

Solis	Tiaht	Waxman
Souder	Tiberi	Weiner
Spratt	Tierney	Weldon (FL)
Stark	Towns	Weldon (PA)
Stearns	Turner	Weller
Strickland	Udall (CO)	Westmoreland
Stupak	Udall (NM)	Wexler
Sullivan	Upton	Whitfield
Sweeney	Van Hollen	Wicker
Tancredo	Velázquez	Wilson (NM)
Tanner	Visclosky	Wilson (SC)
Tauscher	Walden (OR)	Wolf
Taylor (MS)	Walsh	Woolsey
Taylor (NC)	Wamp	Wu
Terry	Wasserman	Wynn
Thomas	Schultz	Young (AK)
Thompson (CA)	Waters	Young (FL)
Thompson (MS)	Watson	
Thornberry	Watt	

## ANSWERED "PRESENT"—1

McCollum (MN)

## NOT VOTING—16

Allen	Foley	Meeks (NY)
Capuano	Gillmor	Millender-
Carson	Harris	McDonald
Cleaver	Knollenberg	Napolitano
Davis (FL)	Markey	Sanders
Ferguson	McGovern	

## ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON) (during the vote). Members are advised 2 minutes remain in this vote.

□ 1557

So (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained during rollcall votes 42 and 43. If I were present, I would have voted "nay" on rollcall vote No. 42 and "yea" on rollcall vote No. 43.

## GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BOEHNER. 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. 27.

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

There was no objection.

## JOB TRAINING IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2005

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 126 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. 27.

□ 1557

## 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. 27) to enhance the workforce investment sys-

tem of the Nation by strengthening one-stop career centers, providing for more effective governance arrangements, promoting access to a more comprehensive array of employment, training, and related services, establishing a targeted approach to serving youth, and improving performance accountability, and for other purposes, with Mr. TERRY 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 Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER).

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

Mr. Chairman, as we stand here today we continue to see significant progress toward greater economic opportunity and prosperity across the country. More than 2.7 million new jobs have been created over the last 17 months, and the unemployment rate has fallen to 5.2 percent, the lowest level since September 2001. Our economy is strong and it is getting stronger.

The backbone of a strong economy is a well-trained and highly skilled workforce, and it is absolutely critical for workers to have the education and skills necessary to adapt to new opportunities and to move into higher wages.

Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan agreed with this view when he testified before the Committee on Education and the Workforce last year. The chairman said, "We need to increase our efforts to ensure that as many of our citizens as possible have the opportunity to capture the benefits of the changing economy. One critical element in creating that opportunity is the provision of rigorous education and ongoing training to all members of our society."

Chairman Greenspan this morning testified before Congress and talked about the need to do a better job with our education system and better training and retraining of American workers.

The bill before us, the Job Training Improvement Act, would achieve this objective by strengthening the Nation's job training system. In 1998, Congress established a system of one-stop career centers aimed at providing one convenient central location to offer job training and related employment services. While these reforms have been generally successful, the Workforce Investment Act system is still hampered by bureaucracy and duplication that prevents it from being as effective as it could be for workers and their families.

Our bill includes a number of reforms aimed at strengthening our job training system and better engaging the business community to improve job training services.

Our bill includes a number of reforms. First, requiring State and local workforce investment boards to ensure the job training programs reflect the employment needs in local areas. Second, allowing training for currently employed workers so employees can upgrade their skills and avoid layoffs. Third, encouraging the highest caliber providers, including community colleges, to offer training through the one-stop system, and leveraging other public and private resources to increase training and opportunities.

The bill also includes other important reforms. First, it consolidates the three adult WIA training programs, giving States and local communities greater flexibility and enabling more job seekers to be served with no reduction in services.

□ 1600

In addition, it targets 70 percent of the youth grant funds to out-of-school youth, an underserved population that faces significant challenges in finding meaningful employment.

The bill includes a proposal passed by the House last year introduced by the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. PORTER) to create personal reemployment accounts of up to \$3,000 to help unemployed Americans purchase job training and other employment-related services, such as child care, transportation services and housing assistance, giving them the flexibility they need in order to gain meaningful employment. In addition, it includes the President's community college proposal to strengthen the partnership between local businesses, community colleges, and the local one-stop delivery system.

Later today, we will consider an amendment from my colleague from Virginia to strip the faith-based provisions from this bill, an amendment that would deny faith-based providers their rights under the historic 1964 Civil Rights Act. When we considered this bill in committee, we twice rejected it on a bipartisan basis, and I urge all Members to vote against it today. The 1964 Civil Rights Act made clear that when faith-based groups hire employees on a religious basis, it can exercise the group's civil rights liberties and not discriminate under Federal law. In 1987, the Supreme Court unanimously upheld this right.

As my colleagues can see from the chart that I have next to me, former President Bill Clinton signed four laws allowing faith-based groups to staff on a religious basis when they receive those Federal funds. Those four laws are the 1996 welfare reform law; the 1998 Community Services Block Grant Act; the 2000 Community Renewal Tax Relief Act; and the 2000 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Act, all allowing faith-based providers to preserve their rights under the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

Our Nation's faith-based institutions have a proven track record in meeting the training and counseling needs of