□ 1030

RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE

(Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of raising the minimum wage. Less than a month ago in this body I voted against raising the minimum wage. Now why would I vote against raising the minimum wage? There is no Member in this House that supports raising the minimum wage more than I do. I clearly understand that a person cannot live on $10,700 a year. But it was a poison pill. As we said in the Florida House, it was the kiss of death because it was tied to an estate tax that would have taken trillions of dollars out of the budget and we would have had to cut education, health care and so many other programs that we care about.

The Bible says the poor will always be with us, but our job is to help raise the standard. Give us a clean bill on this floor and let's vote to help the American people.

IRAQ IS A DISTRACTION

(Mr. DAVIS of Tennessee asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DAVIS of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, on Monday night, our President had an opportunity, after 5 years of 9/11, to again unify this Nation as he did in 2001. Instead, he chose to give a political speech that focused more on the war in Iraq than what he is doing now to secure this Nation against those really responsible for the attacks of 9/11.

Last month, the Republican cochair of the 9/11 Commission Tom Kean said, ''We're not protecting our people in this country. The government is not doing its job.'' That is from a Republican.

When Commissioner Kean was asked whether Iraq is preventing us from protecting our Nation, Kean admitted Iraq has been a distraction.

Five years ago and 2 days after 9/11, Osama bin Laden remains at large and the Taliban is resurging in Afghanistan. Since the Bush administration turned its attention away from Afghanistan to go into Iraq, roadside bombs have increased by 30 percent and suicide bombings have doubled.

Mr. Speaker, President Bush had a chance on Monday to level with the American people. It is time we turn our attention back to Osama bin Laden, who really was the one who was responsible for the 9/11 attacks. Let's get Osama bin Laden.

AMERICA CANNOT AFFORD TO STAY THE COURSE

(Mr. WU asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WU. Mr. Speaker, it is indeed time for a change in Iraq. Our troops are currently caught in a deadly civil war between the Sunnis and Shiias, a war that is resulting in the death of American soldiers every night, and hundreds of Iraqi civilians every day. If there was ever a time to change tactics, now is that time.

House Republicans and President Bush cling stubbornly to the mantra ''stay the course,'' but slogans cannot substitute for strategy.

President Bush says American troops will still be on the ground in Iraq when he leaves office in 2009, and that would make the Iraq war longer than World War II. We cannot continue to be bogged down in Iraq's civil war. Conditions there are not getting better. According to the latest Pentagon report, things are actually getting worse and the war in Iraq has put an enormous strain on our military, resulting in military readiness levels at historic lows.

It is time we get back to fighting the real war on terror and not a civil war in Iraq.

REPUBLICANS PREFER TO PLAY POLITICS

(Mr. PALLONE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, this week Republicans have turned to their two favorite political tactics: Smear and fear. It is bad enough that President Bush chose to use a 9/11 anniversary speech on Monday night not to unite this Nation with facts but instead to once again divide us by using his bully pulpit to instill fear into Americans with misleading statements.

Just 2 weeks ago the President said Iraq had nothing to do with 9/11, but once again on Monday night he spent the majority of his speech in the Oval Office talking about Iraq.

Why would the President talk about Iraq if he knows it had nothing to do with 9/11?

Mr. Speaker, he is trying to blur the issue so Americans will continue to tolerate his failed stay-the-course strategy that a majority of Americans have already rejected.

