I think that the vice chairman of the Rules Committee Mr. DIAZ-BALART put it very well when he said that anyone who casts a vote against this rule is saying no to the issue of reform. No, I don't want to proceed with bringing about the kinds of institutional changes that will play a role in enhancing the level of integrity to which the American people can hold this great deliberative body.

We hear everyone talking about reform. Voices for reform are out there, and they are very prevalent in the media, here on the House floor, day after day after day. But in just a few minutes we are going to have the opportunity to transform those voices for reform into votes for reform. This is our opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, with that I urge an ''aye'' vote on this rule so that we can move ahead with this very, very important reform effort.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join my colleagues in making a point that seems to be lost on the leadership of this House: this is not simply a ''lobbyist problem'' we are facing. Ensuring that lawmakers comply with existing ethics rules and enhancing lobbyist disclosure requirements are important goals . . . and even on this measure, . . . the so-called ''Lobbying Accountability and Transparency Act'' falls embarrassingly short.

What started as a limited but seemingly earnest attempt at reform has been progressively hollowed out over the past several weeks in—you guessed it—closed-door meetings with lobbyists. The result is not surprising. Reporting requirements for lobbyist-hosted fundraisers? Gone. No more bargain rates on corporate jets? Gone. A study to examine lobbyist employment contracts? Gone.

But again, this is not simply a lobbyist problem. House Democrats have tried in earnest to offer a plan for reform that takes a hard look in the mirror and examines what Congress must do to clean up its own house.

My colleagues DAVE OBEY, BARNEY FRANK, TOM ALLEN and I have introduced a fourteen-point plan that would address not only individual abuses, but also the abuses of the legislative process. Our proposal would end the practice of keeping votes held open long enough to twist recalcitrant arms into compliance. It would prevent legislation from being slipped into conference reports without conference approval. It would require House-Senate conferences to actually meet and vote. And it would give Members of Congress at least a full day to examine the contents of any legislation we are voting on.

We have testified before the Rules Committee in favor of this comprehensive approach. During Rules Committee markup of this bill and again during the hearing on the rule last night, numerous amendments were offered and defeated—mostly on party-line votes—that would have implemented these reforms. The Democratic Substitute, which was also denied a fair hearing last night, recognized the need to take a comprehensive approach to lobbying and ethics reform. At each step in the process, our attempts at genuine, bipartisan reform were turned away.

So what did we get instead? It's no surprise: a bill that could serve as a case study in everything that is broken in our legislative process—of everything we should be ''reforming.'' We get a so-called ''Lobbying Accountability and Transparency Act'' that offers neither accountability nor real transparency. We get a minority party—and many Members of the majority—completely shut out of the process once again, their amendments denied, their advice and concerns unheeded. We get a restrictive rule that makes in order just nine out of the 74 amendments offered—and only one sponsored by a Democrat without a Republican cosponsor—and allows for only one hour of debate on what should be one of the most significant bills we consider all year.

This leadership had a real chance to enact real reform, not for the sake of an aggrieved minority . . . not for the sake of election-year politics . . . but for the sake of our institution, for its integrity and its capacity to govern. Instead, they seem to think they can convince the American people that they're cleaning up our House, when all they're doing is sweeping our problems under the rug.

Well Mr. Speaker, the American people will not be so easily fooled. And I assure you that those of us in this body who want real, comprehensive reform will not rest until we have successfully enacted such a measure. But this is not such a measure. I urge my colleagues to oppose this legislation.

Mr. HULSHOF. Mr. Speaker, it is with regret that I rise today in opposition to the rule before us.

The ethics process in this body is broken. In all candor, there is plenty of blame to go around as to why we find ourselves in this situation. We undermine the public's faith in this great institution when we let petty politics erode the very processes meant to preserve the public's trust in Congress.

I have met with the Majority Leader on this issue, and I sincerely believe that he has a genuine desire to have an effective, functioning Ethics process in the House. I thank him for his willingness to listen, and I hope we can perhaps address this issue in the future.

Having previously served on the Ethics Committee, I firmly believe that the ethics process can work. For the sake of this institution—it must work. And as we begin consideration of the Leadership's ethics and lobby reform package, I will say there are some provisions in the base bill before us that should ultimately be adopted—earmark reform, denying Congressional pensions to convicted felons, enhanced disclosure and improved ethics education are common-sense proposals that I would hope that we can all support.

That being said, I cannot support this rule. Ethics reform is incomplete absent changes to improve the enforcement of House rules. My colleague JOEL HEFLEY and I have put forward legislation to strengthen the ability of the Ethics Committee to dispense with ethics matters by expediting the review of these issues and insulating committee members and non-partisan staff from the political pressures that can pollute the ethics process. We do this by giving the Chair and Ranking Member on the committee subpoena power earlier in the investigative process and prohibiting the arbitrary dismissal of Members and technical staff. We also require ethics education for Members and staff, and we dramatically improve disclosure associated with gifts and travel. All of these common-sense reforms would greatly improve the ethics process in the House.

We sought to offer our legislation as an amendment to the bill we are to consider today. This proposal was not made in order under the rule. Thus, we are faced with the prospect of passing an incomplete ethics reform package that lacks enhanced enforcement.

I think this is a mistake, and for this reason, I must reluctantly oppose this rule.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HAYES). The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. 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, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Ms. Wanda Evans, one of his secretaries.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on two questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

Motion to instruct on H.R. 4297;

Adoption of House Resolution 783.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. The second will be conducted as a 5-minute vote.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES ON H.R. 4297, TAX RELIEF EXTENSION RECONCILIATION ACT OF 2005

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KUHL of New York). The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to instruct on H.R. 4297 offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT) on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

The Clerk will redesignate the motion.

The Clerk redesignated the motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to instruct.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 190, nays 232, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 109]

YEAS—190

Abercrombie	Berkley	Brady (PA)
Ackerman	Berman	Brown (OH)
Allen	Berry	Brown, Corrine
Andrews	Bishop (GA)	Butterfield
Baca	Bishop (NY)	Capps
Baird	Boswell	Capuano
Baldwin	Boucher	Cardin
Becerra	Boyd	Cardoza