

humane response to a provision of the law that does not make sense and should be changed. It is my hope and understanding that although this bill does not make this section of immigration law permanent, Congress will act soon to enact further extensions. I urge my colleagues to vote for this bill.

Mr. BEREUTER. Madam Speaker, this Member rises in strong opposition to H.R. 1885, the 245(i) Extension Act of 2001. By allowing illegal aliens to buy legal permanent residence for \$1,000, Section 245(i) places American lives at risk.

Although the current legal immigration structure is by no means perfect, it does provide for crucial health screening and criminal record background checks which determine if potential immigrants will place the well-being and security of American citizens and legal immigrants in danger. To make such determinations is not only the right of the United States as a sovereign country, it should be its foremost responsibility.

Madam Speaker, Section 245(i) ultimately rewards those people who have thwarted the legal immigration structure by entering the country illegally or by allowing their legal status to lapse. Simultaneously, the policy penalizes potential immigrants who have patiently waited many years, completed many forms, and undergone appropriate screenings for the privileged opportunity to be reunited with family members and to work in the United States.

Madam Speaker, Section 245(i) was a bad policy when it was first enacted in 1994. It was not worthy of being re-instated during the previous 107th Congress, and it should not be further extended.

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Madam Speaker, today I rise in strong support of at least a minimum one-year extension to the April 30, 2001, filing deadline under Section 245(i), allowing certain persons to remain in the United States while they pursue legal residency.

The bill before us, H.R. 1885, would extend the immigration filing deadline under Section 245(i) for only four months. At best, it acknowledges the importance of this program. However, it is absolutely inadequate time to resolve the problem.

In the 106th Congress, the Legal Immigration and Family Equity Act (LIFE) had a filing deadline of April 30, 2001. INS did not finalize the regulations for LIFE until March 26, 2001. This allowed only barely a month—just over 30 days—for petitioners to be informed of the regulations and to file their applications. This short time frame fostered the dissemination of wrong or inadequate information.

Additionally, H.R. 1885 requires that an applicant seeking to adjust his status under 245(i) must prove that he was physically present on December 21, 2000, and that they established a familial or employment relationship that serves as the basis of their petition. Fulfilling this requirement is not an easy process. Obtaining the necessary documentation will require more than 4 months.

At the April 30, 2001, deadline, 200,000 persons had pending applications. This is due partly to the fact that INS was not able to handle the tremendous influx of applications.

Madam Speaker, a minimum one year extension of the filing deadline is imperative in order to fulfill the purpose and intent of the LIFE Act.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support a minimum one-year exten-

sion of the filing deadline under Section 245(i). It is the right thing to do.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Madam Speaker, it goes without saying that, as legislators, our goal is to pass the best legislation possible. Extending the deadline for people to adjust their immigration status under Section 245(i) of the Immigration and Naturalization Act is the right thing to do. In this case, the goal is to allow everyone who is eligible under the law, to obtain permanent legal residence. Unfortunately, I fear a four month extension is an incomplete remedy.

Consideration of this legislation says volumes about the way business is conducted in the House. The Speed with which this bill has been brought to the floor was noticeably absent on April 30th. This House was uncharacteristically silent about the pending deadline. While I'm pleased that we finally have the opportunity to talk about extending the deadline, I'm concerned about the circumvention of the committee process and the noticeably shorter extension period. We have not had a fair hearing on the alternatives, such as the bill Congressman KING and I introduced after working closely with state and local officials in New York, that gives eligible people an adequate window of opportunity to adjust their status by extending the deadline by six months.

The process of adjusting one's immigration status can be confusing and that misinformation is rampant in the immigrant community. As we cast our votes for or against this bill, we have to ask ourselves a number of important questions: is four months enough time; are we setting ourselves up for a repeat of the last deadline, when long lines of eligible people inundated the I.N.S. offices and many were excluded; and finally, is this bill a fair and reasonable compromise designed to help those who deserve it. I fear it is something less. We could have done better. The people deserve better.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I rise to support the House Resolution 1885 to expand the class of beneficiaries who may apply for adjustment of status under section 245(i) of the Immigration and National Act.

As I understand it, the purpose of this legislation is to enable eligible illegal immigrants to apply for legal residence in the United States without being forced to leave the country while waiting for clearance.

Whereas President Bush would like this program to be extended for another 12 months, the four-month extension proposed by my colleague, Representative GEORGE GEKAS is a sensible approach. This alternative approach would be beneficial to all concerned parties, particularly if family or employment ties are already in existence.

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

□ 1630

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1885.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Madam 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.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 31 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 6 p.m.

□ 1800

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. ISAKSON) at 6 p.m.

VACATING ORDERING OF YEAS AND NAYS ON H.R. 1801, ELDON B. MAHON UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE, AND H. CON. RES. 109, HONORING THE SERVICES AND SACRIFICES OF THE UNITED STATES MERCHANT MARINE

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to vacate the ordering of the yeas and nays on H.R. 1801 and House Concurrent Resolution 109 to the end that the Chair put the question on each measure de novo.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1801.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 109.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

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 motions to suspend the rules on which further proceedings were postponed earlier today.