

(Mr. UDALL of New Mexico asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I very much appreciate the attendance of Mr. RENZI on the floor and his very gracious remarks.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4841 is legislation I introduced to make a technical correction to the map reference contained in Public Law 109-94, the Ojito Wilderness Act. This technical correction is necessary because of an error made by the Bureau of Land Management in the printing of the map to accompany Public Law 109-94. The original map failed to include 1,035 acres of land that all parties agreed would be acquired by the Pueblo of Zia as part of the original legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the cooperation of Chairman POMBO and ranking member RAHALL of the Resources Committee in expediting the consideration of this legislation. H.R. 4841 is truly a noncontroversial measure, and I urge its adoption by the House today.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. UDALL. He has been a true friend and advocate all across Indian country, particularly on Navaho issues in teaming up and working together. This is just one more example of his advocacy for Native Americans.

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 Arizona (Mr. RENZI) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4841.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HIGHER EDUCATION EXTENSION ACT OF 2006

Mr. KELLER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4911) to temporarily extend the programs under the Higher Education Act of 1965, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4911

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 "Higher Education Extension Act of 2006".

SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF PROGRAMS.

Section 2(a) of the Higher Education Extension Act of 2005 (Public Law 109-81; 20 U.S.C. 1001 note) is amended by striking "March 31, 2006" and inserting "June 30, 2006".

SEC. 3. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.

Nothing in this Act, or in the Higher Education Extension Act of 2005 as amended by

this Act, shall be construed to limit or otherwise alter the authorizations of appropriations for, or the durations of, programs contained in the amendments made by the Higher Education Reconciliation Act of 2005 (Public Law 109-171) to the provisions of the Higher Education Act of 1965 and the Taxpayer-Teacher Protection Act of 2004.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KELLER) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KELLER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 4911.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4911, the Higher Education Extension Act of 2006. This bill will provide a clean extension of the Higher Education Act for 3 months. This extension will allow us to finish our important work on the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act and expand college access for millions of American students.

As the new chairman of the 21st Century Competitiveness Subcommittee, which is the subcommittee with jurisdiction over higher education, I am proud of the work we have done so far in reauthorizing the Higher Education Act. We have started the reauthorization process already through the passage of important higher education reforms in the Deficit Reduction Act. We strengthened student loans and cut excessive subsidies to lenders. We have increased loan limits to give students more access to the money they need, and we have reduced fees so students can keep more of what they borrow.

There is important work yet to be done. The Committee on Education and the Workforce has successfully marked up H.R. 609, the College Access and Opportunity Act. I look forward to working with my colleagues in passing H.R. 609 to continue building the Pell grant program, help control the rising cost of college, and increase college access for all students.

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Mr. Speaker, this is a clean extension that will allow the current programs of the Higher Education Act to continue past their current March 31 expiration date. Programs like Pell grants are the passport out of poverty for millions of American students. We must not break our commitment to higher education. I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on H.R. 4911, and I look forward to working to pass a comprehensive higher education reauthorization bill later this year.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support H.R. 4911, a 3-month extension of the Higher Education Act. And I extend my congratulations to Mr. KELLER in his new role as subcommittee Chair.

This, in essence, temporarily extends the last portions of the Higher Education Act not reauthorized in the reconciliation package.

During the 1998 reauthorization, I had the opportunity to work closely with Chairman MCKEON in crafting a bipartisan bill. Despite a rocky reauthorization process so far this Congress, I still hope we can build on our previous partnerships.

Most of the damaging changes to the Higher Education Act in student aid have already been passed in reconciliation, which I opposed. That action forever removed nearly \$12 billion from student aid programs and missed an opportunity to reinvest in students already struggling to pay for college.

With this highly contentious and misguided portion no longer connected to the reauthorization, I hope we can now move forward in a bipartisan way as we reauthorize the few remaining items of the Higher Education Act.

Several good-faith compromises were made in the nonstudent aid portions of reauthorization when we marked up H.R. 609 this past summer. Yet the bill was far from bipartisan when the Committee on Education and the Workforce reported H.R. 609 in July by a party-line vote.

As we move forward this year with my good friend Mr. MCKEON as the new committee Chair, I hope we can build on the bipartisan spirit of the 1998 reauthorization that we worked on together.

Again, I would like to thank Chairman MCKEON for offering H.R. 4911, the 3-month extension of the Higher Education Act, and I am pleased to offer my support and cosponsorship. I hope that this extension will allow the Republican leadership time to work with us to move forward in a bipartisan way as we finish our work on the higher education reauthorization.

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

Mr. KELLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCKEON), the chairman of the Education and Workforce Committee.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, for the last several years my colleagues on the Education and Workforce Committee have joined me in working to renew and indeed improve the Higher Education Act. Congress recently took an important step toward doing just that. Legislation enacted last month reauthorized mandatory spending programs under the Higher Education Act and made some important reforms to the law as well, reforms destined to benefit students and taxpayers alike.

