

penalties and \$8.6 million in redress or disgorgement. This is a proud record indeed.

To maintain the success of this program, however, legislative action is needed. The authority of the FTC to collect fees to support maintenance of the Registry and the related enforcement program expired at the end on September 2007. H.R. 2601, whose lead sponsor is Rep. STEARNS, will provide the FTC with a permanent fee structure for this purpose, contingent on approval of the fees in annual appropriations acts. This will provide appropriate oversight over the funding mechanism. The bill also requires the FTC to prepare two reports on the use and effectiveness of the Registry, including allegations regarding abuse surrounding a number of exemptions. The Committee takes these consumer complaints seriously and intends to look into them, in connection with review of the FTC reports.

I urge my colleagues to vote for this important consumer protection bill.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. 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 North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2601, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### DO-NOT-CALL IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2007

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3541) to amend the "Do-not-call" Implementation Act to eliminate the automatic removal of telephone numbers registered on the Federal "do-not-call" registry, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3541

*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 "Do-Not-Call Improvement Act of 2007".

#### SEC. 2. PROHIBITION OF EXPIRATION DATE FOR REGISTERED NUMBERS.

The Do-Not-Call Implementation Act (15 U.S.C. 6101 note) is amended by adding at the end the following:

#### "SEC. 5. PROHIBITION OF EXPIRATION DATE.

"(a) NO AUTOMATIC REMOVAL OF NUMBERS.—Telephone numbers registered on the national 'do-not-call' registry of the Telemarketing Sales Rule (16 C.F.R. 310.4(b)(1)(iii)) since the establishment of the registry and telephone numbers registered on such registry after the date of enactment of this Act, shall not be removed from such registry except as provided for in subsection (b) or upon the request of the individual to whom the telephone number is assigned.

"(b) REMOVAL OF INVALID, DISCONNECTED, AND REASSIGNED TELEPHONE NUMBERS.—The Federal Trade Commission shall periodically check telephone numbers registered on the national 'do-not-call' registry against national or other appropriate databases and shall remove from such registry those tele-

phone numbers that have been disconnected and reassigned. Nothing in this section prohibits the Federal Trade Commission from removing invalid telephone numbers from the registry at any time."

#### SEC. 3. REPORT ON ACCURACY.

Not later than 9 months after the enactment of this Act, the Federal Trade Commission shall report to Congress on efforts taken by the Commission, after the date of enactment of this Act, to improve the accuracy of the "do-not-call" registry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) each will control 20 minutes. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, at this time I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The bill that we now consider on the floor is related to the previous bill that we just adopted. H.R. 3541, the Do-not-call Improvement Act of 2007, ensures that Americans who signed up to be on the do-not-call list remain on the do-not-call list. As the law currently stands, consumers are automatically purged from the registry after a 5-year period and they are forced to re-register their phone numbers with the FTC. Consequently, if we do nothing, of the 132 million telephone numbers that are currently listed on the do-not-call registry, almost 52 million of those numbers will expire and once again be fair game for telemarketers.

I guarantee you, Mr. Speaker, that the vast majority of these consumers are unaware that they must relist their phone numbers. As was the case with the previous bill, I don't think Members of Congress want to incur the wrath of millions of angry constituents and family members who thought they were safe from the nuisance of telemarketers, but are once again getting their pestering phone calls every evening. I might also add that September 28, the date in which 52 million numbers will expire, is right before election day. Need I say more?

The authors of the bill, my good friend Mr. DOYLE, who will speak in just a few moments, the gentleman from Pennsylvania, and my friend Mr. PICKERING from Mississippi, are both valued members of the Energy and Commerce Committee, and they are to be commended for their bipartisan cooperation. On October 30 the bill was amended at the full committee markup to require the FTC to periodically scrub the do-not-call registry to remove phone numbers that have been disconnected or reassigned and further

requires the commission to report to Congress on the accuracy of the registry. As such, H.R. 3541 ensures that the do-not-call list is fair and accurate and that only those American consumers who do not wish to be called by telemarketers are on the registry.

This is a thoughtful, bipartisan piece of legislation, and I urge its adoption.

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

□ 1615

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bill, H.R. 3541, the Do-Not-Call Improvement Act, and I thank my colleagues from Pennsylvania and Mississippi for their initiative here of making a good bill even better. This legislation simply removes the requirement from the Federal Trade Commission to automatically remove consumers' phone numbers from the registry.

My colleagues, the original act would have required consumers to re-register their phone number every 5 years and was intended, in part, to keep the list accurate and up to date. This will result in tens of millions of Americans being dropped off the list each year contrary to their intention. Millions of Americans would have to re-up, so to speak, to stay on the list. Most of them, in their day-to-day life, would be unaware that their number is about to expire.

