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No. 173

House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. RIVERA).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
January 2, 2013.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DAVID RIVERA to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 17, 2012, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

HURRICANE SANDY RELIEF

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) for 3 minutes.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, it was to my profound disappointment that I learned last night that the House would adjourn the 112th Congress without providing assistance to the victims of Superstorm Sandy.

I am joined today, Mr. Speaker, by many of my colleagues from the jurisdictions whose people received the most damaging blow. Though my district did not sustain the extreme damage that those in New York, New Jer-

sey and Connecticut did, the President declared several Maryland counties eligible for Federal assistance from this storm, but it was minor, and my citizens are not in dire circumstances; but the citizens of some from whom we will hear today are in that condition.

Those counties joined hundreds in the 1,000-mile diameter of this storm—the largest geographically in the history of the Atlantic hurricanes. Now, at best, the Speaker has said that Sandy's victims will need to wait until the next Congress to receive assistance—Wait, they say, to millions who are in pain and in distress. We should not be waiting. We should be voting this very morning, which I tell you, Mr. Speaker, I expect to happen from my discussions with the majority leader.

As I said last night, I went with Congressman GREG MEEKS to Breezy Point and the Rockaways in New York, and what I saw there in Sandy's aftermath defied description and demanded action. To those who say that FEMA has not yet disbursed all the funds it has to assist families and businesses, I would tell them that they deeply underestimate the damage in these areas and the wide range of assistance required to alleviate the pain and suffering. At Jacob Riis Park, I saw the mountains of debris that the Corps of Engineers had begun to remove from neighborhoods. That debris represents people's lives, homes, and businesses.

With this legislation, we would have provided up to \$1.6 billion to the Corps to continue removing debris so that families could begin rebuilding. Would we have had to borrow that money? Yes. Just as if the furnace went out and the temperature were at zero, you would immediately replace the furnace to keep the families safe and borrow the money to do so; and, yes, we would have had to repay it, and we would.

This bill would have allocated \$6 million in emergency aid for food banks to

make sure that people in the richest country on the face of the Earth have some sustenance for them and their children. I saw an area of Breezy Point where more than 100 homes were devastated by fire when an electric transformer malfunctioned. The many firefighters who lived in that neighborhood could not get additional help from surrounding boroughs due to the severe flooding. They battled mightily and they saved many lives, but there is little left—indeed, none—of their homes.

I saw local businesses, Mr. Speaker, which had been there for years, completely destroyed, waiting for the \$620 million in SBA assistance this bill would have provided. We talked a lot about not imposing burdens on small business by additional taxes. These small businesses are out of business without our help. We walk away today from nearly \$4 billion in assistance to help reconstruct Rockaway Beach and other places, which is critical to the area's economic recovery and important to prevent further storm damage.

Finally, there is also the toll on transit and infrastructure, including inundated subway and traffic tunnels that were referred to last night. This bill would have provided up to \$10.9 billion for transit and \$2.2 billion for highways to help make sure that the area is not just cleared of water but repaired. If small businesses are going to be able to operate, it will be because consumers and customers can get to them and get to the schools and get to the hospitals and get to their families.

Waiting to act until later this month when Members were here and ready to vote last night is not the right choice. No Member of this House could travel to the Northeast, see the damage, and tell anyone in those areas to wait—wait for us to act, wait for us to help, wait for us to come to your aid. We cannot and we should not wait. We must not walk away.

This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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Mr. Speaker, I urge the Speaker of this House to reconsider and to act immediately. Now is the time to act.

Mr. RUNYAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in disbelief that a Hurricane Sandy disaster relief bill has failed to come to the floor in the current Congress.

It has been over two months since Super Storm Sandy devastated my home state of New Jersey, and Congress has failed to act. After Hurricane Katrina Congress acted and passed a supplemental spending bill within 10 days.

My district was ground zero for Sandy and suffered horrific damage.

I can personally attest to the devastation as I toured many of the coastal towns in the days after the storm, and I can honestly say that some areas look like they had just been bombed.

Governor Christie, after careful examination, estimates the damage to New Jersey alone to be \$36.9 billion.

