Thomas
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Towns
Turner (OH)
Turner (TX)
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Vitter
Walden (OR)
Walsh
Wamp
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Wexler
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOES—32

Akin
Barrett (SC)
Bartlett (MD)
Beauprez
Chabot
Cooper
Cubin
Duncan
Feeney
Flake
Franks (AZ)
Garrett (NJ)
Green (WI)
Gutknecht
Hensarling
Hostettler
Jones (NC)
King (IA)
Manzullo
Miller (FL)
Myrick
Paul
Pence
Petri
Pitts
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Sensenbrenner
Shadegg
Smith (MI)
Stearns
Toomey

NOT VOTING—11

Boehlert
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Cannon
Gephardt
Hastings (FL)
Hoeffel
Meek (FL)
Nethercutt
Putnam
Tauzin
Weldon (FL)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

□ 1619

Mr. DEMINT changed his vote from ''no'' to ''aye.''

So the joint resolution was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FOLEY). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken tomorrow.

WELFARE REFORM EXTENSION ACT, PART VIII

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5149) to reauthorize the Temporary Assistance For Needy Families block grant program through March 31, 2005, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 5149

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Welfare Reform Extension Act, Part VIII''.

SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF THE TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM THROUGH MARCH 31, 2005.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Activities authorized by part A of title IV of the Social Security Act, and by sections 510, 1108(b), and 1925 of such Act, shall continue through March 31, 2005, in the manner authorized for fiscal year 2004, notwithstanding section 1902(e)(1)(A) of such Act, and out of any money in the Treasury of the United States not otherwise appropriated, there are hereby appropriated such sums as may be necessary for such purpose. Grants and payments may be made pursuant to this authority through the second quarter of fiscal year 2005 at the level provided for such activities through the second quarter of fiscal year 2004.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) SUPPLEMENTAL GRANTS FOR POPULATION INCREASES IN CERTAIN STATES.—Section 403(a)(3)(H)(ii) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 603(a)(3)(H)(ii)) is amended by striking ''September 30, 2004'' and inserting ''March 31, 2005''.

(2) CONTINGENCY FUND.—Section 403(b)(3)(C)(ii) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 603(b)(3)(C)(ii)) is amended by striking ''2004'' and inserting ''2005''.

(3) MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT.—Section 409(a)(7) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 609(a)(7)) is amended—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''or 2005'' and inserting ''2005, or 2006''; and

(B) in subparagraph (B)(ii), by striking ''2004'' and inserting ''2005''.

SEC. 3. EXTENSION OF THE NATIONAL RANDOM SAMPLE STUDY OF CHILD WELFARE AND CHILD WELFARE WAIVER AUTHORITY THROUGH MARCH 31, 2005.

Activities authorized by sections 429A and 1130(a) of the Social Security Act shall continue through March 31, 2005, in the manner authorized for fiscal year 2004, and out of any money in the Treasury of the United States not otherwise appropriated, there are hereby appropriated such sums as may be necessary for such purpose. Grants and payments may be made pursuant to this authority through the second quarter of fiscal year 2005 at the level provided for such activities through the second quarter of fiscal year 2004.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER).

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I rise today in support of H.R. 5149, the Welfare Reform Extension Act, Part VIII. Why Part VIII? Because, unfortunately, we are here again for the eighth time to pass short-term legislation that simply continues the status quo for one of our most important social assistance programs.

Mr. Speaker, this bill will continue funding for the Temporary Assistance For Needy Families program and other related programs that assist low-income families through March 31, 2005. I support this legislation, but as I have said before and will say again today, I wish we were here today to vote on comprehensive, forward-looking legislation like the House has already approved and the President has supported.

In his convention speech, President Bush said, ''Because family and work are sources of stability and dignity, I support welfare reform that strengthens family and requires work.'' In his call for more work and stronger families, House Republicans stand with the President. That is why we approved comprehensive welfare reform legislation twice in the last 2 years, bills that promote more work and stronger families.

