We will have an amendment on the Farmers Market Promotion Program, trying to bring it to a level where it can serve a majority of our people.

So, again, I ask for the support of the membership on the rule, and I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

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

Let me just close by again saying I want to commend the work of the gentleman from Texas (Chairman BONILLA) and the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ranking Member KAPTUR) for doing the best they could with the low allocation. It is not their fault they had a low allocation. The fault lies with the President and the White House and the leadership of this Congress.

I think that during this debate I think we will hear a number of Members question their sense of priorities when, in fact, the need, especially in this area of agriculture, is so great, and yet we do not have the resources to be able to address all those challenges.

They have done a good job with not a lot of resources. They deserve to be commended.

We have no problem with this rule, and I would urge adoption of the rule, and I also will vote for this bill and hope that in conference that Members will be able to get the allocation up to a more reasonable level.

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

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues support both the rule and the underlying bill. I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KINGSTON. 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 H.R. 4755 and that I may include tabular material on the same.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CULBERSON). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2005

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 707 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 4755.

□ 1753

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 4755) making appropriations for the Legislative Branch for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2005, and for other purposes, with Mr. LINDER in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered as having been read the first time.

Under the rule, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON).

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today to present the Legislative branch appropriation bill for fiscal year 2005 to the House for consideration, and I want to start by thanking not just the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN), my ranking member, but I wanted to say thanks to all the subcommittee staff who have worked hard to make this bill possible: Liz Dawson, who is our Chief Clerk; Chuck Turner, our Staff Assistant; Kathy Rohan; Celia Alvarado; Tom Forhan; Tim Aiken; Bill Johnson; Heather McNatt; and Jennifer Hing.

I wanted to say to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN), the ranking member, that I have enjoyed working with him and working with all the subcommittee members. We have put together I think a good bill. We have had a number of amendments, some committee debate on it, and I think the product is a better bill because of that.

It is a bipartisan bill and somewhat noncontroversial. I am not aware of any angst that Members have; although I know everybody would improve it here or there, given the opportunity.

This bill actually funds the House of Representatives and all the various support agencies, including the Capitol Hill Police, the Architect of the Capitol, the Library of Congress, the Government Printing Office and the General Accounting Office.

The bill is $2.7 billion, which does not include the Senate items; and traditionally we do not fill in the blanks for the Senate. They do not fill in the blanks for us.

The bill came in below the budget request and is basically flat, meaning that the size of it is about the same as what it was last year. It does, however, provide for the current staffing levels. It includes cost of living increases and other increases here and there for inflationary reasons. There are no deductions in force, and yet we have kept new initiatives off it and tried to defer funding on certain projects.

Overall, the bill started out with a request level of $3.1 billion, and we were able to work that down to the $2.7 billion,

My colleagues may also recall that the fiscal year 2004 bill was brought to the floor with a decrease from the 2003 levels. So the Subcommittee on Legislative of the Committee on Appropriations has done its best to practice fiscal restraint and try to keep the President's goal in mind of a 1 percent increase for nondefense and homeland security discretionary spending, and we are actually below that.

There are a number of important things in this bill, but what I might do is I see some Members are here to speak on it. At this point, I see the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN), the ranking member, is here; and I will give him an opportunity to speak.

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

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON) has, in fact, been fair. We have worked out an appropriations bill that we can both live with. So this should not take an inordinate amount of time.

Mr. Chairman, as my colleagues know, there is some disagreement over the rule, and the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) I know will be addressing a consideration of the rule, but that was not a matter that was left open to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON) or myself. It was an amendment that might have been added.

The gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT) has an amendment that he would at least like to talk about, and I think it has considerable merit, but there are a lot of things that had considerable merit that are not included within this bill.

We had a very tight, tough 302(b) allocation; and it was felt that the Congress itself has to lead by example. Our original requests were not realistic. They would have increased spending in this appropriations bill by more than 14 percent above last year's spending level; and some of the major parts of this campus, the Capitol Police, the Architect of the Capitol, et cetera, had increases that were over 30 percent this year over last year. So they were not granted.

What we have before us is basically a flat bill. It is actually a .1 percent cut below last year's level. It is probably unprecedented. Maybe somebody is going to find an appropriation bill that was actually cut below the prior year, but I am skeptical that there is such a thing. I think all of us would have liked more money for a number of components of this bill, but it is responsible, and, as far as I am concerned, it is a fair bill. It covers in full, mandatory cost increases without resorting to any layoffs or RIFs.

In terms of percentages, the Office of the Attending Physician, who does a great job, Dr. Eisold and his colleagues are terrific and often called for in crisis situations, they receive a 13.7 percent increase, well justified, but the Open World Leadership Program, which I also think is well-justified, fared the worst with a 50 percent cut.

□ 1800

Hopefully, we will be able to restore some of that money in conference.

Now, somewhere in between those two ends of the spectrum, all the other legislative branch agencies, the Congressional Budget Office, the Office of Compliance, Government Printing Office, our own Members' Representational Allowance, they will receive considerably less than was requested, but certainly enough to carry out their primary responsibilities and missions.

The Capitol Police will be given approximately a 6 percent increase and additional flexibility to use unobligated funds from last year to cover most of their new equipment needs.

I am disappointed that this bill, though, does impose such a stiff cut to the Open World Leadership program, because it promotes democracy by bringing foreign leaders from Russia and other countries that were satellites of the Soviet Union to study our democratic institutions, something that is very much needed. And when we consider the relative costs if we do not get democracy embedded in those countries, it is substantially greater, obviously.

I am also troubled the public printer will lack the funds to modernize the functions of the Government Printing Office. But I am pleased that, despite the overall freeze, the chairman agreed, and I think we had the consensus of our subcommittee, that we should finally establish a staff fitness center. So I trust that the staff is going to be very pleased with that, and it is something that a number of us have been wanting to see go forward.

The Congress, of course, is the institution that is at the heart of this great Republic's democracy. A $2.75 billion budget is less than .15 percent of the proposed total Federal budget. It is a small price to pay for a legislative body that represents the world's greatest democracy.

So while the bill is fair, we do fall far short of what we may need to do in the future to provide for this institution's needs, the people who work here, and the people who visit here. If we attempt to continue such a tight budget in future years, and I am afraid that the same justification is going to apply, with large looming deficits for the next decade, then this institution will truly suffer.

The flat funding we have in this budget will not be sustainable. It will trigger reductions in force, it will compromise security, it will render our now current computer information systems obsolete and ineffective, and it will undermine improvements in productivity and efficiency that will subsequently drive up future maintenance costs. Popular initiatives, like digitizing the Library of Congress' collections and sharing its wealth of literary material with the public, simply will not happen.

We cannot balance the budget by freezing the legislative branch's budget. In fact, we cannot even balance the budget by freezing all of discretionary spending. So we do have some fundamental differences about our Nation's priorities, but those fall outside the scope of this committee. I am not going to dwell on them.

This year's appropriation bills mark the beginning of what in the past has been an abstract budget debate, but we are now getting into the real consequences of a budget resolution that I think is insufficient, and we are going to have to address those 302(b) allocations in the future.

Again, specifically, the legislative branch appropriation bill is a fair bill. I think it is reasonable and sustainable, at least for this year.

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I wanted to say, Mr. Chairman, that we have a lot of good things in this bill. We had some good subcommittee- and committee-level debates and a number of amendments. One such amendment actually encourages Members of Congress to lease or use hybrid fuel-efficiency cars. This amendment was debated and offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. WAMP) and successfully put on it. He is here, and he is going to address that.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. WAMP).