I fully support the Governor's request. New Jersey will need every last dime in order to rebuild successfully.

My constituents and I are extremely disappointed that in our time of need this Congress has failed to act.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my absolute shock that the House Republican leadership has adjourned the 112th Congress without addressing the needs of the victims of Superstorm Sandy.

Like most Members whose constituents were affected by Sandy, we expected, and were all but assured, that there would be consideration of a supplemental appropriations bill before this House adjourned. It is utterly unacceptable to leave millions of Americans across the most densely populated part of the nation, including my Long Island district, on the hook for the unexpected costs of a natural disaster.

The House Republican leadership had plenty of time to act—let's review the timeline. In November, Governors from affected states acted to give preliminary assessments of the damage caused to their cities and towns. In early December, the President submitted to Speaker BOEHNER a detailed supplemental package. By the end of December, the Senate passed a bipartisan supplemental providing sixty billion dollars in federal resources to Sandy victims. And yesterday, House Republican leadership chose to give Members an extra day of vacation rather than take up the Senate-passed bill or, at the very least, even attempt to address the needs of millions because of this natural disaster. All the House leadership did was tell storm victims to wait until the next Congress. Excuse me for being cynical, but I don't have much faith that this House leadership can keep its word and deliver for the people in a timely manner. Midnight hour deals on fiscal cliffs, pending dysfunction with the debt ceiling situation in two months—I just don't believe it.

Ladies and gentlemen, this represents an unprecedented action in the Congress. Never before has the United States Congress turned its back on its citizens after a natural disaster. Members of this Congress whose constituents were affected by Sandy have time and time again supported supplemental appropriations bills for other areas of the country affected by natural disaster. We were there with funding after Katrina, and we were there after the

floods in the Midwest. Now we need to be there for millions in the Northeast. How come when it is our constituents' unfortunate circumstance to be in need of similar funding we are told to wait?

It's shameful.

I am pleased that both my Republican and Democratic colleagues have expressed their shock and disappointment in House leadership for not allowing a vote on a Sandy aid package. I will not rest until I can deliver this funding to my constituents on Long Island and to the millions who live throughout the Northeast. The Senate passed a good bill, a bipartisan bill, a bill that includes much needed mitigation funding as well. Nine weeks is already far too long for folks to wait to be helped by our federal government after a disaster of this magnitude. FEMA alone cannot provide all the necessary funding until this House acts. The Small Business Administration, the Army Corps of Engineers, other vital federal agencies and our state and local governments NEED the additional resources to help stem the hurt Sandy caused.

I am ashamed of the actions of this House Republican leadership and I remain committed to getting Long Islanders and those across the Northeast the federal assistance they deserve.

SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, we've had a very good session of the 112th Congress, and we got through it last night. I think all of us, regardless of how we voted, feel a certain relief that we can move on in this country and start to tackle the huge deficit we have.

This is going to be my last speech on the floor. I had the opportunity yesterday to deliver a speech that deals with what I felt were some of the problems in this country with regard to the deficit.

I quoted a lot from Thomas Jefferson, who aptly realized how troublesome and serious the amount of borrowing by this Congress and past Congresses could be to this country. He, of course, inherited a similar situation when he became President, and how he solved it, I felt, was important to put in the RECORD—his acute sense of urgency and how he went about solving the deficit he inherited. So I talked about that last night in my speech on the floor.

The second thing I talked about was this whole idea of Keynesian economics and that the problem we have is continuing to stimulate the economy with either QE1, QE2, QE3, and so on with this quantitative easing that Chairman Bernanke is doing and how that is ultimately hurting this country.

I also thought I would speak briefly today on some of the accomplishments that I have had over my 24 years. Some of these are very important, I think, for my district and, of course, I think, for the country.

The first one I'll mention is the Cross Florida Barge Canal. This was 86,000

acres that were tied up at the Federal Government. President Nixon wanted to do the Cross Florida Barge Canal. Ultimately, he decided against it, so this amount of land was tied up in the Federal Register. With the help of Charlie Bennett, a Congressman from Jacksonville at that time, I sponsored a bill to retake that 86,000 acres and move it back to Florida, where it was originally located. So we de-authorized the Cross Florida Barge Canal, and President Bush signed into law my bill on November 29, 1990.