Democrats want a new direction for Iraq, with the responsible redeployment of U.S. troops beginning this year, in order to strongly position America to confront the global challenge of terrorism. Unlike the administration's current plan, our real security plan is a strategy for taking the fight to the terrorists to better protect Americans.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2965, FEDERAL PRISON INDUSTRIES COMPETITION IN CONTRACTING ACT OF 2006

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 997 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 997

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2965) to amend title 18, United States Code, to require Federal Prison Industries to compete for its contracts minimizing its unfair competition with private sector firms and their non-inmate workers and empowering Federal agencies to get the best value for taxpayers' dollars, to provide a five-year period during which Federal Prison Industries adjusts to obtaining inmate work opportunities through other than its mandatory source status, to enhance inmate access to remedial and vocational opportunities and other rehabilitative opportunities to better prepare inmates for a successful return to society, to authorize alternative inmate work opportunities in support of non-profit organizations and other public service programs, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on the Judiciary now printed in the bill. The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. Notwithstanding clause 11 of rule XVIII, no amendment to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, this is a structured rule providing for consideration of H.R. 2965, the Federal Prison Industries Competition in Contracting Act of 2006. The rule provides 1 hour of general debate, equally divided and controlled by the chairman and the ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary. It waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. It provides that the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on the Judiciary which is now printed in the bill shall be considered as an original bill for the purpose of amendments and shall be considered as read.

The rule makes in order only those amendments printed in the Rules Committee report accompanying the resolution, and it provides that the amendments made in order may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report, equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, and shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, the rule waives all points of order against the amendments printed in the report and allows one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

Mr. Speaker, today we will debate reforming a government-owned corporation called UNICOR, which is more commonly known as the Federal Prison Industries. Federal Prison Industries, Incorporated, manufactures products and provides services that are sold to the executive agencies in the Federal Government. When the Federal prison system was established at the turn of the 20th century, factories were erected in Federal prisons to manufacture products for the Federal Government. President Roosevelt consolidated Federal Prison Industries into UNICOR in 1934 to provide training opportunities for inmates, control inmate behavior, and diversify production.

In fiscal year 2005, Federal Prison Industries generated $765 million in sales with all revenue reinvested in the purchase of raw materials and wages for inmates and staff. As of 2004, there were 102 UNICOR factories at 71 different correctional facilities working on operations such as metals, furniture, electronics, textiles and graphic arts. UNICOR currently employs 19,720 inmates, or 17 percent of eligible Federal prisoners, at a rate of 23 cents to $1.15 an hour and, by charter, must be economically self-sustaining without any Federal appropriations.

So, Mr. Speaker, the problem with the current system is the adverse impact it has had on small businesses which do not have the ability to compete with UNICOR's guaranteed market, even if they could provide a better deal for our government agencies.

Mr. HOEKSTRA introduced H.R. 2965, the Federal Prison Industries Competition in Contracting Act of 2005, with the fundamental objective of correcting this problem by eliminating the requirement for Federal agencies to purchase products from UNICOR under most circumstances.

H.R. 1829, the Federal Prison Industries Competition in Contracting Act of 2003 passed by a vote of 350–65 in the 108th Congress, and it is almost identical to this Federal Prison Industries Competition in Contracting Act of 2005, the notable exception being the authorization of a new work-based employment preparation program for Federal inmates where private sector firms can enter into agreements with UNICOR to prepare inmates to reenter society through real-world work and apprenticeships.

The Federal Prison Industries Competition in Contracting Act would change the 1934 statute of Federal Prison Industries by requiring UNICOR to compete, let me repeat, to compete for business opportunities instead of relying on a mandatory government purchasing, prohibits inmate labor from being sold separate from inmate products, provides more remedial education and vocational training opportunities for inmates, authorizes alternative inmate work opportunities in support of nonprofit community service organizations, and it allows the Attorney General oversight and discretion to award individual source contracts should UNICOR lose a contract and endanger the safety of a Federal correctional institution.

It establishes a $2.50 per hour minimum wage for prisoners who are within 2 years of release. It raises the maximum wage to half of the Federal minimum wage for all inmates by September 30, 2008, and equal to the Federal minimum wage by 2013.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, it increases the ability for public comment on proposed Federal Prison Industries expansions and ensures direct access to these comments by the board of directors.