Mr. WAMP. Mr. Chairman, I thank the chairman for yielding me this time, and I thank both the ranking member and the chairman for the work they do. Having served on this subcommittee for 6 years, I know the important work that they do.

Mr. Chairman, the American people probably do not pay a whole lot of attention to this bill, because a lot of it is inside the Beltway, but I know the American people are keenly aware of the rising cost of gasoline and the need for our country to be independent of energy sources and not so dependent on oil. And I do not want to encourage any extra government spending whatsoever.

A number of Members either take a mileage reimbursement for official travel, which is totally permissible under the rules, or they lease a vehicle at government expense. And in either case, this resolution encourages Members to use hybrid electric or alternatively fueled vehicles. Why? Because the American people expect us to lead. And a lot of them are asking what are we going to do about our dependence on foreign oil; what can we do to lower our cost of fuel.

In the past, the options have not been too good. But this fall, in this country, there are at least eight hybrid electric vehicles in the marketplace for American consumers, including domestic vehicles, from pickup trucks to SUVs, where you can double your gas mileage. The new Ford Escape, and I have one on order, will get 38 miles per gallon. It is a small SUV. Throw your kids in the back, or if you are taking staff around the district, drive one of those. Or even a foreign model, if your constituents like that or will allow that. Some will not. But you have all the options, and we want to encourage this.

The resolution simply says it is the sense of the House of Representatives that Members of the House who use vehicles in traveling for official or representational purposes, including Members who lease vehicles for which the lease payments are made using funds provided under the Members' Representational Allowance, are encouraged to use hybrid electric or alternatively fueled vehicles whenever possible, as the use of these vehicles will help to move our Nation forward toward the use of a hydrogen fuel cell vehicle and reduce our dependence on oil.

We need to accelerate the transition to a hydrogen economy away from a petroleum-based economy, clean up the air, secure our liberty, and Members should lead by example. As the cochairman of the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Caucus here in the House, the Republican cochairman, with my colleague, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. UDALL), we have over 228 to 232 Members, well over a majority of this body are members, we encourage the use of these hybrid electric vehicles, and it begins with us. Lead by example.

If my colleagues are taking the mileage or if you lease a vehicle, we encourage you to use these alternative-fuel vehicles, double your gas mileage, and move us towards a secure energy future. I commend the chairman for including this important language.

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I yield 7 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN).

Mr. SHERMAN. I thank the gentleman from Virginia for yielding me this time, Mr. Chairman.

I rise to deal with one aspect of this bill, and that is that it does not impose, as I would like it to, a $25,000 limit on the amount of postage spent by any one committee in any one year. That would be $50,000 a Congress or $25,000 as an annual limit.

After all, in the 107th Congress, encompassing 2002 and 2001, the average amount spent by the highest-spending committee was $6,807. In fact, in looking at the entire history of this House, I cannot find an example where any committee prior to the 108th Congress ever needed to spend more than $10,000 on postage.

A $25,000 limit seems like it provides plenty of room, particularly for a country that faces the kinds of fiscal problems that we face. And yet, why would I even think it necessary in a House where no committee had until the 108th Congress spent even $10,000 on postage, why would I think it necessary to come to this floor to seek a $25,000 annual limit? The reason is that

one committee, and this could be the opening of Pandora's box, decided in the 108th Congress to engage in a program of mass mailings in selected Members' districts.

That committee, in the 107th Congress, spent an average of $2,483, that is less than $2,500 on postage. But in the 108th Congress, they came before the Committee on House Administration and asked for $250,000 for postage for 1 year, and in fact asked for $.5 million on postage for the 2 years making up the 108th Congress.

So think of this. This is a 4,445 percent increase over what that same committee had requested for the prior Congress. But if that does not bother the fiscal conservatives in this room, reflect that it was a 9,968 percent increase over what that committee actually spent in the prior Congress.

Now, in fact, the Committee on House Administration did not provide for this one authorizing committee to have $.5 million for postage, but they did provide $50,000 for 2003 and another $50,000 for 2004. And this committee in fact spent $49,587 on postage just in one invoice in December 2003. And, in fact, in order to have something to mail for $49,000 in postage, they spent $40,000 printing the material that was mailed, just to send out material into a very few Members' districts.

Now, the affected Members did not, to my knowledge, have any objection to the contents. But mark my words, this is the beginning. If we pass this legislative approps bill with no limits, then this one authorizing committee may come and ask for $.5 million on postage for the 109th Congress. They may ask for $2 million or $3 million in postage. Other committees may get in on the deal, and then we may have a circumstance where the Chair of each committee has a multi-million dollar postage slush fund to do mailings in the different Members' districts.

Now, how is this different for the Member communications that we are all aware of? Because we all mail into our own districts newsletters, et cetera. Well, first, each Member gets a limited MRA. In contrast, the amount that could be provided under this leg approps bill for a single committee to do mass mailings is unlimited.

Secondly, and I think this is the most important difference, every mailing says published and mailed and printed at government expense, so that the recipients of the mailing can hold the author accountable. If I am sending out useless mailings to my constituents, they can circle that line and remember it when the ballot box is in play.

In contrast, if a Chair mails into my district or mails into another Member's district, and the recipients of that mailing think that it is useless, that it is highly political, that it is propaganda, that it is on a subject they are not interested in, what recourse do they have?

I guess they could pick up and move to the district of the Chair who sent out the mailing. But assuming they are unwilling to move from one part of the country to the other, they have no recourse. So once we have Chairs sending out mailings, these mailings have no check on them. There is no accountability, and there is no way for the recipients to register their belief that the mailing is useless.

In addition, MRA funds are distributed equally to Members regardless of their political party. But if we see $.5 million appropriated by this bill allocated to a particular chairman to do mass mailings into Members' districts, that will be entirely money for one party and zero for Members of the other party.

Now, I want to stress my proposal here is bipartisan. In fact, it is designed to affect Democratic chairmen. That is to say, it affects the 2005 fiscal year, when I hope and expect Democratic Chairs will be the ones that will be able to do these mass mailings. But I do not care whether it is Democrats or Republicans. We should not have mass mailings going out by Chairs. That is why I would like to enter into the RECORD a letter from the National Taxpayers Union and another from Citizens Against Government Waste.

□ 1815

Each of them says that we ought to limit to $25,000 a year as a first step the amount spent on postage by any committee. This marks the first time that any legislative proposal of mine has been formally endorsed by the National Taxpayers Union and by Citizens Against Government Waste.

I know that people will want to come to this floor and reflexively vote against any motion to recommit, at least members of the majority, but your vote determines whether you endorse opening Pandora's box to unlimited mailings.

NATIONAL TAXPAYERS UNION,
Alexandria, VA, July 12, 2004.

Hon. BRAD SHERMAN,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN SHERMAN: On behalf of the 350,000-member National Taxpayers Union (NTU), I am responding to your request for NTU's views on a proposal to limit each Committee's expenditure on postage to the sum of no more than $25,000 per year.

Even as overall postage and printing expenditures have declined from the $100 million-plus levels once seen in Congress 15 years ago, franking remains a source of fiscal and political interest to NTU. The already-generous limits governing the use of postage by House Members' personal offices were lifted in 1999, while new computer technologies have allowed lawmakers to maximize the impact of their mailings in ways that were not feasible as recently as ten years ago. Today, it is still possible for an incumbent House Member to spend as much on franking in a year as a challenger spends on his or her entire campaign. Rules regarding the content and proximity of mailings to elections only modestly offset this tremendous political advantage.

