

□ 1140

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

(Mr. HOYER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I yield to my friend from Virginia, the majority leader, Mr. CANTOR, for the purposes of inquiring about the schedule for the week to come.

Mr. CANTOR. I thank the gentleman from Maryland, my friend, the Democratic whip, for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, on Monday, the House will meet at noon for morning-hour and 2 p.m. for legislative business, with votes postponed until 6:30 p.m.

On Tuesday and Wednesday, the House will meet at 10 a.m. for morning-hour and noon for legislative business.

On Thursday, the House will meet at 9 a.m. for legislative business. Last votes of the week are expected no later than 3 p.m. on Thursday.

On Friday, no votes are expected in the House.

The House will consider a few bills under suspension of the rules on Monday. A complete list of suspension bills will be announced by the close of business this afternoon.

As for the remainder of the week, we have a number of items to consider. We will complete action on H.R. 2218, the Empowering Parents Through Quality Charter Schools Act. We expect to consider an additional FAA extension. We will vote on a resolution of disapproval relating to the President's debt limit increase request. And we will consider H.R. 2587, the Protecting Jobs from Government Interference Act, the first bill in our fall agenda, Mr. Speaker, relating to job creation.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for the information he has given to us.

Can I inquire, as the gentleman knows, when we left for the August break there was a very substantial issue with respect to the FAA. Does the gentleman know whether there will be any policy riders on the FAA bill that comes to the floor? I know there is a reduction in authorized levels, but are there any policy riders in that bridge bill?

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I would say to the gentleman that we are still in discussions with the other body on the other side of the Capitol, as well as the committee, on exactly the construct of that bill, but do intend to bring that forward next week.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for that information.

I certainly hope that we can do so. And I am pleased to hear that we are having discussions so that that will not be a matter of contention. As you know, we had 4,000 FAA employees and about 71,000 or so contractor, private sector employees who were laid off for a period of time because of the failure to get agreement with the rider that was included in the bill that we passed over to them. I'm hopeful that we don't have a recurrence of that situation be-

cause it would be very harmful not just to those 75,000 people but to the FAA and generally, so I'm hopeful that we can work that out.

The President, Mr. Leader, spoke to us last night about a jobs program. I know that you have made comments with reference to shifting focus from cuts to jobs. We think that's appropriate; we appreciate that observation. But do you have any idea of how soon we may get to the President's proposal on job creation and trying to get our economy growing again? You made some, I think, positive comments and the Speaker has made some positive comments. I think those are welcome. But can you give me some idea, given the President's sense of urgency and I think the sense of the American people of the urgency of trying to create jobs and give them some more resources with which to support themselves and their families, and to invest and to comprehensively try to staunch the loss of teachers and police and fire personnel that each one of our communities is experiencing?

I yield to my friend.

Mr. CANTOR. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, I would respond by saying, first of all, the President has not sent a text of his bill, and we will be awaiting that. I would also like to respond by saying that the President came last night, and there were several things and proposals within his speech that seemed to reflect some areas that we can both agree on and build towards consensus. I would say to the gentleman that insisting that this body and the two sides here agree on everything is not a reasonable expectation. But I feel, and have said so many times since the President's speech, that this is an opportunity for us to set aside the differences that we have, because good people can differ, and begin to focus on things like allowing for tax relief for small businesses, like allowing for the rollback of regulatory impediments that stand in the way of small business growth. As the gentleman knows, we have put forward a fall agenda that is squarely focused on those two goals: rolling back regulation proposals that are standing in the way of middle class job creation, and affording tax relief for small businesses to create an environment for middle class jobs.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman.

I would hope that we could also have hearings.

I understand the gentleman is correct that the text has not been sent up—I expect that to happen in the very near future, probably, I would hope, before we get back on Monday night—but I would hope that we could start hearings on all segments of that and see that on which we could get agreement. Certainly investing in our infrastructure, investing in our schools, in our highways, critically important, we believe. And I think that will not only create jobs, but it will create jobs that will have a meaningful, positive impact on our infrastructure and our economic competitiveness.

