

last 7 years; and it is very difficult to pay for water that you do not get. The farmers are not asking that the loan be forgiven. What they are asking is that the length of time to pay the money be extended until such time as the Good Lord sends the rain and that we might use the project for that which it was created originally.

So, without further ado, I thank, again, the chairman and ranking member for their bringing this bill up. I thank them for their support, and I urge support for this bill.

I rise in strong support of H.R. 856, legislation I introduced to extend a repayment period for the Tom Green County Water Control and Improvement District No. 1.

The Tom Green County Water Control & Improvement District No. 1 has an outstanding loan with the Department of Interior for the construction of an irrigation canal. The remaining balance is approximately \$2.4 million. The farmers in the District have made diligent efforts to make timely payments on the contract. They have paid 38 percent (about \$1.5 million) of the original debt owed to the Department of Interior despite the fact that they have yet to receive a fair return on their investment.

In West Texas, there is virtually nothing of a higher daily concern than the availability of water. In recent years, Texas has been devastated by drought. As a result, the farmers have received a full year's allocation of irrigation water only 50 percent of the time. Moreover, for the other 50 percent of the time, they received either less than the annual allocation or no irrigation water at all.

Payment on the debt has never been forgiven, even in years when the District received no water. Deferments have been granted seven times; however, those payments still have to be made. They are added to the remaining balance and the payments continue to get higher annually because the original contract end date does not change.

To make matters worse, the concrete lining placed in the canal in 1960 has started to deteriorate after forty-two years and repairs are necessary. These repairs are very expensive. Farmers simply cannot sustain paying the costs of the annual operation and maintenance costs due to the irrigation district, the Bureau of Reclamation annual payment, and extensive repair costs when little or no water is available.

The Bureau of Reclamation has stated that the increased payments, as a result of continued deferments due to the drought conditions, are making it increasingly difficult on the farmers' ability to repay the annual payments. The increased annual payments place additional financial burdens on the District and increasing these payments further will only lead to future difficulty that the Bureau of Reclamation cannot remedy. Only Congress can remedy the long-term problem, which is why I have introduced H.R. 856 to get this loan restructured.

This legislation would allow the Secretary of Interior to revise the repayment contract (No. 14-06-500-369) by extending the period authorized for repayment of reimbursable construction costs of the canal from 40 to 50 years.

These Tom Green County farmers have been doing their part to meet their responsibilities. When year-after-year the water was unavailable, their only recourse was to ask for an

extension on the loan. I'm glad Tom Green County Commissioner Clayton Friend brought this to my attention and I'm very appreciative of the speedy Resources Committee action. I have high hopes that we will be able to get this bill to the President within the next few weeks.

On behalf of the farmers in my district, I urge members to support H.R. 856.

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

Mr. RADANOVICH. 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 California (Mr. RADANOVICH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 856.

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.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may be given 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1577, H.R. 1012, H.R. 856 and H.R. 255.

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

There was no objection.

MICROENTERPRISE FOR SELF-RELIANCE ACT OF 2000 AND FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1961 AMENDMENTS

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 192) to amend the Microenterprise for Self-Reliance Act of 2000 and the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to increase assistance for the poorest people in developing countries under microenterprise assistance programs under those Acts, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 192

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

SECTION 1. AMENDMENTS TO THE MICROENTERPRISE FOR SELF-RELIANCE ACT OF 2000.

(a) PURPOSES.—Section 103 of the Microenterprise for Self-Reliance Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-309) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by striking “micro-entrepreneurs” and inserting “microenterprise households”;

(2) in paragraph (4), by striking “and” at the end;

(3) in paragraph (5)—

(A) by striking “microfinance policy” and inserting “microenterprise policy”;

(B) by striking “the poorest of the poor” and inserting “the very poor”;

(C) by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”;

(4) by adding at the end the following:

“(6) to ensure that in the implementation of this title at least 50 percent of all micro-

enterprise assistance under this title, and the amendments made under this title, shall be targeted to the very poor.”.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—Section 104 of such Act is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2), by striking “for micro-entrepreneurs” and inserting “to micro-entrepreneurs and their households”;

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(5) VERY POOR.—The term ‘very poor’ means individuals—

“(A) living in the bottom 50 percent below the poverty line established by the national government of the country in which those individuals live; or

“(B) living on the equivalent of less than \$1 per day.”.