During our 15-year campaign on behalf of franking reform, NTU has focused on Member offices because they are the primary source of unsolicited mass mailings and associated expenditures. We were thus surprised to learn of a single Committee's FY 2005 postage request for $250,000 in the Legislative Branch Appropriations Bill.

NTU is greatly concerned over the prospect of any Committee in Congress receiving postage fundings in these amounts, as it would mark a significant expansion of the franking privilege that had traditionally been utilized in large part by Member offices. Such concern is irrespective of the immediate policy issue at hand or the parties involved. If the House sets a budget precedent now, taxpayers will very shortly face the unwelcome prospect of tens of millions in additional franking expenditures in future Congresses. Equally, important Americans would be forced to contend with a new set of issues affecting the balance of the political process.

Years of efforts from groups like NTU and reformers within Congress have yielded an improved, yet imperfect, franking disclosure process. Despite instances of poor recordkeeping, inadequate disclosure, and overly-permissive rules, today constituents at least have limited access to basic franking information—giving them a chance to hold House Members politically accountable for the unsolicited mass mailings they send into their districts at taxpayer expense. Allowing such a practice at the Committee level, where ties between Members and constituents are less direct, would undermine even this limited progress.

It is especially galling that Congress would even consider an additional taxpayer-financed expansion of the franking privilege under the current fiscal and political circumstances. Amidst FY 2005 budget deficit estimates approaching $400 billion, and a campaign finance law that further hamstrings political challengers, allowing such a huge postage funding request for any Committee will further reinforce Congress's reputation as an institution incapable of self-restraint.

Given the historical patterns of Committee expenditures, a $25,000 annual limit on postage for each Committee is more than adequate for any legitimate communication needs. Seemingly minor budget requests such as the one before Congress now can have major consequences for taxpayers in the not-too-distant future. For this reason alone, the House of Representatives can and should restrict Committee postage expenditures—and a $25,000 annual limit is a reasonable first step.

Please feel free to contact me should you have an additional questions regarding our position.

Sincerely,

PETE SEPP,
Vice President for Communications.

COUNCIL FOR CITIZENS
AGAINST GOVERNMENT WASTE,
July 12, 2004.

Representative BRAD SHERMAN,
House of Representatives, Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE SHERMAN: The more than one million members and supporters of the Council for Citizens Against Government Waste would like to express their appreciation for your cost-saving effort to limit each Committee to spending $25,000 a year on postage.

Sincerely,

THOMAS SCHATZ,
President.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to respond to my friend from California a little bit.

Number one, this, as we all know, is an appropriation bill; and the proper place to deal with a franking issue, of course, would be on an authorizing bill. I hope that our friend is taking his concerns to the proper committee, which would be the Committee on House Administration.

But I also wanted to say, in the spirit of good government, what I would like to see is Members of Congress and the institution going out into America, into the States a little bit more. As I understand it, talking to some committee chairmen, they actually use this franking privilege in their field hearings.

I sit on the Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies. I used to be on the Committee on Agriculture. What is more important than our food policy out there? If we had the Committee on Agriculture going out and talking about the dairy program or the peanut program or whatever, sending out letters to people to say, come to this congressional hearing that is going to be in your neighborhood, come raise Cain with your Congressman, I think that would be a good thing.

Certainly the Committee on Ways and Means, the taxing committee, my folks down in the little briar patch that I represent would love to go out and, frankly, raise hell with everybody that writes our tax policy.

Then there is the Committee on Energy and Commerce. They control telecommunications. We passed several years ago the slamming bill. That is something that I know has affected a lot of people. If there was an opportunity for the common, everyday citizen to go to a field hearing and raise Cain about how slamming was done on their phone service, I think that would be a healthy thing.

I am not sure that a $25,000 limit would be good enough to have people come, but I think what we need is more sunshine and more public input. That is why I am hesitant to accept the $25,000 limit just on face value because I know that these notices are important. But I also know, Mr. Chairman, that the committees who use these have them signed off by the minority and the majority party and so there is a system of fairness.

Again, in terms of fiscal restraint, I want to congratulate the gentleman from California for getting an endorsement from the National Taxpayers Union, but I also want to say that this bill, we are very happy to say, is flat funding, if not a little less than last year. So we are with him at least on that angle.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD), who has come up through the ranks as a former staffer and worked very hard and continues to work hard on staff quality of life. One of the issues that we are facing, we lose lots of staff here on Capitol Hill. The gentleman from Illinois has worked tirelessly to protect the quality of life for somebody who works here.

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for yielding me this time and for his leadership on the Subcommittee on Legislative. I certainly rise in support.

I would ask Members, after reviewing the amendments, to vote against the amendments. I think the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON) have worked very hard on this bill to make sure it is the right mix of staffing for the House of Representatives, the right mix of staffing for our law enforcement personnel, the right mix for the Library of Congress and for all those who serve the Members of Congress.

I know Members like to take the opportunity from time to time when they have a complaint maybe against another Member or against another committee or somebody else to come to the floor and use this bill to try and carry out some kind of a complaint or a gripe that they have. This is not the bill to do it. I would urge Members to vote against the amendments that are being proposed.

As a member of the subcommittee, I have worked very hard over the last several years on the issue of improving the quality of life for employees of the House of Representatives, particularly as it relates to their health care, particularly as it relates to the issue of whether our employees of the House of Representatives should have some kind of health fitness center similar to the kind of center that we have for Members where staff, who work here pretty much 24/7 when we are in session, can have the opportunity to go and to work out and to keep healthy. We have accomplished that goal.

I want to thank the gentleman from Georgia for his leadership in providing the funding in this bill and also the gentleman from Virginia, who obviously represents a lot of the employees, for his leadership for including the money so that we can begin, once this bill is signed by the President, to have the construction of a health fitness center for our employees for the House of Representatives.

This is an important issue. There is a lot of talk about obesity and health care and how do we all stay healthy. Working around here is very, very demanding. I can think of no other opportunity that we can provide to our hardworking employees than an opportunity to have a place to stay healthy, to be healthy and to have it right here on the premises.

I thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KIRK), too, for his leadership. As a former staffer, he also worked hard around here and continues to work hard on behalf of the staff.

I just want to say a word about the people that make all of us look good, the people that are gathered here in the House Chamber, the Parliamentarians, the lawyers, the doctors, the police, the law enforcement who work here 24/7 to make sure that we are well protected, that we are well taken care of, that every word that we speak is taken down. There are so many people that work in the House complex that average, ordinary citizens, certainly taxpayers, never see, but they help make this institution what it is, the great institution that it is, in terms of our ability to do our work and pass bills and make new laws and solve problems in the country. We could not do it without the many wonderful employees that work so hard on behalf of the Members of the House of Representatives. My hat is off to them.

This bill is the bill that takes care to make sure they have the equipment, make sure they have the information and the means to do their jobs. In supporting this bill and asking Members to look carefully at the amendments and rejecting the amendments because of the good work that has gone on by the chair and the ranking member, I say to the employees of the House of Representatives, job well done, and this is our way of saying thank you. I appreciate the opportunity to serve on this committee.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KIRK), another distinguished member of the subcommittee who is also a former staffer, as the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD) said, and has worked on not just the issue of quality of life for staffers and the gym but also one that has to do with our security around here, the Capitol Hill police, the use of horses, among other things.