Unfortunately, the other body has not yet passed its own bill, and many on the other side of the aisle continue to oppose more welfare reforms designed to promote work and reduce dependence and poverty. Why do some continue to ignore the three overwhelming lessons of the 1996 welfare reform law?

Lesson one: Real welfare reform means more work, less dependence, and less poverty.

Lesson two: Real welfare reform means stronger families and more healthy marriages, improving children's prospects for the future.

Lesson three: Real welfare reform frees up money from welfare checks that is better spent on services like child care so families can support themselves.

Perhaps one reason for the Democrats' opposition to more welfare reform is that many on that side of the aisle opposed real welfare reform all along. Since Congress started voting on welfare reform bills in the mid-1990s, there have been eight major votes in this House. During that time, Democrats collectively registered 1,392 votes against welfare reform and only 188 votes for it. Eighty-eight percent of the time congressional Democrats have opposed welfare reform bills. Half of the Democrats even opposed the landmark 1996 welfare reform law. On those same votes, an overwhelming 98 percent of the Republicans supported welfare reform.

The debate in the past 2 years has been a reminder of what we saw in the mid-1990s. Whatever their reasons, whether it is because they oppose requiring a 40-hour work week of welfare recipients, like other American families, or they oppose promoting stronger families and healthy marriages, or insist on billions more in welfare spending despite the reduced caseload, some have consistently opposed meaningful updates to welfare reform. That is despite the obvious success of welfare reform since 1996, and despite the obvious need to make adjustments that would help the 2 million families still on welfare achieve independence and better lives.

That is precisely what the legislation passed by the House twice, and supported by the President, achieves. Those who oppose this legislation also continue to ignore letters from the States urging forward movement on a long-term authorization. Most recently, the State of New York sent a letter to their Members in the other body and said, ''In these very difficult budget cycles, delaying TANF reauthorization until the next congressional session will certainly jeopardize the current block grant funding level of $16.5 billion currently maintained in both the House and Senate bills, and the Senate-passed $7 billion child care

amendment, which will annually support over 70,000 additional children of New York's working parents.''

Mr. Speaker, now is the time to act, but today we are here to pass yet another piece of short-term legislation that only maintains the status quo. Unfortunately, this placeholder does exactly what the States fear: places any reforms of additional funding in jeopardy.

Just yesterday, I heard from representatives from my own State of California that continued extensions are standing in the way of more welfare reform there. In short, States serving families on welfare are unable to take the next steps to help them achieve independence when there is not certainty of funding and clear goals are not established. Passing the legislation before us today is a necessary step, since we need to help States keep writing welfare checks to 2 million families.

What more we should be doing is obvious: expecting and supporting more work instead of simply supporting more welfare checks. House Republicans supported the President and have twice passed legislation designed to help more parents know the dignity of drawing a paycheck instead of a welfare check. Others who oppose that next step must explain why they continue to block forward movement.

Mr. Speaker, before I conclude, I would like to mention an individual who has been a tremendous asset in our efforts to reform these programs, Ms. Vee Burke. As my statement reflects, Ms. Burke will be retiring from the Congressional Research Service this year after more than 30 years of service to the Members and their staff. Ms. Burke joined CRS in 1970 as a recognized expert in the field of public welfare. For more than three decades she has worked diligently and professionally to assist us with our efforts. Her contributions and knowledge of these programs have had a direct, positive impact on the lives of millions of families and children. We will miss her and we wish her well and thank her for her many years of service.

Mr. Speaker, today I'd like to pay tribute to Vee Burke, a policy specialist in low-income programs at the Congressional Research Service. Ms. Burke joined CRS more than 30 years ago as a recognized expert in the field of public welfare. Much to the regret of many Members of Congress and their staff, Ms. Burke will retire at the end of November.

During her tenure at CRS, Ms. Burke became a leading expert on the history, evolution, and interaction of welfare and public assistance programs for low-income individuals and families. Over three decades, Ms. Burke has played a role in all major congressional deliberations affecting low-income individuals including the sweeping welfare reforms enacted in 1996. Largely considered the most significant social policy change in the past 60 years, Ms. Burke's in-depth knowledge of low-income programs and her tireless efforts to assist Members and their staff with this legislation were instrumental in our success.