Considering our Nation's tradition on promoting fair competition and with the support of organizations and business interests such as the Associated Builders and Contractors, the Coalition for Government Procurement, the National Association of Manufacturers, the National Federation of Independent Business, the Uniform and Textile Service Association, the United States Chamber of Commerce, and the Prison and Justice Fellowship, it should be reasonable to apply good business practices to prison labor.

Beyond fair competition, it is important to modernize the Federal Prison Industries program for this 21st century. UNICOR has operated on the same base model since 1934, despite diverse changes in labor and technology.

Our Federal prisoners are beyond the days of simply stamping a license plate for a penny a day. If we are to remain committed to rehabilitation and our Federal system of prisons, then we need a serious commitment to give prisoners reasonable work skills, reinforce acceptable behavior, and reinstate these prisoners to a real world work environment.

□ 1045

Furthermore, we need a system that is business friendly and is cost effective to our Federal Government.

I urge my colleagues to vote for swift passage of this rule, and, of course, H.R. 2965, the Federal Prison Industries Competition in Contracting Act of 2006.

I, Mr. Speaker, stand in support for both the rule and the underlying legislation.

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. I thank Mr. GINGREY for the time, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to this rule and to the underlying bill. In 1934, Congress had established Federal Prison Industries, or FPI, a government corporation that employs inmates in Federal prisons to produce goods and services for the Federal Government.

FPI employs nearly 20,000 inmates in more than 100 prison factories to manufacture a number of products for the United States Government. Prisoners manufacture such items as clothing, textiles, fleet management of the vehicle components, graphics and industrial products in return for cheap labor. Inmates receive valuable job training opportunities that teach them the necessary skills that may help them become productive, hardworking citizens once they reenter society.

Under current Federal law, FPI is a mandatory source of goods and services for Federal agencies. That means, Mr. Speaker, that any agency that wants to buy at least $2,500 worth of goods and services must first seek to do so through FPI. If FPI cannot process an order, the agency is then given a waiver to make the purchase from another source.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation seeks to phase out the preference given to Federal Prison Industries in contracts with Federal agencies. Supporters claim that it is unfair to exclusively employ prisoners when small businesses and private firms want to secure contracts with the Federal Government.

However, I claim if it ain't broke, don't fix it. I claim that it is unfair to spend more than half a billion tax dollars to dissolve an effective and self-sustaining program. I claim that it is unfair to obligate an additional $75 million a year for the next 5 years to implement an educational and vocational program to replace an already successful educational and vocational program.

This seems to me to be an extraordinarily wasteful way to spend American taxpayers' dollars. As a former judge, I know the importance of prison

employment training programs. I personally witnessed the benefits of giving prisoners constructive work while they are incarcerated. While the Federal Prison Industries may need reform, I propose we seek other options. I propose we first ask the Bureau of Prisons what they think about reforming Federal Prison Industries.

I propose we ask the Federal agencies that receive FPI products and services what improvements can be made. I am not convinced that this particular bill is necessary or that it is the best solution in reforming Federal Prison Industries.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I do not understand why this bill could not have been considered under an open rule. It was in the last Congress, and this same measure passed in the last Congress, 350–65, was not taken up by the U.S. Senate, is not going to be taken up by the United States Senate in the next 2 weeks and probably not even in a lame duck session.

There weren't very many of our colleagues who offered amendments at the Rules Committee last night, and of the Members who were not permitted to offer their amendments, Mr. SCOTT from the Judiciary Committee and Mr. ROHRABACHER, a Democrat and a Republican, each had thoughtful amendments, which the full House should have been given the opportunity to debate.

We didn't vote yesterday until 6:30 in the evening, and there isn't anything at least firm on the schedule on the floor Friday. So why not let the House work its will? Why continue to stamp out democracy here in the people's House while feigning to advocate democracy around the globe. It really kind of makes you go hmm, and it makes me wonder, Mr. Speaker.

For all of the above reasons, I urge my colleagues to reject this rule and the underlying bill.

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

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 5 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA).

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on the rule, not due to the merits of the bill before us, but because I am compelled to call to attention the complete debacle that I think is existing at the Federal Bureau of Prisons.