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Chairman, I thank the distinguished chairman and the ranking minority member for their strong leadership.

As a former staffer, the construction of a staff gym is one I am very proud to see move forward. Congress spends a lot of money each year on programs to promote physical fitness and to fight obesity. Finally, the Congress is doing that right here. This legislation includes a $3 million fund for the construction of a staff gym located in the Rayburn garage. Along with my colleague, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD), who has advocated this for so long, we have finally begun the process of the construction of a staff health and fitness center because it is time to give our staffs the same opportunities that Members have right here.

We employ over 17,000 people in the legislative branch. Any employer of that size in Chicago would have long provided such facilities to their employees. The staff gym gives men and women who serve here in the House the opportunity to be fitter and be able to better handle the stress of their jobs, handling the long hours and under sometimes low-paying conditions working for our constituents.

I want to thank the subcommittee staff, especially Liz Dawson for her work in making this a reality.

During the subcommittee markup, another issue was addressed to halt funding for the Capitol Police mounted horse unit. I offered an amendment to deny funding because of fiscal constraints in the face of security threats. It is imperative that we invest funds in protecting the Capitol and spend them wisely. I applaud the Capitol Police for their cooperative work with law enforcement agencies to minimize the threat but do not believe that investing taxpayer dollars in 18th century technology represents fiscal responsibility.

We should not fund a program that has so many unresolved issues. A perfect example is the issue of quartering horses on the Capitol grounds. Last year, the committee was told the horses would be using Park Police stables on the far side of the mall. At very little expense, they were supposed to be housed close to the Capitol complex. However, that is not happening.

Currently, the Capitol Police horses are stabled at a Bureau of Land Management facility on Gunston Road in Lorton, Virginia, 1 hour's drive with trailers from the Capitol. The Architect of the Capitol does not have a current cost estimate for constructing a stable or handling manure on the new location, but the K–9 kennel construction cost over $1 million, and one could easily hazard a guess that horse stables would cost even more than the K–9 facility that we have built. If the program continues, Congress would have to pay for use of the BLM facilities or constructing an entirely new horse stables and waste disposal system at taxpayer expense. By blocking funding for a new mounted unit, the committee has taken the action to save taxpayers approximately $1.8 million over the next 10 years.

Mr. Chairman, I urge adoption of this legislation. I thank the ranking minority member and the chairman for their work on this legislation.

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN).

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Chairman, just to quickly respond to the gentleman from Georgia who argues that these mass mailings by committees are justified.

If we do not have a limit, they will grow. What was a $500,000 request this time may be a $1 million request or a $2 million request for the 109th Congress. Never before the 108th Congress has any committee ever needed more than $10,000.

The idea of having a field hearing as a reason to mail out a districtwide mailing, or several districtwide mailings, is relatively absurd. If the field hearing is really of interest, the press will publicize that field hearing; and people will come if they are interested. A field hearing has never in the history of this House up until this Congress been used as an excuse for mass propaganda into a Member's district; and if the gentleman thinks it should be, that is a revolutionary change. It is not one I would like to see in the 109th Congress.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Chairman, I want to say to my friend from California, I understand he has a motion to recommit, and we will debate it a little bit more then, but I certainly think there is a lot to say about it. Again, one of our things is that the Committee on House Administration needs to be doing the authorizing on that.

Mr. Chairman, this bill does have a lot of good things in it. It includes one thing that I did not mention, that we are asking the Architect of the Capitol to contract out the management of the Capitol power plant as a private entity. We are doing that in the spirit of how can we lead the way to continue to make the Capitol a little more efficient.

We are also asking for a review of the legislative branch agencies. Some of the heads of these agencies are appointed by the President. Some have a 10-year term. Some have a 14-year term. Some have the approval of the Senate. Some have the approval of the Senate and the House. We just think that it is time to review some of these things. They have a different retirement program.

There are a lot of proposals out there. The Capitol Hill Police Chief, for example, for whom I have a lot of respect, has suggested that we build a wall around the U.S. Capitol. The gentleman from California (Mr. FARR), among others, has made sure that we have language in our bill to say that we do not want a wall around the U.S. Capitol compound. We want people to be able to get in here.

We have taken a look at everything under our jurisdiction in a very serious way and just asked the questions, can we do it better? I will submit many of the changes that we have recommended for the record.

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

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I will be the last speaker before we move to amendments, unless the gentleman from Georgia would like to offer some concluding remarks.

Again, I will summarize what I said earlier. It is a fair bill. I thank the gentleman from Georgia very much. I want to thank Liz Dawson of the majority staff. The Democratic staff person has been Tom Forhan, who has done an excellent job, and Tim Aiken, my legislative director.

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I have got a whole list here, and I ought to mention them. Chuck Turner deserves mentioning, Kathy Rohan, Clelia Alvarado, and I have already mentioned the others, and Heather McNatt. I thank them.

Again, I want to say a word about something that the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) mentioned, this business of the mounted police on the Capitol. I wholly agree with the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) and the chairman. I do not think this is a necessary adjunct to our Capitol Police. I think it is a strange and illogical addition, in fact, and particularly when I learned that the Capitol Police have to spend what must be a good hour driving down to the BLM property on Gunston Road. I was involved with the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS) in setting that aside for the Bureau of Land Management. I am very much familiar with it. But I never imagined it would be housing horses that had to be deployed on the Capitol grounds. So they pick up the horses. They schlep the poor horses all the way back to the Capitol for a few hours, I guess, galloping around, and then they schlep them all the way back to this BLM property down in Lorton, Virginia, down Route 1. It is congested; so it is bumper to bumper. That is almost inhumane in itself, but it is certainly inefficient and a strange use of our resources. I am glad that that was eliminated.

There are a number of things that we chose not to fund, but I think in subsequent years are probably going to have to be funded. As I said, I know a .1 percent cut in the legislative branch appropriations bill is not reasonable in the long term, although we can clearly get along with it this year.

I do hope we will restore the Open World Leadership program in conference. We do have dental and vision benefits for the people who work here in the legislative branch, and that is an appropriate thing to do, and it is largely consistent with what we do with the executive branch. The gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT) is going to have an amendment with regard to science and technology. We do need a resource to avail ourselves of when it comes to scientific and technological issues which change every day, and we really do need a good deal of expertise to assist us in that. But he is going to have an amendment to address that issue.

With that, I think we can go on to the amendments, and I suspect shortly we will have a full complement of House Members to be able to vote.

Mr. NUSSLE. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to speak on H.R. 4755, the Legislative Branch Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2005. This is the sixth bill we are considering pursuant to the 302(b) allocations adopted by the Appropriations Committee on June 9. I am pleased to report that it is consistent with the levels established in the conference report to S. Con. Res. 95, the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2005, which the House adopted as its fiscal blueprint on May 19. Conforming with a long practice—under which each chamber of Congress determines its own needs—appropriations for the other body are not included in the reported bill.

H.R. 4755 provides $2.751 billion in new budget authority, which is within the 302(b) allocation to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Legislative and outlays of $2.92

billion. The bill contains no emergency-designated new budget authority, nor does it include rescissions of previously enacted appropriations.

Accordingly, the bill complies with section 302(f) of the Budget Act, which prohibits consideration of bills in excess of an appropriations subcommittee's 302(b) allocation of budget authority and outlays established in the budget resolution.