□ 1010

The second major piece of legislation I am very proud of is the Telecommunications Act of 1996. I was a conferee with the Senate. I had many amendments involved with that, particularly with the broadcast side. It provided competition, reduced regulation, and it started this whole innovation in our telecommunication industry. And it was a great honor for me to serve and to be contributing to that great bill which created all of the new jobs in this country.

The third one was the Veterans Millennium Health Care and Benefits Act, which was signed by President Clinton on March 10, 2000. This bill was to provide extended care services for our veterans, to make improvements in health care programs at the Department of Veterans Affairs. I was chairman of the Health Subcommittee at the time, and I was able to advance this bill, and I am very proud that President Bill Clinton signed it.

The fourth bill was the Cardiac Arrest Survival Act. President Clinton signed it on February 13, 2000. It prevents as many as 50,000 unnecessary deaths each year in the United States by using what are called AEDs, which are automated external defibrillators. It allowed people to be trained to save lives, and so this act was very important. I'm glad that it was signed as my bill.

The fifth one I am very proud of that President Bush signed is dealing with asthma conditions. Self-administration of medications was prevented in schools because they had no drugs allowed, and some of the children had asthma and they needed EpiPin or they needed some albuterol, and if it wasn't available they could go into asthma attack. This bill allowed nurses in schools to provide this type of treatment.

The sixth one is the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act. It was signed by President George Bush on October 26, 2005. It basically provided civil liability action protection for companies that were manufacturing, distributing, or importing firearms or ammunition, for damages that were caused. Cities and States were suing these manufacturers, putting them out of business. They were nuisance suits, and I'm glad that President Bush signed it.

The last one I'm very happy to talk about is a bill that President Clinton

signed, H.R. 5109, which basically assisted the Veterans Health Administration to help personnel.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Jack Seum, my chief of staff, for his 20 years of service; Paul Flusche for his 17 years; Sherrie Porter for her 10; and Shawna Williams for her 14 years of service. They did an extraordinarily good job, and I thank them.

I recognize my long time employees.

Jack Seum, Chief of Staff, 20 years of service; Paul Flusche, Press Secretary, 17 years of service; Sherrie Porter, District Director, 10 years; and Shawna Williams, Staff Case-worker, 14 years.

And I thank all of my staff for their strong efforts.

Also I want to thank Jay Pierson for his help during my tenure in Congress. He was the floor manager and did a great job. His 34 years of service was extremely impressive.

DISTRICT FUNDING REQUESTS SUMMARY

1. Establishment of an outpatient clinic for Veterans in Leesburg and Ocala, Florida.

2. Instrumental in building a Veterans' hospital facility in western Marion County, part of The Villages, with ten acres of land donated by Gary Morris, the owner of The Villages.

3. Funding for a 235-bed facility for the Veterans Administration Hospital in Gainesville.

4. Numerous funding support for the infrastructure for the beltway in Ocala and the beltway in Clay County.

5. Conversion of the Master Navy Jet Base Cecil Field into the Cecil Field Commerce Center with continuous appropriated funding made to help transition this into a commercial enterprise.

6. Further funding for the National Guard in Camp Blanding for the new Education Center as a result of the 9/11 tragedy and terrorist attack. Also helped National Guard in the relocation of the space program deposit of rocket fuel at Camp Blanding.

7. Federal funding for the building of a new prison in Sumter County and the funding for the intersection to allow transportation requirements to be met off of I75.

8. Accomplishments for Jacksonville Area: JAX VA Cemetery: I first offered legislation (H.R. 3882) to establish a new VA cemetery in northeast Florida in 1996. There are approximately 189,000 veterans in the Jacksonville area, but there were no veterans' cemetery to provide them a permanent place of honor. It was not until 2003, with the inclusion of language from my bill (H.R. 197) into H.R. 1516, the National Cemetery Expansion Act of 2003, that a veterans' cemetery in Jacksonville was finally established.