So, this bill does a great service. This bill corrects this and would make numbers on the registry permanent, but at the same time require the Federal Trade Commission to keep the list accurate by simply removing invalid and disconnected phone numbers. As further assurance of this, the Federal Trade Commission must study and report to Congress on the accuracy of these numbers. I think that's important. And we mentioned that earlier in the bill, that we're going to have the Federal Trade Commission come back with a report to us. And this is a good area for the Federal Trade Commission to come back and talk about the accuracy of these millions and millions of numbers. So, I applaud my two colleagues for doing that.

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

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I would like to yield 4 minutes to my good friend from Pennsylvania, a gentleman who works so hard for his constituents, Mr. DOYLE.

Mr. DOYLE. I thank my friend from North Carolina.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to approve H.R. 3541, the Do-Not-Call Improvement Act of 2007.

The national do-not-call registry was established in 2003 and is managed by the Federal Trade Commission and enforced by the FTC, the Federal Communications Commission, and State law enforcement officials. Most telemarketers are not allowed to call your number once it has been on the registry for 31 days. If they do, you can

file a complaint against them with the FTC and they can be forced to pay a fine.

The Federal do-not-call registry is one of the most successful government programs ever created. Over 132 million telephone numbers have been added to the registry since its creation. Unfortunately, current regulations require that the registry remove individuals' numbers after 5 years. Consequently, starting in June of 2008, millions of people will begin receiving telemarketing calls again. Many of them don't realize that their listing has expired and that they need to add their number to the do-not-call list again if they want to block telemarketers' phone calls.

It makes no sense to force people to sign up every couple of years. Unfortunately, that's just what will happen if action isn't taken. And that's why I introduced this legislation along with my good friend from Mississippi, CHIP PICKERING, to make registration with the Federal do-not-call list permanent.

My legislation, the Do-Not-Call Improvement Act of 2007, would make the numbers on the Federal do-not-call registry permanent. Under this legislation, someone would only have to sign up for the do-not-call registry once. Without passage of this act, over 50 million phone numbers will be purged from the registry within the next year. The hassle for consumers will be tremendous, with no real payoff.

Now, when a consumer signs up for the do-not-call list, they expect a roach motel where their numbers go in and the telemarketers can't check them out. But for those few individuals who are worried that they might change their mind at some future date, I want to make clear that this bill will still allow individuals to take their names off if they choose to, and it gives the FTC explicit authority to scrub numbers that are invalid or don't belong on the list.

There is no need to risk Americans being removed from the do-not-call list unless they want to be removed, and the best way to deal with this nightmare is to end it before it starts. As I said when I introduced this legislation, I suspect there are very few people saying, "Gee, I really miss those telemarketing calls at dinnertime. I wish the Government would just take me off that do-not-call list." Well, if this bill is enacted, individuals won't have to worry about signing up for the do-not-call list every 5 years.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the AARP, the Consumers Union, the Center for Democracy and Technology, Consumerist.com, and the American Teleservices Association for endorsing this bill. It's a great day when consumer groups, senior groups, privacy groups, and yes, even telemarketers, can agree on making the do-not-call list better.

I urge my colleagues to join me in passing this legislation. By signing up with the national do-not-call registry,

over 130 million Americans have told telemarketers, "Don't call us; we'll call you." Let's save them the hassle of having to have sign up time and time again.

In closing, I want to thank my friend CHIP PICKERING. I want to thank Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman DINGELL, Ranking Member BARTON, Commerce, Trade and Consumer Protection Subcommittee Chairman BOBBY RUSH and my good friend CLIFF STEARNS. And I also want to thank several staffers who have worked so hard on this bill: Gregg Rothschild, Consuela Washington, Shannon Weinberg, Brian McCullough, Will Carty. And finally, I want to thank Hugh Carroll of Mr. PICKERING's staff and Kenneth DeGraff of my staff for all of their hard work.

I encourage my colleagues to join me in passing this bill and making one of the most popular Federal services even better.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished Member from Mississippi (Mr. PICKERING).

(Mr. PICKERING asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PICKERING. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3541. I, too, want to join in commending my colleagues, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. STEARNS, and my good friend Congressman DOYLE from Pennsylvania. I thank the leadership of the committee, Chairman DINGELL and Congressman JOE BARTON. JOE has been a good friend, and he has provided the support on our side, and CLIFF STEARNS, the leadership on our side.

MIKE DOYLE has been a tireless champion on this, a bulldog, and a great advocate for keeping peace and goodwill through the Christmas season for the citizens of our country as we do something that is common sense and pretty straightforward and simple, and that is to extend the do-not-call.

