware that we have not conducted any hearings on this legislation.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman again for his comments. And so you are against this bill, have not had any hearings, there have been no votes in committee, and you are urging that we rush it through this process when it has never been through the committee.

If that is the case, sir, then I would ask unanimous consent to have this suspension bill removed from the calendar.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Does the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HUTCHINSON) yield for that request?

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I certainly object to the request. I would ask the gentleman to yield for a response.