Cecil Field: With the closure of Cecil Field, I have worked with area leaders and involved citizens in transforming Cecil into a commercial center. Since 2001, I have secured \$10.5 million in appropriations funding for the former Cecil Field, now Cecil Commerce Center.

I also worked through the Military Airport Program (MAP) to upgrade the facilities at Cecil. From FY 2000 to 2003, I helped Cecil receive more than \$12.5 million in MAP funding for building and hangar renovation, runway rehabilitation, and infrastructure improvements.

Florida National Guard: I have a long record of working with the Florida National Guard and its premier facility at Camp Blanding. I have secured funding and support for establishing the Rocket Motor Storage Facility, various infrastructure upgrades, and the Air National Guard Weather Readiness Training Center.

NADEP: I support the mission and workers at Jacksonville NADEP. Stearns contacted Secretary of Defense and pointed out specific examples in which NADEP personnel contributed directly to returning equipment to combat readiness.

JAX Port: I consistently join the area delegation in supporting dredging at JAX Port Authority.

MORE RECENT EXAMPLES ARE

1. Representative STEARNS introduced FAST, the "Faster Access to Specialized Treatment Act" (H.R. 4132), which rewrote Section 506 of the Food, Drug & Cosmetics Act to modernize the accelerated approval pathway for rare disease drugs. FAST was included in the FDA Prescription Drug User Fee Act (PDUFA), Rare Disease Bill.

2. Congressman STEARNS worked with Rep. ED TOWNS (D-NY) to craft H.R. 734, the Pedestrian Safety Enhancement Act of 2009 which directed the Secretary of Transportation to set a noise level sufficient to alert blind and other pedestrians of the presence of operating motor vehicles. This legislation was signed into law on January 4, 2011 as S. 841.

3. One of the high points for veterans and serving on the 24 years on the Veterans Affairs Committee was the accomplishment of getting a new cemetery in Jacksonville. The language in Representative STEARNS' bill H.R. 1516 was incorporated into the National Cemetery Expansion Act of 2003, establishing a veterans' cemetery in Jacksonville. This was signed by President Bush. Representative STEARNS had originally dropped H.R. 3882 and it was ten years later that this Act was accomplished and signed into law by President Bush.

4. Representative STEARNS served as a member of the Air Force Congress with Sam Johnson who spent 6½ years as a POW at the Hanoi Hilton. While a member of the Air Force Caucus the Air Force Association presented to Congressman STEARNS the W. Stuart Symington Award which is the highest honor presented to a civilian in the field of national security.

5. A recent bill which passed the Congress for the first time with Democrat support was H.R. * * * (James) the Concealed Weapons Permit to allow Americans to carry a concealed weapon if they have established their credentials from the state of their residency to other states.

HURRICANE SANDY RELIEF

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) for 3 minutes.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, sometimes events occur that are so out of the ordinary, so unusual as to defy belief. Such is the decision of the Speaker last night not to permit this House to vote on relief aid for the three States and some other areas that were devastated by Hurricane Sandy.

I have been in this House for 20 years. There have been many disasters—floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, wildfires. In every single instance, this House has voted aid for the necessary States; in every single instance, usually within a week or 2. Never more than 3. It has now been 9 weeks since October 29 when Hurricane Sandy devastated three States and parts of more—9 weeks.

The Senate passed a bill to aid us. The House was ready. The bill was prepared and an amendment was prepared. We were assured the bill would be on the floor last night or today. At the last minute the Speaker, without even talking to Republicans, not to mention Democrats from New York, refusing to meet with them, suddenly pulled the bill and said we wouldn't have a vote; as if the people in New York and Connecticut and Pennsylvania, New Jersey are not in need of aid; as if thousands of people are still not without heat, without water—as if thousands of small businesses don't need loans and aid so that they don't go under; as if thousands of people don't need help to rebuild their homes, to clear the trash from their properties; as if hundreds of municipalities don't need aid to finance this activity, having used up all their budgets for that purpose.