The President mentioned about making it in America. As you know, we have a Make It In America agenda which includes a large number of items, including a manufacturing strategy, the President mentioned. That was one of the few times we all stood very enthusiastically when he mentioned, whether it was making cars or refrigerators or other goods here in America, that having made in America goods was something that I think we all support. So that's part of his agenda as well and certainly our agenda, and I hope our agenda writ large on a bipartisan basis.

If I might ask you, on the front page of The Washington Post today, as you probably saw, is a picture of my district in Upper Marlboro, Maryland, where there is great flooding as a result of the rains that we have received from Irene. The supplemental for FEMA is coming hopefully from the Senate relatively soon.

I would ask the gentleman: As you know, \$484 million remains in FEMA's Disaster Relief Fund, clearly not enough to meet the disasters. In the aftermath of 9/11, as the gentleman knows, we appropriated such funds as were necessary, and we did so without paying for them because, in fact, they were real emergencies, real pain, real displacement, real dislocation, real costs immediately incurred by people as a result of the disaster—in that case in a terrorist act, but in this case a disaster. Can the gentleman tell me whether or not we will be able to pass, in a relatively accelerated fashion, sufficient resources for FEMA without getting into arguments about how, in the short term, we will pay for them?

We have to pay for things in the long term; I'm for that. But I would ask the gentleman whether or not he would anticipate getting that supplemental done as early as possible—and hopefully a clean supplemental next week if that is at all possible—because we need to respond to the emergencies that confront us.

I yield to my friend.

Mr. CANTOR. First of all, I would say to the gentleman, he knows as well that my district was the epicenter of the earthquake and damage there for that as well as extremely hard hit by the high winds associated with Irene. We had almost 900,000 people out of power. There are still some people out of power. So I understand the situation that people are suffering and we need to get them their relief. The gentleman knows that I share his commitment to making sure that happens. I also applaud the gentleman for saying that, yes, because he has always been, Mr. Speaker, someone who says we have to pay for what we do here.

□ 1150

I don't think that the two are mutually exclusive. I don't and have never said we should be holding up any relief at all for people who need it. I also think we can work together to act responsibly.

The gentleman has been an advocate always for paying for what we do. And so I would say, as to the request as to where and when we were doing the supplemental, we still have not heard from the administration because, as the gentleman knows, there's a process that goes on at the local and State levels to make a determination about the need and to make a determination that the need exceeds the capacities of the local and State governments so as to then turn to FEMA and the Federal Government to come in.

So I say to the gentleman, we need to understand exactly what the costs are going to be, and we will make sure that we find the money. I will also say that we continue to try and get out of the sort of ad hoc way of appropriating for such emergencies. The fact is in the past that we, in this Congress, have not adequately funded the disaster accounts and have found ourselves caught shorthanded when disaster hits.

As the gentleman knows, part of the debt ceiling agreement included a 10-year rolling average to now be the amount for which we will budget for the disaster fund. Hopefully, that will get us on a much more even keel and allow for the adequate funding of what's needed, both in the short term and long.

But as for the supplemental, we are still waiting for the administration's determination of what is needed. And if it is FY12 monies, we will have the opportunity to roll that into the process of budgeting for the disasters the way we set out to do that in the debt ceiling agreement.

Mr. HOYER. I appreciate the gentleman's observation and also his reference to the head room that we gave in the agreement that was reached in raising the debt ceiling, understanding that there are emergencies that occur and you need head room to deal with those emergencies. I'm appreciative of the gentleman's observation.

I understand as well, I want to acknowledge that his district was hard hit, not only by the earthquake, but by Irene and, I presume, by the rains as well that have compounded that issue.