SEC. 2. AMENDMENTS TO THE MICRO- AND SMALL ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT CREDITS PROGRAM UNDER THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1961.

(a) FINDINGS AND POLICY.—Section 108(a)(2) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151f(a)(2)) is amended by striking “the development of the enterprises of the poor” and inserting “the access to financial services and the development of microenterprises”.

(b) PROGRAM.—Section 108(b) of such Act (22 U.S.C. 2151f(b)) is amended to read as follows:

“(b) PROGRAM.—To carry out the policy set forth in subsection (a), the President is authorized to provide assistance to increase the availability of financial services to microenterprise households lacking full access to credit, including through—

“(1) loans and guarantees to microfinance institutions for the purpose of expanding the availability of savings and credit to poor and low-income households;

“(2) training programs for microfinance institutions in order to enable them to better meet the financial services needs of their clients; and

“(3) training programs for clients in order to enable them to make better use of credit, increase their financial literacy, and to better manage their enterprises to improve their quality of life.”.

(c) ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA.—Section 108(c) of such Act (22 U.S.C. 2151f(c)) is amended—

(1) in the first sentence of the matter preceding paragraph (1)—

(A) by striking “credit institutions” and inserting “microfinance institutions”;

(B) by striking “micro- and small enterprises” and inserting “microenterprise households”;

(2) in paragraphs (1) and (2), by striking “credit” each place it appears and inserting “financial services”.

(d) ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENT.—Section 108(d) of such Act (22 U.S.C. 2151f(d)) is amended by striking “micro- and small enterprise programs” and inserting “programs for microenterprise households”.

(e) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—Section 108(f)(1) of such Act (22 U.S.C. 2151f(f)(1)) is amended by striking “for each of fiscal years 2001 and 2002” and inserting “for each of fiscal years 2001 through 2004”.

(f) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 108 of such Act (22 U.S.C. 2151f) is amended in the heading to read as follows:

“SEC. 108. MICROENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT CREDITS.”.

SEC. 3. AMENDMENTS TO THE MICROENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT GRANT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM UNDER THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1961.

(a) FINDINGS AND POLICY.—Section 131(a) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2152a(a)) is amended to read as follows:

“(a) FINDINGS AND POLICY.—Congress finds and declares that—

“(1) access to financial services and the development of microenterprise are vital factors in the stable growth of developing countries and in the development of free, open,

and equitable international economic systems;

"(2) it is therefore in the best interest of the United States to facilitate access to financial services and assist the development of microenterprise in developing countries;

"(3) access to financial services and the development of microenterprises can be supported by programs providing credit, savings, training, technical assistance, business development services, and other financial and non-financial services; and

"(4) given the relatively high percentage of populations living in rural areas of developing countries, and the combined high incidence of poverty in rural areas and growing income inequality between rural and urban markets, microenterprise programs should target both rural and urban poor."

(b) AUTHORIZATION.—Section 131(b) of such Act (22 U.S.C. 2152a(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3)(A)(i), by striking "entrepreneurs" and inserting "clients"; and

(2) in paragraph (4)(D)—

(A) in clause (i), by striking "very small loans" and inserting "financial services to poor entrepreneurs"; and

(B) in clause (ii), by striking "micro-finance" and inserting "microenterprise".

(c) MONITORING SYSTEM.—Section 131(c) of such Act (22 U.S.C. 2152a(c)) is amended by striking paragraph (4) and inserting the following:

"(4) adopts the widespread use of proven and effective poverty assessment tools to successfully identify the very poor and ensure that they receive needed microenterprise loans, savings, and assistance."