I rise on behalf of my constituents in a small rural town in Mendota, California, to demand that the Federal Government stay true to its word, as a focus to the core of this issue, to focus on what I believe is smart budgeting in addressing the security demands that evolved with our country, as well as the Federal Government's commitment to make good on its commitments.

In May of 2000 the city of Mendota was approached by the Federal Bureau of Prisons to build a medium security Federal correctional institution. The local elected officials, the community leaders have been strong supporters of this project and proud to provide the public service to our country, which also has the effect of encouraging economic stimulus that this prison would create.

As you see here, over $100 million has already been spent on the facility. It is about 40 percent complete. This photograph was taken about a week ago.

The funding, though, is now in jeopardy. The administration has proposed a rescission of $57 million in fiscal year 2002 and 2004 that has jeopardized the entire completion of this project. Mendota's contract is set to expire in October of this year, which, in this case, is anticipated that any new contract that will have to be reissued will cost the Federal Government and our budget 20 percent in additional dollars.

Yet the Bush administration refuses the request to add additional dollars, dollars to complete this facility. The administration's approach to funding in this case, in my opinion, is pennywise and pound foolish. There is no sound reasoning that would support cutting off the funding for the completion of this facility. We know what the issue is on the Federal level. We have, under the medium security facilities, currently over 37 percent over capacity throughout the country, 37 percent over capacity. The Federal Bureau of Prisons expects that they need to house 7,500 new Federal inmates annually.

In California, our institutional system is 89 percent over capacity, and the Department of Corrections expects an increase of over 4,000 inmates annually. This Mendota facility would provide 1,522 much-needed beds to help address this growing demand. The Federal Government has made a long-term commitment to construct and operate this facility.

To bring this project to a virtual halt would be unfair not only to the citizens of Mendota, who have over an 18 percent unemployment level, of which 42 percent of the population is living below the poverty line. The President would provide good jobs and a major boost to the very depressed local economy.

Now, when we talk about the administration's failure and their fiscal year irresponsibility to American taxpayers, I think this continues, when you begin to understand that the Bureau of Prisons proposes to begin the construction of two new facilities while they want to stop this one half completed. What sense does that make?

That is right, believe it or not, we have a half-built prison in California in the city of Mendota. It will cost the Federal Government $2 million a year to mothball this facility, to go in and to make sure that they flush the toilets and they do the other kinds of things necessary to keep it operational.

In closing, this is an untenable situation. It is an untenable situation for the city of Mendota. It is an embarrassment to this administration, which finds its credibility being shredded almost on a daily basis. It is clear that if the Bush administration refuses to provide the promised funding to this ongoing construction of this facility, this half-built facility will be standing proof to our administration's failure to keep its word and to honor its commitments.

Ladies and gentlemen, I urge that reconsideration be taken to this funding rescission and that, in fact, we offer good common sense as it relates to our Federal budget. It is not good fiscal responsibility to stop construction of a half-completed prison and begin the construction of two new facilities that have yet to be started.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I don't question the gentleman from California's right to take an opportunity to advocate on behalf of his district and the construction of that Federal facility, and I am sure he knows of what he speaks. But getting more to the point of this particular bill, the gentleman, my good friend from Florida, wanted an open rule.

Of course, I understand that. I think if I were on the other side, I would always want an open rule as well. But in the spirit of openness, I want to point out to my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, that I think there were eight or nine amendments submitted. We accepted five. Three of those amendments to this bill were Democratic amendments, one was a bipartisan amendment. Yes, there was one Republican amendment.

The last time we passed this bill, there were something like, we had an open rule, and there were 14 amendments that were accepted. All of those amendments are included now in the text of this bill that we are discussing today.