Because of her stature as one of the leading authorities in the country in this policy area, Ms. Burke's advice and assistance has been regularly sought by the congressional committees with legislative jurisdiction. She has offered expert testimony and authored numerous reports that have served as the basis for legislation considered by Congress. Her most unique contribution is the series of CRS reports entitled Cash and Noncash Benefits for Persons with Limited Income that she began in 1976. This initially annual and more recently biennial report provides detailed and comprehensive information and statistics on program rules, participation and spending for some 80 means-tested Federal programs. Ms. Burke also has been a key contributor to the House Ways and Means Committee Green Book since that report's inception in 1981. Anyone who has used either of these resources understands the amount of time and effort that such significant undertakings require, but also appreciate the value and contributions they make to our efforts to assist low-income families.

Ms. Burke is respected and admired by congressional staff and Members, by her colleagues within CRS, and by the broader research and policy community. Her contributions have had direct impact on the lives of millions of Americans. I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking her for her service and I wish her all the best in her future endeavors.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, only in this body with Republican leadership can they blame everyone but themselves. Even though they control this body, the other body, and the White House, they seem to blame everybody else for the failure to enact the reauthorization of welfare. Only in this body.

And then my distinguished chairman says that our States want us to pass a long-term reauthorization. And the chairman is absolutely right, but they do not want us to pass the bill that passed this body because it would take us backwards in welfare rather than forward in reform.

I do appreciate the fact that the distinguished chairman at least had the title of the bill accurately reflect what we are doing here, and that is Welfare Reform Extension Act, Part VIII. Eight times in the last 2½ years we have had short-term extensions because of the failure of the Republican leadership to work for a bill that would build on the work that was done in 1996 to give our States the flexibility they need in order to implement welfare reform and give them the resources they need. Instead, we have a bill that passed this body that was anything but bipartisan. In fact, we never even had hearings in our committee. We had a markup, but no hearings in this Congress because of the failure to really reach out and try to do something that could be enacted into law.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am terribly disappointed that we are again looking at an extension. I support this bill, so my distinguished chairman and I are in agreement, we do not want to see this program lapse. It is an important program. It extends not only the TANF program but several related programs, including child care and development block grants and transitional Medicaid assistance for people leaving welfare to work.

I agree with those who say we should be doing more, much more. After all, over the last 3 years, the number of Americans in poverty has grown by 4.3 million. Last year alone, another 700,000 children fell into poverty.

□ 1630

Meanwhile, funding for several antipoverty programs, including TANF, child care and social services block grant and job training through the Workforce Investment Act have declined by $1.7 billion in real terms over the last 3 years. In short, we are responding to rising poverty with declining assistance.

Regrettably, the long-term welfare authorization plan put forward by my Republican colleagues largely ignores this problem. Instead, they have suggested poverty is rising because welfare recipients are not working hard enough. However, this suggestion falls flat when we consider one basic fact: The welfare rolls have continued to decline even though our poverty rates have grown.

The problem is not the unwillingness of people on welfare to work; the problem is that too many of these people leaving welfare are not finding employment, or they are finding jobs which do not lift them out of poverty.

We could help by providing more child assistance and job training, but so far the majority and President Bush have resisted such reforms.

While obviously an imperfect response, temporarily extending TANF funds is certainly better than fundamentally dismantling the successful parts of the 1996 welfare reform law such as providing our States and communities with the flexibility to determine how to best move welfare recipients into the work force. Therefore, I support this legislation to maintain necessary funding for several poverty programs over the next 6 months in the hopes that we can pass a more comprehensive improvement next year.

One area that Congress must focus on next year is providing access to affordable child care, which is undoubtedly one of the biggest problems confronting low-income working families.

Mr. Speaker, the price of child care can easily range between $4,000 and $10,000 per year per child. It is no wonder that the Urban Institute found that families in poverty with day-care expenses spent almost a quarter of their earnings on child care. Unfortunately, many States have cut back on child care assistance because of recent budget shortfalls. This problem has been documented by the General Accounting Office and more recently in a report by the National Women's Law Center.