(d) DEVELOPMENT AND APPLICATION OF POVERTY MEASUREMENT METHODS.—Section 131 of such Act (22 U.S.C. 2152a) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (d) and (e) as subsections (e) and (f), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (c) the following:

"(d) DEVELOPMENT AND CERTIFICATION OF POVERTY MEASUREMENT METHODS; APPLICATION OF METHODS.—

"(1) DEVELOPMENT AND CERTIFICATION.—(A) The Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, in consultation with microenterprise institutions and other appropriate organizations, shall develop no fewer than two low-cost methods for partner institutions to use to assess the poverty levels of their current or prospective clients. The United States Agency for International Development shall develop poverty indicators that correlate with the circumstances of the very poor.

"(B) The Administrator shall field-test the methods developed under subparagraph (A). As part of the testing, institutions and programs may use the methods on a voluntary basis to demonstrate their ability to reach the very poor.

"(C) Not later than October 1, 2004, the Administrator shall, from among the low-cost poverty measurement methods developed under subparagraph (A), certify no fewer than two such methods as approved methods for measuring the poverty levels of current or prospective clients of microenterprise institutions for purposes of assistance under this section.

"(2) APPLICATION.—The Administrator shall require that, with reasonable exceptions, all organizations applying for microenterprise assistance under this Act use one of the certified methods, beginning no later than October 1, 2005, to determine and report the poverty levels of current or prospective clients."

(e) LEVEL OF ASSISTANCE.—Section 131(e) of such Act, as redesignated by subsection (d), is amended by inserting "and \$175,000,000 for fiscal year 2003 and \$200,000,000 for fiscal year 2004" after "fiscal years 2001 and 2002".

(f) DEFINITIONS.—Section 131(f) of such Act, as redesignated by subsection (d), is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(5) VERY POOR.—The term 'very poor' means those individuals—

"(A) living in the bottom 50 percent below the poverty line established by the national government of the country in which those individuals live; or

"(B) living on less than the equivalent of \$1 per day."

SEC. 4. REPORT TO CONGRESS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than September 30, 2005, the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development shall submit to Congress a report that documents the process of developing and applying poverty assessment procedures with its partners.

(b) REPORTS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2006 AND BEYOND.—Beginning with fiscal year 2006, the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development shall annually submit to Congress on a timely basis a report that addresses the United States Agency for International Development's compliance with the Microenterprise for Self-Reliance Act of 2000 by documenting—

(1) the percentage of its resources that were allocated to the very poor (as defined in paragraph (5) of section 131(f) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2152a(f)(5))) based on the data collected from its partners using the certified methods; and

(2) the absolute number of the very poor reached.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH).

□ 1145

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. 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 the bill currently under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BASS). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in very strong support of H.R. 192, the Microenterprise for Self-Reliance Act. I introduced this bill at the beginning of the 108th Congress, along with 66 cosponsors. And this, frankly, Mr. Speaker, is the final product representing a culmination of months of hard work and discussions by Republicans and Democrats alike in both the House and the Senate, members of the microenterprise community, and USAID. We are trying, with this legislation, to build upon one of the most progressive and successful foreign aid programs that this country offers.

I would like to thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) and our leadership for scheduling this bill. We know that the House has been considering numerous important pieces of foreign affairs legislation in recent weeks and

months, from the global AIDS bill to legislation relating to the war on terrorism, and I am grateful that this bill has been posted for today's consideration.

I would also like to thank the gentleman from Illinois (Chairman HYDE) who has very strong support for this bill, and seeing it through every step of the way. We moved it at the very first markup of our committee. I would also like to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), who has been a great friend and supporter of microenterprise initiatives, as well as many other very important foreign policy and human rights initiatives that are considered by this House. I also thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. HOUGHTON), the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE), and the gentleman from Florida (Ms. ROSLEHTINEN) who is a cosponsor.

I would also like to thank my friend and colleague, Tim Roemer, former colleague, who worked very hard with us last year in developing this legislation. We had a very good broad coalition of Members trying to make this legislation a reality.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 192 will expand our existing microenterprise program so that more people can share in the hope of microlending that has already proved so fruitful to so many. H.R. 192 puts a priority on microenterprise funding, which is currently authorized at \$155 million, by authorizing \$175 million in fiscal year 2003, and \$200 million in fiscal year 2004.