We do not want the cold calls to fill the stockings. We simply want the good cheer that will come from the time around the dinner table and the Christmas tree and the holiday season that all of us who want to be protected in that sanctuary of home will be, and this bill will do that.

The other great benefit, if we're watching our budget around Christmastime as a country and in the Congress, this has no cost. And so for our friends on the Senate side who are known to be frugal, we can tell you this has no cost. It can be passed quickly. It should be passed quickly as a Christmas present for the citizens of the country.

This is good government. It is time. And we can do this together, House and Senate, on a bipartisan basis. It is one of the most widely popular programs that we've had in this country; over 150 million people have signed up. I'm proud to be part of this effort, and I'm proud that I've worked with friends on the other side of the aisle to achieve this.

This is good news, good legislation, and a good effort. And I do wish to commend the committee for their work. I thank Mr. DOYLE again for his good leadership.

As I previously stated, the Do Not Call legislation is extremely popular and has been effective in largely eliminating the unwanted intrusions associated with commercial telemarketing calls to the home. We should all be proud of the success of the legislation and I want to commend both the FCC and FTC for their efforts in this area. I am confident that this language will benefit both the American people and industry. FTC and industry concerns were well vetted and fully considered as the bill moved through normal process. We added the reporting requirement to ensure we are providing an accurate database to the telemarketing industry so they are not hindered by making registration permanent.

Since the Do Not Call registry falls within the jurisdiction and enforcement of both the FCC and FTC, I hope there is continued consistent application, direction, and enforcement by both agencies. We have all worked hard to develop and implement the Do Not Call legislation, and we must be cautious in protecting its integrity and enforceability, particularly as it applies to charities and nonprofits. Inconsistent direction or enforcement ultimately will weaken the enforceability of the restrictions and undermine the statutory intent of this successful Government program. Again, I thank the committee and look forward to passage of this legislation.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, this has been a good debate on this issue, and I want to thank both the gentlemen who have authored this bill for their passion and for their leadership and what they do for the Congress.

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers. I just want to add to Mr. PICKERING's comment about the frugality of the Senate. I think certainly if Mr. PICKERING was in the Senate, we wouldn't have that frugality.

Mr. PICKERING. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. STEARNS. I would be glad to yield.

Mr. PICKERING. I would be regretful if I did not mention the good work of the staff, as did Mr. DOYLE. And for me, on my staff, Hugh Carroll has been tireless and has worked hard, and I appreciate his good work on this effort.

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3541 the "Do-Not-Call Improvement Act of 2007". This bill enjoys wide bipartisan support. Along with H.R. 2601, legislation considered by the House immediately before this bill, these measures will strengthen and ensure the continued operation of one of the most popular Federal consumer protection programs ever adopted by the Congress, the registry that allows consumers to list their phone numbers and thereby protect themselves from unwanted telemarketing phone calls.

Current rules provide that telephone numbers be removed from the list after 5 years, thus requiring consumers to re-register their numbers in order to fend off pesky telemarketing calls. Most consumers are unaware

of this requirement. And I would observe that it places a particular burden on the elderly, the group most often victimized by telemarketing frauds.

The FTC testified before our Committee last month that they would not remove any expiring numbers from the Do-Not-Call Registry, that is, phone numbers will stay registered, pending action by Congress to address this issue.

To that end, H.R. 3541 will eliminate the automatic removal of telephone numbers registered on the Registry, subject to certain common sense exceptions, such as at the request of the individual to whom the number is assigned. To maintain the accuracy of the Registry, H.R. 3541 directs the FTC to "periodically" check telephone numbers on the Registry against national or other appropriate databases, and remove from such Registry telephone numbers that have been disconnected and reassigned. The Committee intends for the FTC or any subcontractor to check these numbers at least once a month and preferably more frequently as technology allows. Nothing in this bill prohibits the FTC from removing invalid telephone numbers from the Registry at any time. The Committee expects the FTC to work with industry and technology experts to ensure the accuracy of the Registry. The legislation directs the FTC to report to Congress, not later than 9 months after date of enactment, on efforts taken by the agency to improve the accuracy of the Registry. I commend Representatives DOYLE and PICKERING for their strong bipartisan leadership on this legislation.

I urge my colleagues to vote for this strong package of important consumer protections. Let us hope for swift action on H.R. 3541, as well as on the legislation establishing a permanent funding mechanism, leading to quick enactment so that Americans are not once again inundated with unwanted calls from telemarketers.