Their study found that between 2001 and 2004, three-fifths of our States made child care eligibility more restrictive. Half the States raised their copayments on low-income families, waiting lists for those eligible for aid but not receiving it grew in more than a dozen States.

My own State of Maryland has frozen enrollment in child care for working families. In other words, the only way in Maryland that families can get child care assistance is to go on welfare. What a message.

Instead of helping to address this problem, the Federal Government has not even allowed child care funding to maintain the pace with inflation over the last 2 years. The long-term TANF reauthorization bill passed by this body earlier this session will simply continue this disturbing trend by reducing the real value of child care assistance. We can and should do better for America's struggling families.

Mr. Speaker, there is much work to be done, but in the meantime I urge support for this temporary extension of funding for several poverty-related programs for the eighth time in the last 2.5 years. Like the past seven extensions, this bill simply continues current law without including any new controversial policy changes.

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

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW), the chairman of the subcommittee and author of the welfare reform legislation which has done such an incredible job of bettering families.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, we are coming again to a crossroads, and why it is that we cannot move this bill ahead in an orderly fashion instead of bits and pieces and jumping all around absolutely escapes me.

The bill that my colleague from California has crafted which has passed this House now on several occasions increases the child care which is so necessary for the single moms struggling to go to work. We want to be sure their kids are taken care of and they are not in the street, and we have increased the funding substantially.

When we look at what we are spending on each welfare recipient, because of the amount of welfare recipients going down and the funding not going down, we are spending well over twice as much on each welfare recipient for job training to get them on their feet and to get them to be productive human beings.

This bill and the bill referred to by the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER) and the Committee on Ways and Means which has passed this House on several occasions gets to the other side of the Capitol and it is blocked. The other body has constantly talked this bill down and has prevented a vote on the floor of the other body, which is too bad.

Mr. Speaker, we are seeing pre-1996 all over again. One of the proudest accomplishments of this body which I can remember so well culminated on August 22, 1996, when the President actually signed the bill. He opposed it and vetoed it twice, but when it got to him the third time, while the debate was going on in this Chamber, went on national television and indicated his support for this bill. And much to his credit, he signed it.

It was very controversial then. There were massive resignations within the White House in protest of President Clinton having signed this bill. Much to the credit of those who stayed on, including Ms. Shalala who is now President of the University of Miami where the debates are going to be tomorrow night, although she was opposed to it, she saw to it and did the best to see that it worked, and it did work.

It worked not only because we had faith in the human spirit, but also at the end, even though there was bitter partisan bickering to get it to the floor and to get the vote, in the end there was bipartisan support with a Democrat President signing a Republican bill.

We can do better. Let us pass this particular bill because we still have the other problem in the other body, but let us move ahead and let us in the next Congress come back and pass the next generation of welfare reform, and that is the bill that the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER) has been cosponsoring and working on.

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

Mr. Speaker, I listened to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) and I agree with almost everything he said. In 1996 we were able to pass a bill by working together as Democrats and Republicans, and I am amazed that the bill that the Republican leadership has been advancing in this Congress would take us backwards, take away the discretion of our States to deal with the welfare programs. That presumes that some of our States are not capable of dealing with it. In 1996 we trusted our States, and it worked.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN), a senior member of the Committee on Ways and Means and a Member who has worked on welfare reform since he has been in Congress.

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

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I want to briefly review the history of welfare reform, not to finger point, but to have us understand what this is all about.

The gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) said, pointing to 1996, that the third time around, the President agreed to it. What he forgot to say was that there were three bills and that they changed from bill to bill. Many Democrats worked to change those bills so that they would be acceptable. The third time around it was different because it included more adequate health care and also more adequate day care. Neither was taken care of appropriately in the first two times around. That is point one.

So it was a bipartisan product. The President, President Clinton, had kicked off the effort years before, and eventually we worked together to produce a product.