I commend Chairman KINGSTON's remarks in the accompanying report underscoring the fact that with record deficits, a war on terrorisms, troops on the ground in Afghanistan and Iraq, the budget request from agencies of the legislative branch cannot continue to be presented with requested increases as high as 50 percent. I welcome his efforts and the efforts of other members of the Appropriations Committee as we try to hold discretionary spending to a reasonable level.

In reading the final version of this bill I noted that the accompanying report directs the General Accounting Office to review the statutory responsibility and overlap of the jurisdiction of joint committees of Congress, the Congressional Budget Office and the Congressional Research Service. We should pause before we ask one congressional agency to examine the jurisdiction of other congressional agencies and committees of Congress. Also, it might not be appropriate for GAO to assume this role when it may duplicate the functions of some of the agencies it is being charged with evaluating.

With that reservation, I express my support for H.R. 4755.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to announce that I am going to vote for H.R. 4755, the Legislative Branch Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 2005, for one simple reason: It provides enough resources for the legislative branch agencies to fulfill their responsibilities to the American people during the coming fiscal year.

First, I would like to thank Subcommittee Chairman KINGSTON and especially Ranking member MORAN for all of their hard work on this legislation. Mr. MORAN and Tim Aiken of his staff, as well as Tom Forhan of Mr. OBEY's staff, worked closely with my staff and me on a number of issues in this bill and this cooperation is much appreciated.

In the aggregate, the bill holds legislative branch spending, excluding the Senate items that are not before us, at $2.4 million below the level of new budget authority provided for fiscal 2004. Despite holding at last year's spending level, the Committee on Appropriations has managed to fund the agencies' mandatory increases, including an expected 3.5 percent Federal wage adjustment, and avoid requiring agencies to lay off employees. The Committee was also able to achieve significant savings, year-on-year, because it has benefited from non-recurring items from last year, deferred new capital projects and delayed others. This is appropriate, since our Federal budget deficit has reached mammoth proportions in just 4 years' time. It is hard for me to imagine that when I first came to this House, in January 1999, the Federal budget was in surplus. Today, our Federal deficit has reached massive proportions, eclipsing those considered horrendous in 1990 when the first President Bush was in office. The legislative branch must expect to participate in efforts to reduce that deficit, and this bill strikes an appropriate balance in this regard.

While I will support the bill, I want to highlight several matters of interest to me as the ranking minority member of the Committee on House Administration, which has authorizing jurisdiction over several accounts funded in the measure, and others.

First, I join with the Appropriations Committee in commending the staff of the numerous entities who helped to make last month's state funeral for President Reagan an occasion of which the entire legislative branch could be proud. Without the tireless efforts of countless individuals in the office of the Architect of the Capitol, the Capitol Police, the Government Printing Office, the Capitol Guide Service, the Attending Physician's Office, as well as the House and Senate leadership, committees, and others, Americans could not have paid proper respects to their former President. On behalf of my constituents in Connecticut, I wish to thank all of the dedicated legislative branch employees who made that funeral possible.

I also thank the Appropriations Committee for its report language encouraging legislative agencies with respect to their employees' use of the transit-subsidy program. Wherever we can encourage Federal employees in the Washington area, and elsewhere, to use mass transit, we can not only clean the air, reduce traffic congestion, and reduce our dependence on foreign oil, I believe we can make our employees more productive. The program works here in the House and elsewhere, and I am pleased the Appropriations Committee expressed its continuing support.

At total funding of $1.1 billion, including the House office buildings, the bill provides sufficient funds for the people's House. I am delighted that the Appropriations Committee has found $3 million to establish a new in-house fitness facility for staff, made a reality through the efforts of the gentlemen from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD) and Virginia (Mr. MORAN), both of whom are devoted to the health and welfare of all our dedicated employees. I am also pleased that the Committee eliminated the prohibition on exploring options for developing a supplemental vision and dental benefit for Members and employees. Many House staff have expressed interest in the availability of such benefits, for which they would pay.

I appreciate the work of the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE), who recently discovered that the chief administrative officer was improperly making prepayments for certain Web-related services, Federal law generally prohibits pre-payments for Federal services, and the CAO has moved swiftly to address the problem in his Finance Office.

Finally, I hope the sense-of-the-House language included by the Committee at the behest of the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. WAMP) and the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR), encouraging the use of hybrid and alternative-fueled vehicles wherever possible, will indeed spur the use of these cutting-edge technologies so important to our Nation's future.

This bill provides adequate funds for the Capitol Police for the coming year, and eliminates funding for its new mounted unit. Mounted patrols may make sense for the U.S. Park Police, which must operate in the many thousands of forested acres of Rock Creek Park in northwest Washington. But in my judgment, horses, though perhaps harkening back to the "Charge of the Light Brigade," make little sense in the comparatively small, confined, clean and manicured urban park that is the Capitol grounds, given the animals' unavoidable by-products. I also agree with the Committee, which included language prohibiting the study or construction of a fence around the Capitol grounds at this time. The people's House must not, even symbolically, erect a barrier between itself and the people we represent.

I am glad this bill authorizes the Office of Compliance to institute a student-loan repayment program. Similar programs, including those established recently in the House and Senate, are designed to help agencies attract and retain qualified employees, and the Compliance Office's needs for talented staff are no different.

The Library of Congress will receive adequate funding overall under the bill, enabling it to continue fulfilling its important missions. I appreciate the Committee's decision to provide level funding of $14.8 million for the National Audio-Visual Conservation Center in Culpeper, VA. I hope the relevant committees will take whatever action may be required in order to reauthorize the National Film Preservation Board and the National Film Preservation Foundation, so this important work can continue unabated. The pending bill does not include the $500,000 provided for these activities last year, because the authorizations have expired. There is ample time to reauthorize it before this bill becomes law.

I am pleased that the Committee also provided adequate funding for the coming year for the Government Printing Office, which has faced financial trouble. Our House Administration Committee convened an oversight hearing on April 28. We heard from the new Public Printer, Bruce James, who has exciting ideas for how GPO, which has made great strides in the last decade, can continue moving forward in the electronic age. Labor witnesses expressed concerns about Mr. James's plans, and about spending at the agency, which must run like a business and generally earn its keep. I hope the differing views expressed by Mr. James and labor at our hearing, and thereafter, reflect a misunderstanding of each other's goals for the agency in these challenging times.

Finally, the Appropriations Committee report includes several far-reaching assignments for the General Accounting Office, directing that agency to examine every legislative branch agency in search of savings and efficiencies, including by "outsourcing" of agency functions where appropriate. While I am willing to consider every reasonable way to save the public money in these times of massive Federal budget deficits caused largely by the policies of the present Administration, "outsourcing" is hardly reasonable if the term means transferring the performing of inherently governmental functions overseas. I trust the Committee does not mean to suggest, for example, that government printing should be performed overseas.

I thank the Appropriations Committee for its work, and look forward to working with the Committee on these and other matters in the months remaining in this session.

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIRMAN. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

No amendment to the bill shall be in order except those printed in House Report 108–590. Each amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, debatable for the time specified in the report, equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in House Report 108–590.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. HOLT

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 1 offered by Mr. HOLT:

Page 20, line 7, after the dollar amount insert ''(reduced by $15,000,000)''.

Page 33, line 21, after the dollar amount insert ''(reduced by $15,000,000)''.