Mr. STEARNS. 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 North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3541, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title was amended so as to read: "A Bill to amend the Do-not-call Implementation Act to eliminate the automatic removal of telephone numbers registered on the Federal 'do-not-call' registry".

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM EXTENSION

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4341) to extend the trade adjustment assistance program under the Trade Act of 1974 for 3 months.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4341

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

#### SECTION 1. TEMPORARY EXTENSION OF TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

(a) ASSISTANCE FOR WORKERS.—Section 245(a) of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2317(a)) is amended by striking "December 31, 2007" and inserting "March 31, 2008".

(b) ASSISTANCE FOR FIRMS.—Section 256(b) of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2346(b)) is amended—

(1) by striking "and \$4,000,000" and inserting "\$4,000,000"; and

(2) by inserting after "October 1, 2007," the following: "and \$4,000,000 for the 3-month period beginning on January 1, 2008.".

(c) ASSISTANCE FOR FARMERS.—Section 298(a) of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2401g(a)) is amended—

(1) by striking ", and there are authorized" and inserting ". There are authorized"; and

(2) by adding at the end the following: "There are authorized to be appropriated and there are appropriated to the Department of Agriculture to carry out this chapter \$9,000,000 for the 3-month period beginning on January 1, 2008.".

(d) EXTENSION OF TERMINATION DATES.—Section 285 of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 note) is amended by striking "December 31, 2007" each place it appears and inserting "March 31, 2008".

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsections (a) through (d) shall be effective as of January 1, 2008.

#### SEC. 2. OFFSETS.

(a) TIME FOR PAYMENT OF CORPORATE ESTIMATED TAXES.—The percentage under subparagraph (B) of section 401(1) of the Tax Increase Prevention and Reconciliation Act of 2005 in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act is increased by 0.25 percentage points.

(b) CUSTOMS USER FEES.—Section 13031(j)(3)(B)(i) of the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (19 U.S.C. 58c(j)(3)(B)(i)) is amended by striking "December 13, 2014" and inserting "December 20, 2014".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER) will each control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. TAA will run out very soon, and it's essential that that not happen. This is a vital program for workers in this country, for the firms for which they work, for farmers, and for their entire communities.

We've been trying to not only extend TAA, but we've been trying to reform it and to improve it. We have passed legislation in this House, legislation that, indeed, reformed and enhanced and expanded TAA, and it passed this House with some considerable bipartisan support. It addressed issues like this:

Expands TAA to service workers;

Improves funding, because a number of States have essentially run out of funds;

Streamlines the process for application for TAA because an unfriendly regimen of rules has too often made it difficult for people to access it;

Modernizes the unemployment system, which badly needs it;

Provides assistance to manufacturing communities hard hit by trade.

Unfortunately, though this bill passed comfortably in this House and

was an important landmark supported by our Speaker, by the majority leader, by Chairman RANGEL, by others, many of us on the Ways and Means Committee and, as I said, with some considerable bipartisan support, but unfortunately, the bill has essentially not moved in the other body. And it has been blocked, I think, by a position in the other body that it should be linked to something else.

Also, the administration essentially has opposed this legislation. And it was really rather startling that that occurred. After all, earlier this fall the President said this about TAA: "I understand that if you're forced to change a job halfway through a career it can be painful for your family. I know that. And that is why I'm a big believer in trade adjustment assistance that helps Americans make the transition from one job to the next."

Unfortunately, it was only a few weeks after that that we received, on the eve of the markup of the bill in the Ways and Means Committee, a letter from the Secretary of Labor opposing the bill that was before the committee. And in the letter the Secretary said, "negative impacts with trade that are borne by the few," that this does not warrant the changes we make in the legislation. Unfortunate language, indeed, because there has been an impact of trade very substantially across the board, not only in the manufacturing industries, but in the service industries and beyond, and that that impact has been borne by many, many more than a few.

So, what has happened is that we passed this legislation with some bipartisan support, legislation that, as I say, expanded and reformed TAA and also addressed overdue issues of unemployment counts. We're just stuck because of the opposition of the administration, and also because of inaction in the Senate.

So, here's what this legislation does:

It extends TAA for 3 months. Why 3 months? Three months because it's the intention the majority, after we return after the holidays, if we adjourn for the holidays, and I assume we will, to get moving quickly to take up this vital reform of TAA within the first few months, to make it a high priority in this House, and we hope in the entire Congress, and we hope in the White House.

□ 1630

So I come today on behalf of many of us viewing the importance of this legislation and asking that this House vote for a 3-month extension until March 31, 2008.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, I yield back myself so much time as I may require.

I rise in support of this extension of the Trade Adjustment Assistance, or TAA program, for 3 months beyond its expiration of December 31. The TAA program provides important training,