My next point, as the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) has so clearly pointed out, it has been different this time around in terms of this product that came through the House. It has not been a bipartisan product whatsoever. Instead, what the majority has been trying to do is really to rewrite the 1996 welfare reform bill, as the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) has pointed out, to turn the clock back on provisions of that bill, and to do so despite the fact that the research that has been undertaken since passage in 1996 indicates that what is in the House-passed bill is wrong in important respects, and that is why the Senate has failed to act.

First of all, in terms of people moving up the economic ladder, the evidence is clear that a majority of people who have moved from welfare to work earn less than 42 percent of the median average wage in their States. And also these studies make clear that the most successful programs focus on getting people better jobs and increasing their earnings. Former welfare recipients with higher starting wages were 40 percent more likely to still be working 2 years later and those with child assistance were twice as likely to work for 2 years.

So that is why the National Governors Association, when they canvassed the welfare directors, found that 40 of them said that the fundamental changes in the Republican bill were wrong; or to put it another way, that the Republican bill would force fundamental changes in the successful welfare programs. And the researcher who has done so much of the federally funded research on welfare-to-work strategies said that the House Bush administration plan would force the most successful programs to change substantially. So that is what this is all about.

We passed a bill that would, instead of emphasizing people moving off of welfare into work and as they moved, moved up the ladder, would emphasize people on welfare working. The whole point is to help people and get them to move off of welfare and to stay off of welfare.

So in our bill the Democrats proposed a very different approach than the Republicans here in the House. In our bill, States would be rewarded for helping recipients move off of welfare and to get into good-paying jobs, and also trying to fix the transitional Medicaid program, to try to get more health care available for people so when they moved off of welfare, they did not lose it, they would instead continue it for 6 months or a year. Also we proposed in our bill full funding to the social services block grant program.

Let me finish by saying I support the extension. It is better than a bad bill that passed the House, but on child care, the record should be straight: We proposed $11 billion more, the Senate $7 billion, and the House Republican bill won. If child care is not provided, it is going to be difficult for people to move off of welfare into productive work that will move them and help move up the ladder, and that is the true test of welfare reform, people moving off welfare out of poverty and into work.

□ 1645

The gentleman from Maryland has led the effort to emphasize that with the support of Democrats. I am proud to be part of that. We need a bipartisan effort in this House, not ramming or cramming through a bill without ever there being an effort within our subcommittee to produce a bipartisan product. There is hope, but not the Republican bill. Let us vote for the extension and do much better after November 2.

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I would just like to respond. We hear the other side, the Democrats, indicating, and I have heard them indicate this over and over, that somehow there was bipartisan support, that somehow the Democrats worked with the Republicans. But if we look at what the votes were, we find an entirely different result completely.

For example, in 1995 on our Committee on Ways and Means, zero votes came from Democrats the first bill that came through. The second bill coming through, again, zero Democrats on the Committee on Ways and Means supporting it. Again, where is this bipartisan support? Finally, the third bill that finally after President Clinton vetoed it twice, the third time around, the bill coming through the same Committee on Ways and Means, the first time through all the Democrats except one voted against it. Then the conference committee, over half of the Democrats on the Committee on Ways and Means still voted against it. And on the House floor the Democrats, over half of them voted against it.

So I am not quite sure where all this bipartisan support is. It seems that the Democrats came kicking and screaming all the way to having the welfare reform.

Let me also refer to this book. They indicate that there is not enough money. Let me quote from how a recent book by New York Times welfare reporter Jason DeParle puts it: ''Falling caseloads brought one problem States welcomed. It left them rolling in dough. States literally had more money than they knew how to spend. Over 6 years, States collected $59 billion more than they could have under the previous system, when falling caseloads brought reduced Federal dollars. Having promised to do more with less, the Governors wound up with more, much more, than anyone imagined.'' That is on page 215 from this book. Again, the facts do not meet the reality of what we are hearing from the other side.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Mrs. JOHNSON) who has been an active member of the committee on this legislation.

Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut. I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, the goal of TANF, that is, welfare reform, was always twofold: first, it was to help women who had children and no means of support and therefore were dependent on welfare to regain their economic independence by entering the workforce. That goal was for the woman, so she could realize her greatest potential, she could gain control of her life by being economically self-sufficient. And then the second goal was to lift her and her children out of poverty, occasionally he and his children out of poverty.

Those twin goals of helping women on welfare to realize their skills, their potential, their capabilities to gain economic self-sufficiency and to raise children out of poverty were goals that we all shared, both sides of the aisle; but they were goals that were achieved by the structure of the bill that the Republicans crafted and passed and which at the time was extremely controversial.

But it did work. Two million children have been lifted out of poverty. According to the census, the poverty rate for African American children and the poverty rate for children living with single mothers hit a record low in 2001 and 2002. So then the question becomes, What happened during the years of recession since 2001 and 2002? We all know that a recession was in progress when this President was sworn into office and then the economy was terribly jolted by 9/11 and unemployment rates soared and so on.

Yet when we look back, these are the facts. First of all, starting from the overall understanding that poverty in a recession and child poverty in a recession does rise. Two years after the 1990–1991 recession, 15.7 million children were in poverty in 1993, or 22.7 percent of the children were in poverty in 1993. That was after the 1990–1991 recession. Two years after the 2001 recession, 12.9 million children were in poverty, or 17.6 percent were in poverty in 2003.

In other words, in this more recent recession, after welfare reform, yes, more children were in poverty. But far fewer were in poverty than had been in poverty 10 years earlier after the 1990 recession. In fact, 17.6 percent were in poverty in 2003, 22.7 percent had been in poverty in 1993. So there are 2.8 million fewer children in poverty now than there were in the preceding economic cycle.

While it is tragic to see poverty numbers go up, we need to put them in the context of this economy and of welfare reform because, in fact, welfare reform has been so successful in reducing child poverty that even with the rise in child poverty during this recent recession, it is still well below what it was 10 years ago.

Let me just add one other point and that is, it is really a shame that this is not the reauthorization rather than a 6-month extension. In the reauthorization, we do provide far better opportunity for women to get the education they need, not just to get into the workforce but to get up the career ladder.

Furthermore, in the reauthorization we recognize what has become a very real problem and that is that many of the women who are really stuck on welfare now are women who need to have better access to either drug treatment programs of a longer term sort or to mental health programs. Both of those kinds of treatment programs we count as work in the extension bill.

The next round of TANF reform will enable us to meet the challenge of improving the educational support and being more realistic about the health services necessary to help women become self-sufficient and their children to do better and the whole family to rise out of poverty. So it is unfortunate that we are not moving on reauthorization rather than extension, but extension certainly beats letting the current law expire because it has done wonderful things for women in America, allowing them to realize their potential and think about their skills and abilities with the help of supportive programs, and it has certainly lifted many children out of poverty. I urge support of this legislation.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN).

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I want to say to the chairman of the subcommittee, if he persists in distorting the record, he is going to continue to make less likely improvement of welfare reform. I am sorry he is not listening, but I will say this for the record.

When welfare reform bills were considered, there were differences. But at important places we proposed alternatives and Democrats voted for them. March 24, 1995, 205 Democrats supported essentially a substitute that was proposed by someone who was then a member of the Democratic Caucus. That was March of 1995. Then if you go over to later on, there was in July 1996 when welfare reform was considered on the floor an alternative proposed by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. TANNER) and the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE). It received 168 votes.

His attempt to really grab the welfare reform flag and deny the involvement of President Clinton who suggested we end welfare as we then knew it, I think he is now suggesting that we change welfare reform backwards. That effort of his I think only diminishes the chances that we can move welfare reform ahead. His trying to make this

into a partisan issue instead of a chance for bipartisan working together is really antithetical to the needs of the people of this country for further welfare reform. I hope the next time around, he does not sing the same song.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY).

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, here we go again. Instead of making this TANF law better, instead of giving welfare recipients the tools to move from welfare to self-sufficiency, we are once again renewing, for the eighth time renewing it, actually, a bill that continues moving families from welfare further into poverty.

