

Justice Appropriations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 2006 through 2009.

Any Member wishing to offer an amendment should submit 55 copies of the amendment and one copy of a brief explanation of the amendment to the Committee on Rules in room H-312 of the Capitol by noon on Tuesday, September 27, 2005. Members should draft their amendments to the bill as reported by the Committee on the Judiciary on July 27, 2005, which is expected to be filed with the House on Thursday, September 22. Members are also advised that the text should be available for their review on the Web sites of the Committee on the Judiciary and the Committee on Rules today.

Members should use the Office of Legislative Counsel to ensure that their amendments are drafted in the most appropriate format, and should check with the Office of the Parliamentarian to be certain that their amendments comply with the rules of the House.

AMENDMENT PROCESS FOR H.R. 3824, THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT OF 2005

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, the Committee on Rules may meet next week to grant a rule which could limit the amendment process for floor consideration of H.R. 3824, the Threatened and Endangered Species Act of 2005. The Committee on Resources is marking up H.R. 3824 today and is expected to file its report with the House early next week.

Any Member wishing to offer an amendment should submit 55 copies of the amendment and one copy of a brief explanation of the amendment to the Committee on Rules in room H-312 of the Capitol by 10 a.m. on Wednesday, September 28. Members should draft their amendments to the text of the bill as ordered reported by the Committee on Resources, which should be available on the Web sites of the Committee on Resources and the Committee on Rules by 2 p.m. on Monday, September 26.

Members should use the Office of Legislative Counsel to ensure that their amendments are drafted in the most appropriate format. Members are also advised to check with the Office of the Parliamentarian to be certain their amendments comply with the rules of the House.

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

(Mr. HOYER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the chief deputy whip for the purpose of ascertaining the schedule for the following week.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Maryland for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, the House will convene on Tuesday at 12:30 p.m. for morning

hour and at 2 p.m. for legislative business. We will consider several measures under suspension of the rules. A final list of those bills will be sent to Members' offices by the end of the week. Any votes called on these measures will be rolled until 6:30 p.m.

On Wednesday and Thursday, the House will consider additional legislation under suspension of the rules as well as two measures under a rule: the Endangered Species Recovery Act of 2005; and H.R. 3402, the Department of Justice Appropriations Authorization Act.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chief deputy whip for that information.

If I could call the gentleman's attention to October. Clearly, the first two weeks in October, as we all know, have a number of holidays, including Columbus Day holiday, which have impacted the schedule. It has been announced that we will not have votes the second week of October; but we still do not have, as I understand it, a clear picture of the first week of October.

We have a number of Members from the west coast who indicate that they will not be able to travel on Wednesday. There has been some discussion about possibly meeting Thursday and Friday. Could the gentleman give me his thoughts or the thoughts of the majority with reference to that particular week, particularly as it relates to Wednesday which, as the gentleman probably knows as well as any of us, is a problem for some of our Members. I yield to my friend.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Maryland for yielding. We do plan to be in session that first week of October, the week of October 3, after the Rosh Hashana holiday. We would expect to have legislative business on both Thursday and Friday of that week.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, let me ask the gentleman, if we are in session on Thursday, again, because many of our Members will not be able to travel on Wednesday, would I be correct in assuming that votes would be delayed until 6:30, as they usually are on a travel day? I yield to my friend.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I would just say to the gentleman that votes will be delayed until the Members have adequate time to return for those who live on the west coast.

Mr. HOYER. Would that be 6:30? I hate to press the point; but, obviously, Members, for purposes of planning and travel and reservations, need to have pretty precise knowledge of when they have to be back here for votes. I yield to my friend.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I cannot tell my friend from Maryland that votes will be at 6:30. All I can say is there will be adequate time for folks on the west coast to be back here in Washington on Thursday for the votes that will be called. I would say further that we will be checking flights to ensure

that Members will be back in time for the votes.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for that information and for that concern. I think that would be appropriate.

Might I suggest that by next week we have some more precise advice in terms of time so Members can plan accordingly.

Mr. CANTOR. I thank the gentleman for that suggestion.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, there was thought that we might meet tomorrow; that is obviously not happening. It is my understanding Friday is on the schedule for next week. Can the gentleman tell me how likely it would be that Friday, while there for contingencies, the likelihood of our meeting on Friday? Does the gentleman have any thought on that? I yield to my friend.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I would also note that the end of the fiscal year is next Friday. That looming date could lead to a flurry of appropriations activity; and, therefore, Members should expect the House to be in session next Friday.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, given that assumption, can the gentleman tell me when he would expect to have on the floor a continuing resolution, in light of the fact we clearly will not have passed most of the appropriations bills prior to the end of the fiscal year? I yield to my friend.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I would say to the gentleman that I do not believe that the chairman of the Committee on Appropriations has completed his consultations or made his decisions on the specifics of the legislation that we would need to pass next week to continue Federal programs after September 30, so I really cannot get into any more detail than that, because I do not think the chairman has completed his discussions.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, if am I to understand about the discussions then as to what would be in the CR, the advice I would have, for whatever it might be worth, is that we try to consider it prior to Friday, in light of the fact that Friday is the last day, and if a glitch occurs, for whatever reasons, I would hope that the majority would bring a CR to the floor either Wednesday or Thursday, so that if we have a problem that we may be able to deal with that either Thursday or Friday.