Page 38, line 4, after the dollar amount insert ''(increased by $30,000,000)''.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to House Resolution 707, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

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

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

My amendment would add $30 million to the salaries and expenses account of the General Accounting Office for the development of Scientific and Technology Assessment. This is something that is vital to us here in Congress. It would meet a bipartisan need of Congress to receive more objective expert and timely advice on the scientific and technological aspects of the issues before us. My amendment would avoid creating any new government agency or bureaucracy, but it would provide Congress with reputable and partial timely advice and analysis of emerging scientific and technological issues.

This is something that was, until 10 years ago, offered by an in-house agency. That is no longer available to us, but the GAO has begun on a pilot basis assuming some of this need and providing us with scientific and technological assessment. Not to have that today is hampering us in doing our work. So this certainly should be added to the appropriation.

It would enable Congress to understand the scientific and technological aspects of current and future legislative choices, be they in homeland security or national defense or medicine or telecommunications, agriculture, transportation, computer science. This is not just science for science's sake. This is to look at those scientific and technological aspects that are present in virtually everything we do here in Congress.

When the Office of Technology Assessment was operating until a decade ago, they produced studies in such areas as colorectal cancer screening, teachers in technology, Super Fund actions, wage record information system, defense of medicine and medical malpractice, grain dust explosion, policy with regard to antibiotic-resistant bacteria. The GAO in the last couple of years, picking up on this need that is currently unmet, has begun with some studies in the areas, for example, of biometrics, protecting against cyberattack. They have under way studies looking at smuggling of weapons of mass destruction and containing forest fires.

I do not think there is anyone in this body who could argue that we do not need to be well informed in such areas. Whether it is aviation safety or AIDS education or Alzheimer's disease or testing in American schools, we need technological assessment. This legislation, this amendment to this appropriations bill, would provide that through the organ of the General Accounting Office.

Because there has been resistance to reviving OTA, the Office of Technology Assessment, as it was, a number of us have been exploring other approaches, recognizing that every year that goes by without this capacity for in-house technological assessment represents lost opportunities, opportunities to save lives, to protect our towns and cities, and to commercialize new discoveries. This amendment will provide that.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Washington State (Mr. MCDERMOTT).

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

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Chairman, when I came to Congress a number of years ago, I served on the OTA with the gentleman from New York (Mr. HOUGHTON) and the bipartisan group that made the decisions. There were four Democrats, four Republicans from the Senate and the House. It was not a partisan committee. It was a committee set up to give us good advice.

A decision was made in 1994 to disband that, and we have since that point been really operating more on ideology I think sometimes than on real scientific bases. We need that. We appropriate billions of dollars on issues like treatment of AIDS and what are appropriate kinds of energy questions, and we have no knowledge except for the prejudices of one or another Member about what it is. It is very helpful to have a nonpartisan group to whom we can hand that problem to and say look, at this issue, tell us where we can make the best decisions.

And I commend the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT) for doing this. I think that we need it, and it is time that we get back on a scientific footing in this Congress.

Virtually every issue facing America today has roots in science and technology.

From battling terrorism, to alternative fuels, from fighting HIV/AIDS, to stem cell research, not a day goes by that we don't rely on science and technology.

Yet, virtually every day, critical decisions involving science and technology are being made using a hodge-podge of data and opinion from well-intended groups. They often lack the resources and scientific expertise to provide the in-depth analysis we need.

There's nothing wrong with opinion, but it is not a substitute for empirical data and analysis.

We've got too much at stake as a nation to let things continue this way.

Congress needs credible data. The nation needs confidence that we are making decisions based on evidence and not conjecture.

Today the General Accounting Office provides independent, bi-partisan reports to Congress.

It's time science and technology gets the same level of attention.

The GAO is a great working model, so let's use it as the home for a Center for Science and Technical Assessment.

We can't hope we get it right when we make a decision.

There's far too much at stake to do anything but recognize we have a problem and a solution is at hand.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to certainly thank the gentleman from New Jersey for bringing this up, as he has spoken to me many times about it. However, I am unable to support it at this time, but I wanted to compliment him. I understand in his district there is a popular bumper sticker that says: ''My congressman is a rocket scientist,'' and I think probably the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT) and maybe the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BURNS), who is our one member of the Fulbright Scholarship Alumni Association, have some of the greatest intellectual capacity of this body.

However, some background in terms of the Office of Technology Assessment. In 1995 on a bipartisan level, we eliminated it, and the belief at that time was that there were other committees that we could turn to to get technology studies and technology assessment. Some of these, for example, are the National Academy of Sciences, the National Academy of Engineering, the Institute of Medicine, and the National Research Council. All of them have hundreds of people who are technically educated. And then in addition to that, there are 3,273 people at the General Accounting Office and 729 at the Congressional Research Service. We have not suffered because of the loss of technology assessment. It is perhaps true that we could rearrange some of the food on the plate and make sure that it does not get shuffled to the back burner; but if my colleagues think about it, Mr. Chairman, we actually have thousands of people out there

doing studies, and we just need to make sure that this does not fall through the cracks.

As a result of eliminating the Office of Technology Assessment, we have saved $274 million, which is serious money in tight budget times, and that is money that we can put into many other worthy causes; and, of course, that is what the debate is all about.

In terms of the specifics of the Holt amendment, it reduces the Architect's office $15 million and the printing office another $15 million; and the problem with that is in terms of the Architect, we are actually almost 13 percent below their budget request. If we did cut them an additional $15 million, it would be a 19 percent reduction, which would result in the RIF, or the reduction in force, of about 67 people, and this comes from the Architect's office; and it would slow down a number of the projects that they are working on. And goodness knows, one of the projects that we want to get finished as a committee is the Capitol Visitors Center. We want to get that done as quickly as possible. A reduction of 67 people could hurt making those deadlines.

In terms of the printing office, we have reduced this account by about 2 percent below last year's level. If we accept the Holt amendment, it would result in an additional cut of 17 percent. And these are things that have to be done anyhow, CONGRESSIONAL RECORDS, bills, resolutions, amendments, hearing volumes and reports and so forth; and that is what the printing office does with that.

So with those words, Mr. Chairman, I urge Members to reject the Holt amendment.

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the Holt amendment to create the Center for Scientific and Technical Assessment.

In this day and age it is imperative that Members of Congress understand technology and the rapidly changing world of innovative advances. But what we really need is fair and balanced information to make those decisions.

This new initiative is a bipartisan office that will quickly respond to Congress and our inquiries into new technology. This office will provide Congress with the basic on how the technology works, how new technology integrates with current policy, how the new technology will affect business.

This office is vitally important because if Congress makes the wrong decision or advances the wrong technology we could set our country back a few years. We could hurt business and let our international competitors take over a technology sector. We could slow innovation and hurt what is still one of our greatest economic engines which is the research and development of new technology.

I ask my colleagues to support the Center for Scientific and Technical Assessment so that we are all educated when we make decisions on technology and technology policy.

I ask my colleagues to support the Holt amendment.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT).

The question was taken; and the Chairman announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT) will be postponed.

It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in House Report 108–590.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. HEFLEY

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 2 offered by Mr. HEFLEY:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following new section:

SEC. _____. Each amount appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act that is not required to be appropriated or otherwise made available by a provision of law is hereby reduced by 1 percent.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to House Resolution 707, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HEFLEY) and a Member opposed each will control 10 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HEFLEY).