We're told by the chairman of the Appropriations Committee we'll get a bill on the floor later this month in the next Congress. It's already 9 weeks. It's already an unprecedented length of time. And why? Are New Yorkers and Pennsylvanians and Connecticut residents and New Jersey residents less American than the people that we aid in the Midwest and the South when we vote for aid for those people because they are the victims of natural disasters? How can we treat an entire region of the country this way? It is the most disgraceful action I've seen in this House in the 20 years I've been here.

I see that we're told that, well, FEMA still has money until March. But it's not just FEMA; it's the Small Business Administration that needs the appropriation now to help small businesses now; it's the Army Corps of Engineers that needs the authorization, the appropriation now to help the people who are victimized.

There is no excuse for this, none. It is a betrayal of the people of those States. It is a betrayal of the people of the United States. It is a betrayal by the Speaker personally of the Members of this House not to permit a vote. I have never seen an action like it. I hope I never see it again.

I urge the Speaker to reconsider and to rectify this decision today, because today is the deadline to avert going down in history as shameful.

HURRICANE SANDY RELIEF

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. GRIMM) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GRIMM. Mr. Speaker, it's very difficult to stand here and have to speak to my constituents knowing that we're going to break, we're going to end this Congress, and I'm going to go and walk the streets in Midland Beach, in South Beach, in New Dorp Beach and Tottenville, and I'm going to meet with homeowners that I've been meeting with for 9 weeks now and I can't

tell them that everything is going to be okay because, as of right now, everything is not okay. In fact, it's far from okay.

I don't often agree with my colleague that just spoke, Mr. NADLER, on a lot of substantive issues, but I have to agree with him today, and that is not an easy thing for me to do because there was a betrayal. There was an error in judgment that is going to cost, I think, the trust of the American people, not from me individually, not necessarily even for the Members here today, but for this body as a whole as we move forward.

I couldn't be more proud to be an American. You know, I used to tease people that I bleed red, white, and blue. Since I was young, I knew I would serve in the military, and I did. And I would have given my life for this country time and time again. And even later on, I put myself in harm's way serving with one of the greatest organizations this country has to offer with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, a huge honor. And I really, really felt, when I took my oath as a Member of Congress, that it would be a level of service that would even outweigh my prior service because I was going to be in a position to help my fellow Americans every way that I could and to actually go out and touch my friends, neighbors, even those that didn't support me or had different political ideologies, I was going to be able to use the work ethic that I inherited from my father to make their life a little better. That's why I took this job, to make people's lives a little better, to make life in the United States a little better. And I'm not able to do that today, and I don't understand why.

□ 1020

And I think it's inexcusable that we did not have this vote and bring those that are suffering, those men and women that are looking at their children right now, and they're not sure what to tell them because they've lost their small business, their only source of income.

And why is that important? Well, because the SBA and FEMA and all the government officials that hit the ground when Superstorm Sandy hit explained that if you didn't get money into the hands of these small businesses almost immediately, then most likely they would go under. If you don't start rebuilding right away, people start to become depressed and they lose hope. Let's not even discuss the economic impact.

So to delay this vote, even for another day, is something that will resonate, not only with the people that have been affected and are suffering and have lost everything, but I think it will resonate with the American people for a long time; and I think it will make them wonder what we are here for and what is the role of the Federal Government, what is the role of the Congress, and maybe most importantly, can they trust us.

So it is with a heartfelt apology that I apologize to my constituents, to my fellow New Yorkers in need, those in New Jersey, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania. I did all that I could. I will not stop. I will not relent, and I will continue to push for this vote to come as quickly as possible. But there is no rhyme nor reason, and it is inexcusable that it has not come already.

You are in my thoughts and my prayers, and I will be there on the ground as soon as I get back to New York to help as much as I can, knowing that I'm not helping nearly enough because we don't have the funding to do so.

I want to thank my colleagues across the aisle that have been exemplary. It has been an honor to work so closely with you on these efforts. It has been not only bipartisan but bicameral. Governors, mayors all across the aisles have weighed in, and that is something that I will treasure and will continue to do as we move forward, knowing that we should not have to be here today.