Through our efforts, we have reduced lender subsidies, increased loan limits

for students, simplified the financial aid process, and provided additional resources for needy students studying math, science, and critical foreign languages in college. All the while, we have made certain that student aid programs operate more efficiently, saving U.S. taxpayers billions as part of this Congress' goal to rein in runaway entitlement spending.

It is my hope that the House will soon renew remaining Higher Education Act programs by passing the College Access and Opportunity Act, H.R. 609. This bill would strengthen the Pell grant program, empower parents and students through sunshine and transparency in college costs and accreditation, and improve college access programs. The measure was passed by the Education and Workforce Committee last summer, and I look forward to working with my colleagues from both parties to see it pass here on the House floor as well.

As Mr. KILDEE mentioned, in 1998 we worked very closely together in reauthorizing the Higher Education Act. And I am certain that we will be able to work very well in passing H.R. 609, hopefully in the next few weeks.

In the meantime, Congress again must act to extend the Higher Education Act which we have done previously on several occasions with bipartisan support. And today I rise in support of the legislation to do so once again. H.R. 4911, the Higher Education Act, will ensure that vital Federal college access and student loan programs continue to serve those students who depend upon them. This legislation extends the Higher Education Act for a brief time, 3 months, to allow the student aid program reforms enacted last month to take full effect on July 1, 2006. At the same time, H.R. 4911 also gives Congress additional time to complete a renewal of the remaining higher education programs as well.

Each year, more and more American students participate in higher education programs at our Nation's colleges and universities. The new realities of an increasingly competitive global economy made clear that higher education is more important than ever before. That is why the Federal investment in the Higher Education Act is so vital. Millions of low- and middle-income students aspire for a college education, and we are depending on these young men and women to lead our Nation into the 21st century.

Mr. Speaker, the legislation before us today is a necessary step to keep programs under the Higher Education Act from expiring. Too many students depend on this assistance, and we cannot allow it to lapse. However, we must remain focused on completing comprehensive reforms to build upon these programs.

With the enactment of the Deficit Reduction Act, we are halfway there. The extension we will vote on today is a bridge to the balance of our work, the College Access and Opportunity Act. I

encourage my colleagues to support the bill before us today and work with us in the coming weeks and months to complete a fundamental reform package so we can better serve American students pursuing the dream of a college education.

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York (Mr. BISHOP).

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, let me start by congratulating our new chairman, the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. MCKEON). I am confident that he will be an excellent chairman and he will preside over our committee with fairness and bipartisanship and with the best interest of America's students and our workforce at the forefront.

And let me also congratulate Mr. KELLER on his appointment as the chair of the 21st Century Competitive Subcommittee. I look forward to working with him as well.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4911 with the hope that this third extension of the Higher Education Act may be the last short-term measure we need to pass before we produce an improved bipartisan and long overdue reauthorization bill that also reflects the best interests of America's college students.

As many of these students continue receiving their college acceptance letters, their families are now calculating how they can squeeze rising tuition and expenses into their budget. This is an uphill struggle made tougher by the President's budget for education which freezes Pell grants for the fifth year in a row, recalls the Federal portion of the Perkins Loan revolving fund, and freezes funding for the SEOG program and for work-study.

Students have done their part by working hard and getting accepted to college. Families have done their part by saving for college. Now it is our turn to help.

Mr. Speaker, let us pass this extension, defeat the budget cuts to student loan programs, and pass a reauthorization that will be improved over the bill reported out of our committee that helps make the dream of college a reality for America's students.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KELLER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4911.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EDUCATIONAL FLEXIBILITY PROGRAM EXTENSION

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 2363) to extend the educational flexibility program under section 4 of the Education Flexibility Partnership Act of 1999.

The Clerk read as follows:

S. 2363

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

SECTION 1. EDUCATIONAL FLEXIBILITY PROGRAM EXTENSION.

(a) EXTENSION AUTHORITY.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Education is authorized to carry out the educational flexibility program under section 4 of the Education Flexibility Partnership Act of 1999 (20 U.S.C. 5891b), until the date of enactment of an Act that reauthorizes programs under part A of title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6311 et seq.), for any State that was an Ed-Flex Partnership State on September 30, 2004.

(b) DESIGNATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Any designation of a State as an Ed-Flex Partnership State that was in effect on September 30, 2004, shall be extended until the date of enactment of an Act that reauthorizes programs under part A of title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, if the Secretary of Education makes the determination described in paragraph (2).

(2) DETERMINATION.—The determination referred to in paragraph (1) is a determination that the performance of the State educational agency, in carrying out the programs for which the State has received a waiver under the educational flexibility program, justifies the extension of the designation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Delaware.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on S. 2363.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today in support of Senate 2363, a bill that would extend the Education Flexibility Partnership Act, also known as Ed-Flex. This important bill will allow States that have already been approved for the Ed-Flex program to continue to participate until the No Child Left Behind Act is reauthorized and the issue of appropriate administrative flexibility can be re-examined by Congress.

As some of you may know, Ed-Flex provides greater State and local flexibility when using Federal education