H.R. 192 establishes a new framework to ensure that more funds go to the poorest of the poor through the development and implementation of easy-to-use and cost-effective poverty assessment programs and techniques. Identifying and targeting the poorest potential clients who would stand to benefit the most from microenterprise loans has proven to be more difficult than originally anticipated. I am hopeful that once developed, these poverty assessment techniques may prove more useful not only for microenterprise, but also in other areas of foreign aid as well.

Let me just say, Mr. Speaker, that this legislation builds upon and complements the principles that President Bush has outlined for a more effective foreign aid through the Millennium Challenge Account. Business owners assisted by microlending are not only able to increase their own incomes, but through their efforts, they create jobs and help economies to go, and person by person, job by job, they help to eliminate poverty.

It is important to note that over 2 million clients are currently benefiting from USAID-assisted programs that provide the necessary capital through these small loans, sometimes through \$200, \$300, maybe \$400, but these loans are the lifeblood to these individuals to make it and to begin to develop their own businesses, build their own homes, and to care for themselves.

It is estimated that 97 percent of microenterprise loans are successfully repaid. I repeat that: 97 percent of the loans are repaid. That is astonishing. About 70 percent of those loans go to women who are very often the most vulnerable in these societies, sometimes subjected to abuse and the need of economic opportunities in the developing world. This is a women's empowerment bill, to ensure that more women get out of poverty so they are not prey for the traffickers and the others who would exploit them.

Finally, just let me say again, Mr. Speaker, a great deal of hard work went into this. This is a bipartisan piece of legislation, and I hope it will have the full support of the body.

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

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

I rise in strong support of H.R. 192. At the outset, I want to congratulate my good friend, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), for the leadership he has shown on this most important piece of legislation. I also want to pay tribute to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE), the gentleman from New York (Mr. HOUGHTON), and three of our former colleagues, Mr. Gilman, Mr. Gejdenson, and Tim Roemer, for their contributions in an earlier Congress to this important issue.

Mr. Speaker, microenterprise programs have proven to be effective in providing poor households with the financial tools needed to generate income, create savings, and develop businesses, however small, to alleviate poverty. Therefore, I am very pleased that our bill not only reauthorizes this program, but also increases the amount of funding for the programs.

In the 3 years since the original legislation was enacted, we have gained new insights on how these programs function. One such insight is that due to a lack of precise tools to measure poverty and the difficulty in identifying and reaching the very poorest households, there is growing concern that these programs are not focusing on the poorest and most needy individuals. Our legislation seeks to improve the targeting of assistance to the very poor by amending the definition and requiring USAID to develop more precise tools to measure poverty.

Finally, I want to reiterate my strong support for USAID and a variety of nonprofit organizations: Freedom For Hunger, Save the Children, Results, FINCA, and countless others which are working in poor communities across the globe to help the most needy families get the financial tools they need to provide for their families. I hope that by passing this bipartisan legislation, we will be giving them the resources they need to lift themselves from grinding poverty.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all of my colleagues to support the legislation, and, again, I want to pay public tribute to my good friend, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH).

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KIRK), a former staff member of the committee and now a member of the Committee on International Relations, who has worked on these issues for a long time.

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Chairman SMITH), the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), and the gentleman from Illinois (Chairman HYDE). As a staff member of the committee, I wrote an earlier version of this legislation, and it reflects a growing movement started by Dr. Muhammed Yunus at the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh, which has now become the largest financial institution in terms of customers in that country, serving the poorest of the poor.

This movement has spread worldwide, founding institutions such as Banco Sol in Bolivia, also now the largest financial institution in that country. As a member of the Committee on Appropriations' Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, Export Financing and Related Programs, we will be working hard to make sure that the appropriation backs up the authorization to ensure that we fund this critical program.

I particularly applaud the chairman for identifying the poorest of the poor. I want to thank the groups behind this legislation such as Results, Sam Daley Harris; FINCA, with Lawrence Janovich; and Accion International, and others like Opportunity International that provide loans to the poorest of the poor overseas.

