

How can you be against building new affordable homes for people who need it all over this country, not just in the cities but in the towns and in the suburbs and certainly in the rural communities? We have people who are living in homes that are not fit for humans to live in. We have people still in some places in the deep South that don't have toilets and running water. We have folks who are living in some of the housing and trailers that are falling apart. We need the housing trust fund. We need this reform. We need this rule, and I would ask support for it all.

Mr. WELCH of Vermont. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK).

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, on October 26, 2005, the House passed the GSE bill that came out of the committee chaired by Mr. Oxley that had a housing trust fund virtually identical to this one. This one is financed a little differently at the request of the Treasury Department, but it's essentially the same thing.

The vote was 331-90. Republicans voted in favor of this bill containing this housing tax 209-15, and among those who joined in the majority, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS). So I appreciate his concern for this. It did not appear to be evident in October of 2005 when he joined 208 of his Republican colleagues in voting for essentially this same fund.

Mr. WELCH of Vermont. Mr. Speaker, I'd inquire of the gentleman from Texas if he has any remaining speakers at this point?

Mr. SESSIONS. I appreciate the gentleman asking. At this time I have no additional speakers.

Mr. WELCH of Vermont. Mr. Speaker, I'm the last speaker on this side. So I will reserve my time until the gentleman has closed for his side and has yielded back his time.

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

The gentleman from Massachusetts makes important points. I think that the gentleman should also hear that we believe there should be transparency to make sure that these middle class homeowners who would be buying and paying for this \$2.5 billion increase, that they would understand why that additional cost is being placed on them, and these are the transparency things that we think that good government can be about.

The process also has developed itself to where we began talking about the Rules Committee once again, and Mr. Speaker, two nights ago I was provided with a summary by the majority party of a breakdown of the rules, what we have done when I was in the majority in the Rules Committee versus the Democrats now being the majority party.

And the fact of the matter is through May 15, which is what this is talking about, the Democrats have had 13 closed rules. The Republicans had six closed rules over the same period of

time. Six closed rules for Republicans; 13 closed rules for Democrats. Eight open rules for the Democrats, which they call open rules but that had a preprinting requirement, so they really should be modified open rules, but the bottom line is a number of those have been over suspensions that Republicans did not even place a rule on. We just brought them to the floor of the House of Representatives and let them see what that outcome would be.

Mr. Speaker, I would insert this into the RECORD at this point.

110TH RULE BREAKDOWN THROUGH MAY 15, 2007  
43 Total rules:

8 open rules (7 with a preprinting requirement).

20 structured rules.

Thirteen closed rules.

1 conference report rule.

1 procedural rule.

60—Republican/minority amendments in order.

109TH RULE BREAKDOWN THROUGH MAY 15, 2005  
29 Total rules:

2 open rules (1 appropriations bill).

15 structured rules.

Six closed rules.

2 conference report rules.

4 procedural rules.

51—Democratic/minority amendments in order.

Mr. Speaker, the Republican Party, my party, is very aware of the dramatic needs of housing in this country, the needs that people have, families who have children, elderly people, disabled people, who do need more affordable and better housing, and that's why you have seen in our past, as was undisputed on the floor today, about the number of people who have voted for providing these funds that would be available.

We do believe that there should be transparency. We believe that the people, the consumers, who will be paying this additional \$2.5 billion should be told why, what it's for, just as anyone who closes on a house should understand if there's going to be a FedEx package that would be delivered or a title fee or some fee that would be associated even with a notary public, that that should be included as part of the closing cost of a house to make sure that the consumer knows why and what they are paying for.

So I would be offering an amendment that was made in order by the Rules Committee as part of our discussion about how to improve this opportunity to make transparency available to all the consumers.

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

Mr. WELCH of Vermont. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 1427, the Federal Housing Finance Reform Act of 2007 ensures that Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, the GSEs that support the mortgage markets, operate in a safe and sound manner and fulfill the missions assigned to them under their charters.

The bill does this through the establishment of a strong, independent regu-

lator and through the enhancements to the GSEs mission responsibilities. The bill also creates the first new funding source for affordable housing. Since the HOME program was created in the early 1990s, it's been almost 20 years since we have put any infusion of money from a new source into a growing crisis in housing. The \$500 million Affordable Housing Fund, which housing advocates in Vermont, in your State and States all across this country are very excited about, will be used by them for badly needed construction and the preservation of affordable housing.

Very similar legislation, as has been discussed between my colleagues from Texas and from Massachusetts, passed this House on a strong 331-90 vote last Congress, and this bill, H.R. 1427, was approved in the Financial Services Committee by a bipartisan vote of 45-19.

I urge a "yes" vote on the rule and on the previous question.

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. The question is on the resolution.

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

Mr. SESSIONS. 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 are 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.

#### NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2008

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 403 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 1585.

□ 1116

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 further consideration of the bill (H.R. 1585) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal year 2008, and for other purposes, with Mr. PASTOR (Acting Chairman) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. When the Committee of the Whole rose on Wednesday, May 16, 2007, amendment No. 1 printed in House Report 110-151