Instead, we should be making education or training count as work so that that activity for welfare recipients will help them get ready for better educational opportunities and job training so they can have better opportunities for earning a salary that pays a livable wage. They will not get that unless they have education and training. Instead of again extending an outdated welfare bill, we should be providing quality child care, child care that includes more care for infants, child care that extends to parents who work weekends and evenings. That is what we need. That is what these parents need. That is what they need to help them get their jobs and become self-sufficient.

Let us face it, if parents do not have a safe, convenient place to leave their children, they cannot go to work. Believe me, I know, because over 30 years ago I was a single mother with three small children, abandoned by their father; and even though I was working full-time, I needed welfare, aid for dependent children at that time, to keep our lives together, to get my children the health care, the child care they needed. But eventually I worked my way out of poverty and started my own business before running for Congress. Of course, you have to know that I believe that others should have the same opportunities that I had.

While I support this short-term extension as necessary, I want us to begin to work to authorize a bill that will give workers the training and the education and the child care that they need so that they can be successful. They need the same kind of opportunities that I was afforded 30 years ago.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RODRIGUEZ).

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, let me just rise and talk about how I on the other side am concerned about our situation now. We are concerned. The census reported just this month in August, 36 million Americans living in poverty, more than ever in recorded history. Forty-five million without access to health insurance. And we are saying we have a good program? This is the most powerful country in the world. Yet we find a large number that still reside in poverty. At the same time we are choosing to cut back in education. We are choosing to say no, when the administration shook hands on Leave No Child Behind.

That Republican compassionate conservatism is self-proclaimed compassionate conservatism because it is not one for allowing young people an opportunity to be able to further their education, to make sure they do not go onto welfare. During the last 4 years, we have lost more jobs than ever recorded. Those jobs that we have gained have been jobs that have paid much less than the ones that we have lost.

□ 1700

So the reality is that we have had an opportunity to make some things happen, and they failed to do that.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). The gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) has 1½ minutes remaining.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I use that 1½ minutes first to join the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER) in recognizing the outstanding work that Vee Burke has provided for more than 30 years at the Congressional Research Service.

Vee has helped our committee conduct its work on poverty and public assistance issues by providing detailed and meticulously accurate information on program rules, participation and trends. Since 1981, she has been a regular and valued contributor to the Ways and Means Green Book, which is the key resource on poverty programs for Members of Congress and their staff.

Vee's expertise on welfare issues started during the Nixon administration and has continued through all major developments thereafter, including the 1996 welfare reform law and our current efforts to reauthorize that law. Her work has provided a foundation of understanding needed to improve our Nation's safety net programs.

We wish Vee well in her pending retirement, and we thank her for her contributions to improving social programs in our great Nation. Mr. Speaker, I can assure the Members that the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER) and I are in complete agreement in regards to Vee Burke's contributions to this body and to this Nation and also urging our colleagues to support this legislation.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, in February of 2003, this House passed long-term reauthorization legislation to encourage more work among welfare recipients and to provide more federal dollars for States to assist low-income families. The other body's unwillingness to work with us to move this legislation forward has resulted in lost resources to the States and 2 years of lost opportunity to provide more assistance so more low-income parents can make the transition from welfare to work.

I wish the legislation before us today were not needed. As I have said before, I wish we were here debating a long-term reauthorization bill. But we do need to pass this legislation. Therefore, I urge all of my colleagues to support this bill.

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. HERGER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5149.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 5149, the bill just considered.

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

There was no objection.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION WAIVING REQUIREMENT OF CLAUSE 6(a) OF RULE XIII WITH RESPECT TO CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS

Mr. LINDER (during debate on H.R. 5149) from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 108–709) on the resolution (H. Res. 807) waiving a requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII with respect to consideration of certain resolutions reported from the Committee on Rules, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

VETERANS HEALTH PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2004

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4768) to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into certain major medical facility leases, to authorize that Secretary to transfer real property subject to certain limitations, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4768

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