But if we have not considered it until Friday and a glitch occurs, we are going to be in a bad spot with reference to the end of the fiscal year and the lack of funding authority for many agencies at that point.

I do not know whether the gentleman wants to comment on that or not, but I yield to him if he does.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for that suggestion, and it will be duly noted.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman. I have noted that all of my suggestions are taken with great solemnity and consideration on your side of the aisle, and I very much appreciate it.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2005, AND HOUR OF MEETING ON TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2005

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 2 p.m. on Monday next, and further, when the House adjourns on that day, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 27, 2005, for morning hour debates.

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

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

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

There was no objection.

PRAISING THE AFGHANISTAN ELECTIONS

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, although the war on terror is far from over, this past weekend's successful elections in Afghanistan were a clear sign that we are on the right track in winning the war. More than 12 million people in Afghanistan stood strong in the face of the Taliban and voted in their parliamentary elections.

But we should not be surprised. Earlier this year, Afghanistan's President Hamid Karzai came to Washington to ensure the American people that these elections would be a resounding success in the face of terrorists, and he was right.

Even though Taliban terrorists killed five candidates and four election workers leading up to the election and on Sunday murdered another 15 people, election turnout was still impressive. Despite the danger, the Afghani people's thirst for democracy was great. The vote was also a major milestone for Afghan women who have long been oppressed. There were 580 female candidates, or 10 percent of the total.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud that the Afghanistan nation is strengthening and unifying the body of its parliament, allowing the Afghanistan citizens to operate as a collective action.

AMERICA'S GOLD STAR MOTHERS

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize our Gold Star Mothers, a special group of American women who have lost either a son or daughter through service to our country.

Although these mothers have experienced a parent's greatest fear, they remain dedicated to supporting our military. By helping the men and women who serve in our Armed Forces, they are honoring their child's service in a positive way. Gold Star Mothers volunteer in our military hospitals, show compassion to our veterans, and care for the families of servicemembers. Their selflessness and generosity is an inspiration to all of us.

As the father of three sons who are currently serving in the military, I would like to express my appreciation for their support. Gold Star Mothers are making a difference in the lives of thousands of people.

On Sunday, I would like to encourage all Americans to take a moment to observe Gold Star Mothers Day in their communities.

In conclusion, God bless our troops and we will never forget September 11.

□ 1700

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SODREL). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. GUTKNECHT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GUTKNECHT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time of the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO).

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

There was no objection.

REVAMP AMERICA'S FOSTER CARE SYSTEM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, last week I introduced the Fostering Our Future Act of 2005, a bill to help our Nation's foster youth by strengthening dependency courts and requiring accountability. Foster care is a critical safety net for half a million abused and neglected American children.

It is, however, a system in need of drastic reform and greater support. Twenty percent of all foster kids will be forced to wait over 5 years for a safe, permanent family. Even worse, almost 20,000 older youth age out of the system without the assistance of a permanent family every year.

Frequent foster home transfers create turbulence and insecurity that heighten the emotional behavior and educational challenges faced by these youth. The doubling of the foster care population since the early 1980s compounded this problem by creating enormous caseloads and taxing the capacity of foster homes. The end result is that foster kids, through no fault of their own, are more likely to experience homelessness, unemployment, and other life course problems despite their courageous resilience.

Imagine what it is like to be 8 years old, neglected by your parents and then taken away from them, living with a family that is not your own, confused by the court proceedings that govern your future, frightened that you might be transferred to another home and alienated and from your peers who talk about mom and dad. Imagine what that feels like.

These children deserve better. They should be guaranteed physical and emotional safety. They should have continuing relationships with caregivers and loved ones. They should have an informed voice in the legal decisions made about their lives. And they should enter early adulthood prepared to live a healthy, happy, and productive life. We have a responsibility to these children to meet these goals, and anything less is unacceptable.

Practitioners and policy experts have conducted thorough analyses and advanced proposals to overhaul the foster care system. The most prominent is a comprehensive 2004 report by the bipartisan Pew Commission, and identified several areas where the Federal Government can support these kids by strengthening the Nation's foster care systems.

The Pew report found that State dependency court systems are failing to sufficiently track cases, and trained personnel, unlike State child welfare agencies, they did not receive Federal funds to do so.

Interagency collaboration and performance measurement, where they exist, are inconsistent, both within and between State systems, and tend to focus on bureaucratic needs rather than outcomes.

Finally, these systems struggle to retain qualified dependency attorneys