HURRICANE SANDY RELIEF

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY) for 3 minutes.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, last night the Republican leadership reneged on their commitment to vote on aid for the families in the States that were devastated by Superstorm Sandy. We were told it was because Republicans just couldn't stomach any additional votes in this Congress.

I wonder if those same people walked along the beaches of Long Beach and Long Island, Breezy Point and Belle Harbor and Rockaway Beach in GREG MEEKS's district, Staten Island or Seaside Heights in New Jersey; if they could stomach the devastation they would witness, stomach the lives that were lost, stomach the homes that have been destroyed or the families that have been displaced, stomach the businesses that are closed and, in many places, have been lost.

In the weeks after the storm, my Republican colleagues told us—not all, by the way, and I want to point out that Mr. GRIMM and Mr. KING, Mr. DOLD and others were very, very helpful—but the leadership, I'm talking about, told us they were with us and that they would support us.

But I guess those were only words, because last night we learned the truth. And thanks to their actions, there's no additional Federal assistance to help hardworking people rebuild and restart their lives.

Now, I'm not a cynic, but I do wonder, what if we told the Republicans that a few millionaires' and billionnaires' lives were destroyed by the storm, whether they'd want to help all the families hurting because of Sandy?

And I wonder, what if Republicans were promised that by providing aid to families in need that, in turn, they would get a tax break? Would these in-

centives have changed their mind? Would it have prompted action? Because it truly does appear their only priority is helping those that have the most.

Republicans in Congress brought this House to a new low last night.

The banner over the Speaker's chair says "In God We Trust." God alone cannot help these families rebuild but, unfortunately, the American people cannot trust the Republican Congress to help either. The only thing my Republican colleagues did this week was to serve up false hope to the people who have been devastated by the storm, false promises, false guarantees that we'd be there to help them in their time of need.

Many of you know that my cousin, John Moran—I don't speak about John often—was killed on 9/11. He came from the Rockaway community. There was a monument on the beach, 118th Street. There were, I would say, dozens of monuments, as Congressman MEEKS knows, along the Rockaway Peninsula. They were destroyed by Hurricane Sandy.

It didn't stop my family and his neighbors from going out and sifting through the feet of sand to find that memorial. It was that precious to them. They didn't wait for the Federal Government to come help pull them up by their bootstraps. They did it themselves. They continue to do it.

There are humble people, proud people throughout this entire region who have been affected by this. They will recover but, sad to say, no thanks to the 112th Congress.

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE LOOKING FOR CERTAINTY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DOLD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, and I know we've talked a lot and have heard from my colleagues about Sandy, and I certainly want to talk about that.

I want to talk about last night we were able to avoid the fiscal cliff. The American public, at least the constituents that I talk to on a regular basis, are looking for certainty. They're looking for us to find common ground. They're looking for us to be able to move the country forward.

I'm a small business owner, Mr. Speaker. I meet a budget and a payroll. I employ 100 people. For me, that's 100 families. It's a role and responsibility that I take very seriously.

And while I do believe that the Federal Government should play as little a role as possible in the lives of Americans, they do need to play a role. They need to be able to provide those things that Americans cannot provide for themselves, whether that be infrastructure, whether that be a common defense, justice. These are some of the things that I think we do share a lot of common ground with.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I spent some time in Long Island, New York, recently and also in New Jersey. The devastation that Sandy has caused that region is nothing short of remarkable.

And while I do believe that we have a spending problem that has been going on, frankly, in this House, on both sides of the aisle for a long time, there are those times when we need to come together as an American people and say we have Americans out there that cannot provide for themselves, that have been devastated, that need a helping hand.

And do I think that they will repay that? I do.

We have an opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to come together as Americans, Republicans and Democrats together, to try to help provide need.

My colleague, JOE CROWLEY, was just up here talking about devastation that happened on the beaches. MICHAEL GRIMM, and I'm sure most of the New York and New Jersey delegations which will follow up here, and those from Connecticut, will talk about devastation that was happening in their communities.