I just want to point out that the process of bipartisanship and openness, Mr. Speaker, let me just tell you, and remind my colleague from Florida, and I know he is aware of this, but in the committee, the ranking member, Mr. CONYERS, supported this bill as did Mr. WATT, Mrs. MALONEY, Ms. WATERS, and Mr. FRANK. The main amendment that came through committee concerned this issue of training, of better training of our current Federal prison population to help them be better rehabilitated and have an opportunity, as they go out into the 21st century.

As we point out, we are trying to revise something that started in 1934 with people stamping license plates. There is a lot of modern technology, Mr. Speaker. I know all of our colleagues on both sides of the aisle understand that.

If there is some way that we can give that training to these people in the prison system who want to change their lives, and, as soon as they get out, they get a good job, maybe even go to work for one of these private companies that is helping provide for their training through this program, that was a wonderful addition to the bill.

□ 1100

That, in fact, was new since the last time this bill came up. Again, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. WATT, Mrs. MALONEY, Ms. WATERS and Mr. FRANK were all very supportive of that.

So the statement that ''if it ain't broke, don't fix it,'' I think it was broke, and I think my good friend from Florida's colleagues felt that it was broken, and in a bipartisan way we are trying to fix it.

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume only to respond to my good friend from Georgia that I am prepared, as I am sure all Members in this body are, to stipulate that this is an important matter. The question that I would ask and answer rhetorically is, is this the most important thing that we could be doing here? If it is, I am missing something, because I did not see the minimum wage, I did not see port security, I did not see the appropriations bills. All we have done is two of the 13 up to now.

So if this is the most important thing, which has already passed in a previous session of Congress 350–65, and ain't going to pass the other body this week or next or before September 29, when the majority leader has said that we will go sine die during that particular weekend, I am here to tell you that this is a woeful response, and it is more than credible that it will make the suggestion that people make come to fruition that this is a do-nothing Congress, when in fact we are taking up something that may very well be important, but it sure ain't the most important thing to Jane and Joe Lunch Bucket in America.

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

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume for the purpose of closing.

The gentleman says that is not the most important thing, and I don't disagree with him. I think it is very important. It is not the most important thing. Of course, a lot of ''the most important things'' that he has mentioned this Republican majority has brought to the floor of this House and we have passed, some of that, most of it actually, in a bipartisan way, with support from the other side.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. GINGREY. Of course, I yield to my friend, the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Most quickly, have we done the appropriations measures, and can the gentleman assure me that between now and September 29 we will pass the rest of the appropriations measures in the House of Representatives?

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, as the gentleman from Florida knows, we have passed I guess it is 10 out of 11. We may have one appropriations bill that has not passed the House. All of the rest have. We are waiting on the Senate. We are very confident that we will next week, given the leader's colloquy for what our schedule is, I can't say for sure, but it is my understanding we will be dealing with both the Homeland Security appropriation and the Department of Defense appropriation next week.

As I pointed out, we have passed all of these appropriations bills. We have done our work and we will continue to do our work. We are ready to receive those conference reports.

In the meantime then, what are we to do? Is the gentleman suggesting we sit over here on the leadership majority side and do nothing? Absolutely not, Mr. Speaker. We are doing our work.

This is a very important piece of legislation, and I want to thank my colleague from Michigan (Mr. HOEKSTRA) for sponsoring it and for being a tireless champion of reform for Federal Prison Industries.

As I discussed in my opening statement, it is important to protect the interests of business without diminishing the effectiveness of our Federal Prison Industries, also referred to as UNICOR. With H.R. 2965, the Federal Prison Industries Competition in Contracting Act of 2005, this Congress has an opportunity to promote fair competition and to update UNICOR for the 21st century, as I said earlier.

This body passed similar legislation with an overwhelming 350–65 majority. Federal Prison Industries are important for prisoner behavior control, for the safety of our Federal prison guards, and, furthermore, it serves as an opportunity, and this is most important, for inmates to learn skills necessary for life after prison. It helps reduce the number of repeat offenders and ultimately reduces the stress of our overcrowded prisons. My good friend the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA), of course, mentioned that in describing the facility in his district that is so needed.

