

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. HIRONO. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 985 and 986, had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on both.

## FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS, FISCAL YEAR 2010

Mr. OBEY. Madam Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 976, I call up the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 64) making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2010, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 976, the joint resolution is considered read.

The text of the joint resolution is as follows:

H.J. RES. 64

*Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2010 (division B of Public Law 111-68) is further amended by striking the date specified in section 106(3) and inserting "December 23, 2009".*

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

Mr. OBEY. Madam Speaker, before I start, I don't see either one of them on the House floor now, but I just want to take this time to note that today is the birthday of the distinguished gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG), the ranking member of the Defense appropriations subcommittee, and also of the gentleman from Washington (Mr. DICKS), who is the second ranking Democrat on the same subcommittee. So in their absence, I think we wanted to wish them well.

With that, Madam Speaker, I would simply say this is a simple joint resolution, a continuing resolution, which takes the Congress to December 23, next Wednesday. It is made necessary by the fact that it is just possible that the Senate might not finish its work before the 18th. They have been known for their speed, but this may be an exception. It is also useful in order to give the President additional time to review the Defense bill before he signs it.

With that, I would urge support, and I am prepared to yield back after the gentleman has made his remarks.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Madam Speaker, this is a simple 5-day CR, and I happily yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. OBEY. Madam Speaker, I would again urge support for the resolution, and I would yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 976, the previous question is ordered.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the joint resolution.

The joint resolution was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

## PERMITTING CONTINUED FINANCING OF GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Mr. STARK. Madam Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 976, I call up the bill (H.R. 4314) to permit continued financing of Government operations, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 976, the bill is considered read.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4314

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

## SECTION 1. CONTINUED FINANCING OF GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS.

Subsection (b) of section 3101 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by striking the dollar amount contained therein and inserting "\$12,394,000,000.000".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California (Mr. STARK) and the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

□ 1415

Mr. STARK. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

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

Mr. STARK. This bill is necessary to allow the government to keep operating past the new year so that we can adjourn for the year. The Treasury Department has told us we will reach our current limit on the national debt on December 31—Happy New Year. Unlike past years, the Treasury Department has informed us they don't have the ability to maneuver and buy more time, so the United States would begin to default on its debt if we do not act.

The bill would raise the debt limit by \$290 billion, enough to last through February 11. Unfortunately, we will have to revisit this issue early next year. I wish we could have avoided that, but to do so, we would have had to resolve differences with the Senate over a budget commission and a statutory PAYGO. With the Senate preoccupied on other matters, that would be impossible before the holidays. Even if the Senate were to pass the larger debt limit increase we sent over to them, we would still have to act again next year.

It's important that we do this, as I said, to keep the government running. I don't like to raise the debt limit, but I do like being in the majority, and I do like seeing us pay our bills because we have an international obligation to many of our creditors.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HELLER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

Madam Speaker, here we go again. Christmas is a week away and Congress is scrambling at the last minute just so we can go home. While Americans are doing last-minute holiday shopping, the majority party is doing its last-minute spending. This year, many families are cutting back on their holiday shopping. The average holiday spending by Americans this year has dropped to \$343 per person from \$372 a year ago. You would think that during these tough times when most Americans are forced to tighten their belts, Congress would do the same. No chance under this majority.

This majority stumbled into 2009 with a budget that raised the deficit by \$1.8 trillion. Then Congress decided to pass an \$800 billion stimulus bill, \$3 billion on Cash for Clunkers, \$1.3 trillion on the Democratic health care bill, a trillion dollars on cap-and-trade and, recently, another \$447 billion was spent on Washington, D.C., bureaucrats. After all this spending, the national debt is now \$12 trillion. Every American citizen will now owe more than \$39,000 to pay for Washington's spending.

Now Democrats want to raise the debt limit to allow even more spending in 2010. The real fat cat is the Federal Government which spends, spends, spends while the American public gets stuck with the bill.

I urge my colleagues to reject raising the debt limit. Give the gift that America deserves: a responsible Federal budget.

Merry Christmas to everyone.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. STARK. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the distinguished committee member of Ways and Means, Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts, be allowed to control the time for our side.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the debt limit legislation we are considering today, and I want to thank Mr. RANGEL for his hard work on the bill in the waning days of the Congress this first session.

Let me talk about what the bill does. This bill is simply about continuing operations for the Federal Government. That is the title of the legislation. "Continuing operations" means getting the Social Security checks out on time, an almost sacred duty that we have. This means providing support for our troops and keeping our museums and our parks open. That is what an increase in the debt limit will allow. Simply stated, this is about bills that have already been incurred.

Now, I will, during my time here, resist the temptation to become overly