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Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today, first of all, to congratulate the gentleman from Georgia (Chairman KINGSTON) and the ranking member, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN), for crafting a bill that actually spends less money than it did last year. My amendment is not in any way intended to slight the chairman or ranking member. They are good friends and work hard at this, and they have done in many respects an excellent job. I know it is a difficult task to draft, and I want to express my appreciation for their hard work.

However, I am going to offer again, as I have on many of the other appropriations bills, an amendment to cut the bill by 1 percent. I know in committee how it works. In committee, it is difficult to get these bills out, and you have to get them out. So you make compromises, and you give a little here and you give a little there, and they usually come out, in my opinion, at least at a higher figure than is desirable if we are serious about trying to balance the budget.

So we do the best we can in committee and bring it to the floor, and I am asking for us to consider cutting one penny on every dollar so we can move towards that elusive idea of a balanced budget. If we would do just this 1 percent on each of the appropriations bills, it would have a tremendous impact on moving towards that balanced budget.

Mr. Chairman, I encourage an aye vote.

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

The CHAIRMAN. Who seeks time in opposition?

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I want to say to my friend from Colorado that, as he knows, I always appreciate his ''let's go at it one more time and try to find some more money to reduce,'' and I have in the past supported a number of the Hefley amendments. This one, however, I find myself on the opposite side of and have to oppose.

The reason I have to oppose this, Mr. Chairman, is that we on the House control the House side. The Senate controls the Senate side. If we were to accept the Hefley amendment, this would tie one of our hands behind our back in terms of a level playing field with the Senate. This would result in a $10 million cut to the House.

One of the problems that we have as House Members is we often lose our staff to the Senate because they see bigger responsibility, bigger title, but most importantly, bigger salary, and we have to keep our salary levels up in order to maintain good people on the House side. That alone makes me say I think we have to hold off on this.

There are other reductions that would come from this bill, I think approximately $27 million total, so another $17 million would come out of the Architect and the Library of Congress and so forth. But we have already cut those from their requests, in many cases from their last year's funding level, and I am not sure we could get another $17 million out of there. If we could go back and find it, though, I would certainly support the Hefley amendment, but at this point we are not able to do so.

I want to point out one example. We are trying to privatize the power plant, which we think it would be a good thing in terms of streamlining the Office of the Architect. Things like that we are doing in the spirit of fiscal restraint, and we are going to continue on that pathway. But, unfortunately, at this time we have to reject his amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN).

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I do rise in opposition to the amendment as well, although I share the very deep respect and warm regard for the author of the amendment.

I concede that 1 percent is not a whole lot of money in the scheme of

things, but the fact is that your own chairman has very skillfully already cut the spending in this bill.

As was said, this bill is already $395 million below what was requested, so I think we want to acknowledge and almost reward the committees when they do cut below last year's level. Imagine, it is below last year's appropriation level, and the fact is that it is as low as we can go, because if it goes any more, even a 1 percent cut will trigger reductions in our workforce.

We are also told it would compromise our plans to upgrade security, and it would slow down or cancel investments to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the legislative branch's operations.

It is based on two assumptions, which I think we are going to find are not entirely the case. One is that the large budget deficits in growth in Federal spending is the exclusive result of discretionary spending increases. That is not the case. And, two, that there is enough waste, fraud and abuse that a 1 percent cut could actually improve government efficiency. I think we are going to find that is not the case as well.

The fact is that discretionary spending is the one portion of the Federal budget that has grown the least and is subject to the greatest level of scrutiny and control by the Congress through our appropriations bills.

I have to say, we ought to be boasting about the fact that we have the most honest and professional public employee workforce in the world. I am proud of the people who toil long hours to serve our needs and ensure that this body operates efficiently and effectively. Any waste, fraud and abuse that exists is far more likely to be the result of conflicting, outdated or inconsistent Federal policies.

I cannot understand why we are spending taxpayer money on many other things that I would like us to look at, such as national roads and national forests. We encourage timber harvests and then cover the costs of the building of roads that do not necessarily have to be built and that cost the taxpayer a great deal of money. We have enormous agricultural support subsidies to any number of industries. In fact, there will be a number of programs in the next appropriations bill that we will consider, the agriculture bill, that we ought to look at, entitlement programs. But I do not think a 1 percent across-the-board cut to the workforce in the legislative branch is warranted at this time. I urge Members to reject the amendment.

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I cannot think of any two gentleman that I hate being on the opposite side of more than these two gentlemen, because they are so conscientious.

Let me say that I think there are ways that we can get at this 1 percent without doing all the damage that has been suggested. For instance, I have not used frank mailing in years. Maybe we do not need as big a frank mailing budget. I have never had my full complement of staff that they allow us to have. Maybe we do not need as many staff as they say we can have.

There are things like that that I think we could do to bring this budget down. I give several hundred thousand dollars each year back into the pot that I simply do not spend, because that is a budget that I can control. So if I mean what I say about balancing the budget, I feel I ought to try to control it. That has amounted to many millions of dollars over the time I have been here. So there are ways.

Mr. Chairman, I encourage an aye vote.

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

The CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HEFLEY).

The question was taken; and the Chairman announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HEFLEY) will be postponed.

SEQUENTIAL VOTES POSTPONED IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, proceedings will now resume on those amendments on which further proceedings were postponed in the following order: Amendment No. 1 offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT); and Amendment No. 2 offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HEFLEY).

The Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the time for the second electronic vote.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY HOLT

The CHAIRMAN. The pending business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The CHAIRMAN. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 115, noes 252, not voting 66, as follows:

[Roll No. 359]

AYES—115

Ackerman
Allen
Baca
Baldwin
Becerra
Bereuter
Berkley
Berman
Bishop (NY)
Boswell
Boucher
Brown (OH)
Capps
Cardin
Cardoza
Case
Chandler
Clay
Clyburn
Cooper
Crowley
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
DeFazio
DeGette
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Edwards
Emanuel
Etheridge
Evans
Filner
Gonzalez
Gordon
Green (TX)
Greenwood
Grijalva
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Hill
Holt
Honda
Hooley (OR)
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kelly
Kind
Kleczka
Kucinich
Lampson
Larsen (WA)
Leach
Lewis (GA)
Lofgren
Lynch
Marshall
Matheson
McCarthy (MO)
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNulty
Michaud
Miller (NC)
Mollohan
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Olver
Pallone
Payne
Pelosi
Price (NC)
Rangel
Rodriguez
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sandlin
Schakowsky
Schiff
Sherman
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Spratt
Stearns
Strickland
Stupak
Tauscher
Thompson (MS)
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Velázquez
Watson
Watt
Weiner
Woolsey
Wu

NOES—252

Abercrombie
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Baird
Ballenger
Barrett (SC)
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Beauprez
Berry
Biggert
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boyd
Bradley (NH)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Burgess
Burns
Buyer
Calvert
Camp
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Castle
Chabot
Chocola
Coble
Cole
Costello
Cox
Cramer
Crane
Crenshaw
Cubin
Culberson
Cummings
Cunningham
Davis (TN)
Davis, Jo Ann
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeLay
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Doolittle
Dreier
Duncan
Dunn
Ehlers
Emerson
English
Eshoo
Everett
Farr
Ferguson
Flake
Foley
Forbes
Ford
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Frost
Gallegly
Gerlach
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gingrey
Goode
Goodlatte
Granger
Graves
Green (WI)
Hall
Harris
Hart
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth
Hobson
Hoekstra
Holden
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Hyde
Issa
Istook
Jenkins
John
Johnson (CT)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Kennedy (MN)
Kennedy (RI)
Kildee
Kilpatrick
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Kline
Knollenberg
Kolbe
LaHood
Langevin
Lantos
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Lowey
Lucas (KY)
Lucas (OK)
Manzullo
Matsui
McCotter
McCrery
McHugh
McInnis
McKeon
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Mica
Millender-McDonald
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy
Murtha
Musgrave
Myrick
Nethercutt
Neugebauer
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nunes
Nussle
Oberstar
Obey
Ortiz
Osborne
Ose
Otter
Oxley
Pastor
Paul
Pearce
Pence
Peterson (MN)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Pombo
Pomeroy
Porter
Portman
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Regula
Rehberg
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher

Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Ryun (KS)
Saxton
Schrock
Scott (GA)
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Sherwood
Shimkus
Simmons
Simpson
Smith (MI)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Souder
Stenholm
Sullivan
Sweeney
Tancredo
Tanner
Tauzin
Taylor (MS)
Taylor (NC)
Terry
Thomas
Thompson (CA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Towns
Turner (OH)
Turner (TX)
Upton
Van Hollen
Visclosky
Walden (OR)
Walsh
Wamp
Waters
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wolf
Wynn
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—66

Andrews
Bachus
Baker
Bass
Bell
Bishop (UT)
Brown, Corrine
Burr
Burton (IN)
Capuano
Carson (IN)
Carson (OK)
Collins
Conyers
Delahunt
DeLauro
DeMint
Deutsch
Dicks
Dooley (CA)
Engel
Fattah
Feeney
Fossella
Frank (MA)
Garrett (NJ)
Gephardt
Goss
Gutierrez
Gutknecht
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hoeffel
Hostettler
Houghton
Isakson
Johnson, E. B.
Keller
Lee
Lipinski
Majette
Maloney
Markey
Meehan
Menendez
Miller, George
Moore
Owens
Pascrell
Peterson (PA)
Quinn
Sabo
Sanders
Scott (VA)
Shays
Shuster
Skelton
Stark
Tiahrt
Tierney
Toomey
Vitter
Waxman
Wexler
Whitfield
Wilson (SC)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN (during the vote). Members are advised there are 2 minutes remaining in this vote.

□ 1916

Mrs. MYRICK, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN and Mr. SMITH of Michigan changed their vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

Mr. BOSWELL, Mr. MOLLOHAN and Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California changed their vote from ''no'' to ''aye.''

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. HEFLEY

The CHAIRMAN. The pending business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HEFLEY) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The CHAIRMAN. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The CHAIRMAN. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 87, noes 278, not voting 68, as follows:

[Roll No. 360]

AYES—87

Akin
Barrett (SC)
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Beauprez
Bilirakis
Blackburn
Bradley (NH)
Brady (TX)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Burgess
Buyer
Cannon
Chabot
Chocola
Coble
Cooper
Cox
Crane
Cubin
Davis (TN)
Davis, Jo Ann
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
Diaz-Balart, M.
Doggett
Duncan
Edwards
Everett
Flake
Forbes
Franks (AZ)
Gibbons
Goode
Goodlatte
Graves
Green (TX)
Green (WI)
Hall
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Hensarling
Herger
Hooley (OR)
Hulshof
Jenkins
Jones (NC)
Kennedy (MN)
King (IA)
Lampson
Lewis (KY)
LoBiondo
Marshall
McCotter
McInnis
Mica
Miller (FL)
Moran (KS)
Musgrave
Myrick
Neugebauer
Norwood
Otter
Paul
Pence
Petri
Pitts
Ramstad
Rohrabacher
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Ryun (KS)
Schrock
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shadegg
Shimkus
Smith (MI)
Smith (WA)
Souder
Stearns
Stenholm
Tancredo
Tanner
Taylor (MS)
Wamp

NOES—278

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Alexander
Allen
Baca
Baird
Baldwin
Ballenger
Becerra
Bereuter
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd
Brady (PA)
Brown (OH)
Brown (SC)
Burns
Calvert
Camp
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Cardin
Cardoza
Carter
Case
Castle
Chandler
Clay
Clyburn
Cole
Costello
Cramer
Crenshaw
Crowley
Culberson
Cummings
Cunningham
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
DeGette
DeLay
Diaz-Balart, L.
Dingell
Doolittle
Doyle
Dreier
Dunn
Ehlers
Emanuel
Emerson
English
Eshoo
Etheridge
Evans
Farr
Ferguson
Filner
Foley
Ford
Frelinghuysen
Frost
Gallegly
Gerlach
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gingrey
Gonzalez
Gordon
Granger
Greenwood
Grijalva
Harman
Harris
Hart
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Herseth
Hill
Hobson
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hoyer
Hunter
Hyde
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Istook
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
John
Johnson (CT)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, Sam
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kelly
Kennedy (RI)
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
Kingston
Kirk
Kleczka
Kline
Knollenberg
Kolbe
Kucinich
LaHood
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Leach
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Linder
Lofgren
Lowey
Lucas (KY)
Lucas (OK)
Lynch
Manzullo
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (MO)
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McNulty
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Michaud
Millender-McDonald
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Mollohan
Moran (VA)
Murphy
Murtha
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Nethercutt
Ney
Northup
Nunes
Nussle
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Osborne
Ose
Pallone
Pastor
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Peterson (MN)
Pickering
Platts
Pombo
Pomeroy
Porter
Portman
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sandlin
Saxton
Schakowsky
Schiff
Scott (GA)
Serrano
Shaw
Sherman
Sherwood
Simmons
Simpson
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Snyder
Solis
Spratt
Strickland
Stupak
Sullivan
Sweeney
Tauscher
Tauzin
Taylor (NC)
Terry
Thomas
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Towns
Turner (OH)
Turner (TX)
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walden (OR)
Walsh
Waters
Watson
Watt
Weiner
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—68

Andrews
Bachus
Baker
Bass
Bell
Bishop (UT)
Brown, Corrine
Burr
Burton (IN)
Capuano
Carson (IN)
Carson (OK)
Collins
Conyers
Davis, Tom
Delahunt
DeLauro
DeMint
Deutsch
Dicks
Dooley (CA)
Engel
Fattah
Feeney
Fossella
Frank (MA)
Garrett (NJ)
Gephardt
Goss
Gutierrez
Gutknecht
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hoeffel
Hostettler
Houghton
Isakson
Johnson, E. B.
Keller
King (NY)
Lee
Lipinski
Majette
Maloney
Markey
Meehan
Menendez
Miller, George
Moore
Owens
Oxley
Pascrell
Peterson (PA)
Quinn
Sabo
Sanders
Scott (VA)
Shays
Shuster
Stark
Tiahrt
Tierney
Toomey
Vitter
Waxman
Wexler
Whitfield
Wilson (SC)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN (during the vote). Members are advised there are 2 minutes remaining in this vote.

□ 1925

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. BASS. Mr. Chairman, owing to weather-caused flight delays, I was regrettably absent on Monday, July 12, 2004, and consequently missed recorded votes numbered 359 and 360. Had I been present, I would have voted "no" and "aye" respectively on these votes.

The CHAIRMAN. There being no further amendments, under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS) having assumed the chair, Mr. LINDER, Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4755) making appropriations for the Legislative Branch for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2005, and for other purposes, pursuant to House Resolution 707, he reported the bill back to the House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.