I do believe that we have a role to play, and I do believe that action needs to happen and happen quickly.

Now, there are many on my side of the aisle that believe that we shouldn't be spending a nickel more than we have to. And while I agree that we need to tighten spending, and that this body needs to treat spending and those dollars as if they were their own, we can't needlessly ask taxpayers to provide more resources only to have them squandered.

Let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, these dollars will not be squandered. I believe that they are desperately needed. At a time when many Americans have lost hope, there is that opportunity for us to stand united together to provide that hope for the American public. It may be New York and New Jersey and Connecticut and Pennsylvania today, but it may be a different part of the country tomorrow.

Now, as we look forward, Mr. Speaker, as the 112th Congress comes to a close, we have a heck of a lot more work to be done as a country.

□ 1030

I, for one, hope that we can talk about reining in the out-of-control spending. But then, again, it's not going to happen with one party or the other. It's going to have to be about bipartisanship. And I do hope that we can bring pieces of legislation on this floor, like Simpson-Bowles, in that framework, that talk about revenue increases, whether that be through reforming the Tax Code and talking about where we can rein in spending, how we can reform things to make sure we have a social safety net, which is so vital. And I do believe that we need to have that social safety net. We need to strengthen that social safety net so that it's there for future generations.

I also think, Mr. Speaker, as we look at health care, we have to start thinking outside of the box. And certainly, I have enjoyed working with ROB ANDREWS on the American Center for the Cures, an idea that we need to be looking at how do we solve and cure some of these diseases that we spend hundreds of billions of dollars on treating each and every year, whether it be diabetes, Alzheimer's, or Parkinson's. If we came up with a cure for these types of diseases, think about where we'd be then, and where we can put those additional resources into the very vital areas that our government needs to fund.

So I am optimistic, Mr. Speaker, that our best days are ahead. But I also know that people are fed up with the idea of this partisanship. And I fear that we're going further partisan; that we're anchoring to the extremes as opposed to coming to the center. My hope is that this body can focus more on what we agree on as opposed to what we disagree on. That's what the American public's looking for. That's what I hope this Congress can accomplish in the 113th, and beyond.

I want to take this last moment to thank so many of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for their friendship, for their support, and I certainly look forward to continuing the friendship in future years.

HURRICANE SANDY RELIEF

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. LOWEY) for 2½ minutes.

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, the Republican do-nothing leadership has an opportunity to do something—something very important—today to help the more than 17 million Americans who were devastated by Hurricane Sandy, one of the worst storms in U.S. history, more than 9 weeks ago. The Senate has sent us a good bill. We are ready to act. We have the bipartisan votes to pass it. And yet the House Republican leadership has said there will be no votes today, the last day to pass this legislation without delay before we have to start all over again in the new session of Congress tomorrow.

Let me be very clear. Republican leadership has turned their backs on New Yorkers. They have turned their backs on those suffering without homes and businesses struggling just to get by. They have no valid reason for this delay—only the dysfunction with which they lead this body.

This record storm resulted in the deaths of over 100 Americans. The coasts of New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut have been devastated. Other surrounding States have sustained significant damage. In 2005, this body came together and passed a Federal disaster assistance bill to help the gulf recover from Hurricane Katrina 2 weeks after the storm. Congress acted to assist those who suffered damage in

Hurricane Gustav and Ike within 1 month.

The Governors of our States, Democrat and Republican, have assessed over \$82 billion in damages. The Senate bill would have provided \$60.4 billion—not everything that was requested, but a detailed, thoughtful disaster assistance plan to help these communities rebuild. More than 9 weeks since the storm hit, House Republican leadership is doing nothing, after giving us nearly virtual assurance just yesterday that we would consider this assistance bill today.

When a disaster hits on American soil, we as a Congress have the responsibility and tradition of working together, Democrat and Republican, to help communities rebuild. Our citizens are counting on us to help them recover from the storm and mitigate future disasters. I respectfully urge House leadership to reconsider their decision. Support the victims of Hurricane Sandy. Put politics aside. Do the right thing. People are waiting. People need this assistance. Let's bring the bill to a vote today.