In recent years, micro has become macro, and this cause has been adopted by Her Majesty, Queen Rania of Jordan, as her key program to spread throughout the world, especially in the former Soviet Union. This movement has also spread to the United States. I want to particularly thank the Duman Foundation in Deerfield, Illinois, that is using the lessons of the Grameen Bank and microenterprise loans to work with the poorest of the poor in my home State, in North Chicago, Illinois.

So I want to commend the chairman, and I urge adoption of this legislation. I urge this House to back up the authorization with appropriations for this critical program.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, we have no further requests for time. In conclusion, I would like to thank Walker Roberts on our staff, and the other unsung heroes of this legislation and other bills that come before this body. The staff who painstakingly work on the details. I thank Peter Smith, who worked very hard on this bill, and George Phillips on my personal staff who has been a real honcho,

pushing this bill through to final passage.

Thank you to all of our staff and the staff of the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) as well who have worked very hard. It has been a great product of cooperation, and the poorest of the poor will benefit when this is enacted in the law.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 192. This legislation is vital to the future of so many impoverished people throughout the world. Microenterprise programs have been remarkably successful in providing opportunity to those most in need both abroad and domestically.

Microenterprise programs provide poor people, who have the initiative to start or expand small business endeavors, access to small loans with low interests rates. These small loans have substantial value to the recipients and effectively foster self-sufficiency and fiscal responsibility. In fact, almost all loans are repaid. This is strong evidence of the effectiveness of these programs.

Microenterprise programs exemplify the qualities of good, sound policy by improving the lives of individuals while positively impacting a broad population and doing so with little waste. Unlike other forms of assistance, microenterprise gives the aid directly to the intended recipients in need. This direct approach eliminates government waste, spreads economic opportunity, and plants the seeds for growth of the small business sector in developing nations. The creation of a solid small business infrastructure in developing nations provides a stimulus for their economics.

Not only will the success of our microenterprise programs be continued under H.R. 192, they will also be strengthened by provisions for increased funding and improving poverty-measuring tools. This legislation calls for increasing the amount of funds authorized for microenterprise to \$175 million in FY 2003 and \$200 million in FY 2004. It also requires that the U.S. Agency for International Development develop, test, and certify two methods for measuring poverty levels of microenterprise assistance recipients. By targeting those most in need and increasing aid, we make a good program better.

Helping in the fight against global poverty also increase the security of the American people and our friends throughout the world. As President Bush states, "Persistent poverty and oppression can lead to hopelessness and despair. And when governments fail to meet the most basic needs of their people, these failed states can become havens for terror." Microenterprise helps the impoverished and serves as one tool we can use to erode that hopelessness and that despair.

This bipartisan legislation will give new hope and opportunity to the poor around the world and provides the potential to improve our relations with many nations. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) for their work on putting this legislation together and their commitment to fighting global poverty. I urge all of my colleagues to support H.R. 192.

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support this important bill which amends the Microenterprise for Self-Reliance Act of 2000 and the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961. This bill would increase assistance for

the poorest people in developing countries by authorizing \$375 million in microenterprise loans.

Microenterprise loan assist people in overcoming poverty through participation in the private sector and are a successful means to combating the debilitating level of poverty in the developing world.

It has been estimated that the number of microenterprises range from one-third to one-half of the world's businesses.

However, there are major challenges for microenterpreneurs who face several impediments to improving their productivity and standard of living such as a lack of skills and market access, legal barriers, and especially, an absence of capital.

This bill will open unlimited doors of opportunity for the world's poorest people. Many microenterprise loans are less than a \$100. What may seem to Americans as a relatively small amount of money, can change the lives of families and communities.

Take for instance a woman in Ghana who tries to make a living selling donuts in her village, but is limited to how many she can make in a day with her own hands. With a small amount of money, this same woman is able to purchase equipment that can make more than one donut at a time and increase sales and profit. This in turn elevates the standard of living for herself and her family.