This current Federal Prison Industries system is outdated and it still operates off of the same executive order issued by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1934. Considering the global economy and accounting for further changes and the needs and exchange of goods and services in this, the 21st century, it is important to update this program in order to preserve its efficiency for rehabilitating prisoners.

The Federal Prison Industries Competition in Contracting Act of 2005 would preserve the successful formula of the current system with the checks and balances of a competitive market. It is no longer in the best interests of our government or Federal prisons to have a guaranteed artificial market. Our current system is not fair to small businesses who wish to compete for government contracts, it is not fair to the executive agencies trying to work within a tight budget, and it is not fair for the education of prisoners who need to learn new job skills and the nature of a competitive market.

Outside of providing competition for outside businesses, H.R. 2965, the Federal Prison Industries Competition in Contracting Act of 2005 would prohibit inmate labor from being sold separate from inmate products, it would provide more remedial education and vocational opportunities for inmates, and it would authorize alternative inmate work opportunities in support of nonprofit community service organizations.

So, Mr. Speaker, in closing, I want to reiterate the diverse support of H.R. 2965, the Federal Prison Industries Competition in Contracting Act of 2005, including businesses, civic organizations and the unions. It is important to pass legislation to reform Federal Prison Industries in order to sustain the program for the 21st century.

I ask my colleagues, please support this rule and the underlying legislation.

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this legislation that will end the unfair government-sponsored monopoly enjoyed by Federal Prison Industries.

H.R. 2965 is a good bill that will protect the jobs of American taxpayers. According to the National Economic Council, 2.9 million manufacturing jobs have been lost since 2001. We should do everything possible to keep workers employed.

FPI is, not competing on a level playing field. It pays its workers just pennies and is not required to pay taxes. With its predatory practices, FPI has contributed to the closure of private companies and the loss of tens of thousands of jobs throughout the Nation. This legislation will ensure that contracts are awarded to the company that will provide the best products, delivered on time, and at the best prices, thereby saving taxpayer dollars and protecting good jobs. In short, the way the free market is supposed to operate.

H.R. 2965 also provides valuable alternative rehabilitative opportunities, including work in support of nonprofit, public service organizations, to better prepare inmates for a successful return to society.

The bill enjoys broad bipartisan support, and has previously passed the House overwhelmingly. Additionally, H.R. 2965 has support from much of the business community and organized labor.

I urge my colleagues to vote for this legislation and to oppose any amendment that will weaken the underlying bill.

Mr. GINGREY. 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 resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H. RES. 994, EXPRESSING SENSE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ON FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF TERRORIST ATTACKS LAUNCHED AGAINST THE UNITED STATES ON SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 996 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 996

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order without intervention of any point of order to consider in the House the resolution (H. Res. 994) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives on the fifth anniversary of the terrorist attacks launched against the United States on September 11, 2001. The resolution shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the resolution and preamble to final adoption without intervening motion or demand for division of the question except: (1) four hours of debate equally divided and controlled by the Majority Leader and Minority Leader or their designees; and (2) one motion to recommit which may not contain instructions.

SEC. 2. During consideration of House Resolution 994 pursuant to this resolution, notwithstanding the operation of the previous question, the Chair may postpone further consideration of the resolution to a time designated by the Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to my friend the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, this rule provides for 4 hours of debate in the House, equally divided and controlled by the majority leader and minority leader or their designees. It waives all points of order against consideration of the resolution and also provides one motion to recommit, which may not contain instructions.

Finally, it provides that notwithstanding the operation of the previous question, the Chair may postpone further consideration of the resolution to a time designated by the Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we are here today, 5 years after the tragedy of September 11, to speak with one voice to let the world know that we have not forgotten the lessons of that terrible day. We are here to remember the thousands ruthlessly murdered by our enemies who hijacked four civilian aircraft and crashed them into the World Trade Center towers, the Pentagon and a field in Pennsylvania, and to recognize the unimaginable losses suffered by their families. We are also here to honor the sacrifices and the courage shown by our first responders who selflessly rushed to the flaming buildings in order to rescue the victims of these attacks.