In any event, I appreciate his willingness to ensure that we do, in fact, get a supplemental that will meet the needs, the immediate needs of those people throughout certainly the Atlantic coast, but in other parts of the country as well. I appreciate and will look forward to working with him on that objective, as I will look forward to working with him on realizing the early passage of a jobs bill which will, in fact, get Americans back to work and get our economy growing, as is essential.

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

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY,
SEPTEMBER 12, 2011

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when with the

House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet on Monday next, when it shall convene at noon for morning-hour debate and 2 p.m. for legislative business.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BROOKS). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia? There was no objection.

INTELLIGENCE AUTHORIZATION

(Mr. BLUMENAUER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I voted against the Intelligence reauthorization act reluctantly. On the eve of the 10th anniversary of 9/11, there's still nothing more important than the security of our people. But I am troubled by a clear lack of progress in getting our arms around the sprawling intelligence bureaucracy.

There are 856,000 people with top security clearance in the United States. Think about it: that's nearly the population of the entire State of Delaware. It's more than the number of people who live in San Francisco.

In over 10,000 locations scattered across the country, there are 1,200 government organizations, 1,900 private companies that focus on intelligence-gathering and homeland security. But, unfortunately, we have an inability for anybody to know exactly what is going on. And the flood of information that is generated by hundreds of thousands of people with opportunities for leaks and mistakes is troubling. It can be a source of vulnerability. After all, parts of the bureaucracy were well aware of the threat from Osama bin Laden immediately prior to 9/11. It's time for us to give this the scrutiny it deserves.

REMEMBERING SEPTEMBER 11

(Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Today we introduced a resolution to honor those whose lives were lost on 9/11. As a Member of Congress, I vividly remember as we rushed from this building and glared at the Pentagon and saw the remains of the plane that had attacked this Nation. From Pennsylvania to Washington, D.C. to New York, our lives were changed as America watched.

Today, as I stand on this floor, I offer my deepest remorse and sympathy to the families who still are in pain, to the first responders whose memories are still glaring in their attempt to find those who were lost and to save what might be left and the pain they have and the health conditions they suffer.

But what I will say to America is that we are still America, strong, patriotic and believing in all that we are, the great diversity that we are. Thank you to the Muslims who are in the Capitol right now providing the gift of life, giving blood. Thank you to the City of

Houston that will be honoring those this coming weekend. We will be together because we are America. We will not be deterred.

PROTECTING OUR WATER SUPPLY

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

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, nearly 10 years after the horrific events of 9/11, Americans are still at risk, especially at risk of being poisoned, poisoned by terrorists who would choose to dump large amounts of chemicals into our drinking water supply. So in order to protect the safety of our people, especially Metro Detroiters who drink water from a large municipal water system, today I'm introducing legislation to better secure our municipal water systems all around this country from such a terrorist threat.

REFLECTIONS ON SEPTEMBER 11

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. HECK) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. HECK. Mr. Speaker, we all have our own stories, personal stories on how 9/11 affected us, where we were, what we were doing. For my generation, I'm sure the day will go down in history as our day of infamy.

My perspective is as a first responder on that day and someone who grew up in New York. I was working for the Department of Defense at the time, leading a counterterrorism medical response organization. And my partner, Paramedic Jason Kepp, was actually conducting some training with the U.S. Park Police over at their aviation facility in Anacostia when they saw a low-flying plane and then heard the loud explosion. Jason quickly jumped on a U.S. Park Police helicopter and was one of the first responders to arrive at the Pentagon and provide aid.

I was traveling and in St. Louis when I turned on the TV that morning and saw the first tower in flames and was watching as the second tower was struck by another aircraft.

□ 1200

I knew that I needed to get back to my office in Bethesda as quickly as possible, a task made more difficult by the fact that aircraft had been grounded nationwide. So I remained on the phone, coordinating my teams, dispatching them to the various sites, and preparing for what might come next.

I carried that out until I made my way back to my office here and then subsequently on my way to New York City.

The tragic events showed us the darkest side of humanity: My drive up the New Jersey Turnpike, along with