A relatively small amount of capital can help empower the world's poorest people and help them graduate from the lowest levels of poverty.

Microenterprise loans are an important part of our country's foreign assistance program. I commend this body for taking up this important measure.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be a co-sponsor of this bill and I urge its passage.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of H.R. 192 to amend the Microenterprise for Self-Reliance Act of 2000 and the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to increase assistance for the poorest people in developing countries.

Microenterprise programs give poor borrowers the capacity to improve the quality of their lives and the futures of their children. It helps very poor people start or expand self-employment ventures and pull themselves out of poverty.

If we are looking for ways to achieve the Millennium Development goal of cutting the severe poverty of over 1 billion people in half by 2015, there is no more direct way than expanding access to Microenterprise. These programs are reaching over 25 million very poor borrowers—with an average family of five—that's over 125 million people touched by Microenterprise. It can have a crucial role to play in families and communities by providing additional income and the money used to obtain better food, housing and education.

Microenterprise is a powerful anti-poverty tool, and it is most powerful in the hands of the poorest people. Mr. Speaker, I encourage passage of H.R. 192 and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. 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 New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 192.

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.

PENSION SECURITY ACT OF 2003

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 230 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 230

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 1000) to amend title I of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide additional protections to participants and beneficiaries in individual account plans from excessive investment in employer securities and to promote the provision of retirement investment advice to workers managing their retirement income assets. The bill shall be considered as read for amendment. The amendment recommended by the Committee on Education and the Workforce now printed in the bill shall be considered as adopted. All points of order against the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour and 20 minutes of debate on the bill, as amended, equally divided among and controlled by the chairmen and ranking minority members of the Committee on Education and the Workforce and the Committee on Ways and Means; (2) the further amendment printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution, if offered by Representative George Miller of California or his designee, which shall be in order without intervention of any point of order, shall be considered as read, and shall be separately debatable for one hour equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent; and (3) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LINDER) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 230 is a modified, closed rule that provides for the consideration of H.R. 1000, the Pension Security Act of 2003. This rule provides for 1 hour and 20 minutes of general debate, with 40 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and 40 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means. H.R. 230 provides that the amendment recommended by the Committee on Education and the Workforce now printed

in the bill shall be considered as adopted. It waives all points of order against the bill, as amended.

The rule makes in order the amendment printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying the resolution, if offered, by the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) or his designee, which shall be considered as read and shall be separately debatable for 1 hour, equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent. H.R. 230 waives all points of order against the amendment printed in the report and provides one motion to recommit, with or without instructions.

With respect to H.R. 1000, I want to again commend the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER), chairman of the full Committee on Education and the Workforce, for leadership that he is exhibiting to American workers who want and need enhanced retirement security here in the 21st century. To his credit, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER) brought similar retirement security legislation to the House Floor in November of 2001. The House passed that bill, H.R. 2269, with a 230 to 144 vote. Unfortunately, that vote died in the Senate.

□ 1200

Again, in April of last year the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER) brought legislation to the floor that sought to implement a series of pension reforms sought by President Bush; and the House passed that bill, H.R. 3762, with a 255-163 vote. Again, the bill died in the Senate.

Well, as the saying goes, the third time is a charm, as the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER) has brought retirement security legislation to the House floor today which the House should promptly pass over to the Senate so that the Chamber's new leadership has a chance to move it through the body. If so, I fully expect that President Bush would sign such a bill into law.

Some of the key elements of H.R. 1000 include giving workers the flexibility and freedom to diversify the holdings within their 401(k) plans; providing workers with high-quality investment advice as they exert more and more control over their nest eggs; amending Federal law to ensure that employers have fiduciary responsibility for employees' savings during blackout periods when employees are barred from changing their 401(k) investments; requiring employers to provide quarterly benefit statements to workers about retirement accounts; and, finally, a series of reforms designed to simplify pension requirements for small businesses that want to offer their workers defined benefit plans.

All of these reforms will help enhance the retirement security of millions of American workers. I look forward to supporting this bill.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 230 is a modified closed rule that will