We are also here to let our allies in the war on terror know that we stand united with them in the war on terror, and to recognize the progress that continues to be made by our Federal intelligence, law enforcement and security agencies in conjunction with intelligence, law enforcement and security agencies of our allies, in keeping Americans safe. And we are here to remind these allies and to place our enemies on notice that we will never shirk from the war on terror and that we will never forget what happened on September 11, 2001.

The six-page resolution should be recognized by every Member of this body as an opportunity to remember our Nation's tragic loss and to encourage every American to do the same. It is an opportunity to extend our sympathies to the families of the lost and to honor those who risked their own lives and health trying to protect the lives and health of others.

It is an opportunity to extend our gratitude to our intelligence and military personnel serving at home and abroad and their families for their service. It is to thank the citizens of other nations who are contributing to the effort to defeat global terrorism.

More importantly, it is an opportunity by this body to reaffirm that we remain vigilant and steadfast in the war on terror, that we remember the sacrifices made by so many innocent Americans on September 11 and that we will never succumb to the cause of terrorists.

Mr. Speaker, the resolution that will be brought here before the House for a vote is an earnest, heart-felt and comprehensive resolution putting the House on record and standing once again against terrorism.

This House already has a strong record on this topic and has already passed a number of bills designed to accomplish the main goal laid out in this resolution, to remember the lessons of 9/11 and to honor the victims by preventing another attack on American soil. We have voted to give our law enforcement the tools they need to prosecute the war on terror in the United States and throughout the world, and through the passage of the USA PATRIOT Act and its reauthorization we have once again reaffirmed that.

We have voted to implement a key component of the 9/11 Commission by creating Federal standards for the application process in the issuing of State identification cards through the REAL ID Act.

□ 1115

And this House has voted to secure our borders through the Border Protection, Antiterrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act and to defend our ports through the Security and Accountability for Every Port Act. We have made important reforms in the intelligence community through the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act and provided our first responders with the resources that they would need with our annual Homeland Security authorization and appropriations process.

Mr. Speaker, this House has accomplished a great deal on behalf of the American people to ensure the citizens of the United States that they can be safe here and abroad, but we understand that this job is not yet done. Next week the House is scheduled to consider legislation that will build upon all of this hard work, legislation to further boost our national security and to give our law enforcement the tools it needs to prevent our shadowy, ever-shifting, and determined enemy to once again demonstrate that we do not rest in the war on terror and that we will not forget.

I encourage all of my colleagues to join me in supporting this rule to let our allies and our enemies alike know that we will continue the war on terror both in memory of those murdered on September 11 and for the generations still to come who will look back and evaluate our ability to put partisanship aside and to stand together on behalf of our Nation, our citizens, and, in fact, our civilization.

I encourage all of my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS), my friend, for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, today we remember that terrible day of September 11, 2001. We continue to mourn for those who are lost. Our hearts continue to ache for the loved ones left behind. We honor those first responders who saved so many lives. We continue to stand firm as we pursue justice against those who perpetrated those attacks. And we remain committed to finding and eliminating terrorists around the world.

Mr. Speaker, almost every year since 2001, Congress has passed resolutions commemorating the September 11 attacks. In past years those resolutions have been thoughtful, appropriate, and solidly bipartisan, as they should be. Sadly and unfortunately, that is not the case this year.

Instead, the Republican leadership of this House has chosen to include controversial language in the resolution, including language celebrating the passage of legislation that many of us, both Democrats and Republicans, find to be deeply problematic.

For example, the resolution before us celebrates the passage of the USA PATRIOT Act, which I and many others, Republicans and Democrats, believe went too far in sacrificing American's constitutional civil liberties.

Rand Corporation terrorism expert Brian Michael Jenkins recently made