HURRICANE SANDY RELIEF

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DOLD). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING) for 5 minutes.

Mr. KING of New York. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the outset, let me thank you for your service during your time in Congress, and thank you for your remarks here this morning.

I think it's important to set the record straight. Last night, many of us came to the floor and rightly said that the conduct of the Republican leadership was disgraceful, it was indefensible, and it was immoral. But I think it's important to lay out the facts as to how we reached this situation so we're not put in a position of name-calling or somehow we're angry or feelings are hurt. This goes far beyond any of that.

The fact is, as Congresswoman LOWEY said, within 10 days after Katrina, \$60 billion was appropriated. That number ended up going well over \$100 billion. It's now 9 weeks and nothing has been appropriated by this Congress for the people of New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Long Island, which I represent.

The fact is that over the last 5, 6, 7 weeks we did everything that the Republican leadership asked us to do. Governor Cuomo came down. I was at the meeting. He met with the Speaker. Governor Christie came down. He met with the Speaker. Governor Bloomberg came down. He met with the majority leader. We were asked to submit detailed documentation. Governor Christie, Governor Cuomo, and Mayor Bloomberg all submitted absolute documentation. When we asked if anything else is required, they said, No, you've given us all we need.

When the bill came from the Senate, we were told there was some pork in

the bill. That was taken out of the bill. The bill that was going to be voted on on the House floor was exactly in compliance with what the Republican leadership asked us to do.

Let me just say at this time, in my dealings with him, Majority Leader CANTOR has been very straightforward, very direct. Last night, I know that he was fighting to get the bill on the calendar. It was the Speaker that, for whatever reason, walked off the floor and said that the bill was being pulled.

Now I don't enjoy saying this. I consider myself a personal friend of JOHN BOEHNER. And JOHN BOEHNER personally has been very helpful to me over the years. So it pains me to say this. But the fact is the dismissive attitude that was shown last night toward New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut, typifies, I believe, a strain in the Republican Party. I know this is not the place to discuss politics, but that politics seeps over into a governmental decision that was made.

I can't imagine that type of indifference, that type of disregard, that cavalier attitude being shown to any other part of the country when we're talking about real life-and-death situations here—and to just have the Speaker walk off and not even tell us. He tells an aide to the majority leader, who then tells us that the item that means life and death was taken off the calendar and is gone for this session.

Now they say it's going to be brought back up in January. The fact is: let's be real. We're not in session next week. The following week we're in session for 2 days. The following week is the inauguration, and we're in recess for 2 days. Then we have the State of the Union. Committees haven't even organized yet. And does anyone believe if they wouldn't vote for a \$60.4 billion last night, that the Appropriations Committee is suddenly going to get religion and going to vote the full amount, when we know what their attitude is—that somehow money going to New York and New Jersey and Connecticut is corrupt money, when money going to their States is so honorable. I would just say that these people have no problem finding New York when it comes to raising money. It's only when it comes to allocating money that they can't find the ability to do it.

So I'm standing here on the House floor today saying we have a moral obligation as Republicans, as Democrats, as Americans. I spoke to Governor Christie and Governor Cuomo. We've been in constant contact with Mayor Bloomberg. We cannot believe that this cruel knife in the back was delivered to our region. I have to go home this weekend and next weekend and the week after and see the hundreds and thousands of people who are out of their homes, who don't have shelter, who don't have food, and they're living with relatives, friends, and living in trailers. This is not the United States of America. This should not be the Republican Party. This should not be the Republican leadership.

I'm asking the Speaker, tell HAL ROGERS and these people who somehow who have become very sanctimonious when dealing with New York and New Jersey that they have an obligation to do what they have to do—and that's provide the aid and relief that we need. If there's one penny that they have a problem with, let us know. But don't walk out in the dark of night and ignore us.

HURRICANE SANDY RELIEF

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) for 2½ minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Let me thank Mr. KING, my colleague from New York, for his remarks. I really appreciate what he said—that this is not a Republican or Democratic issue. It shouldn't be politicized. Natural disasters and responding to them are what I've seen over my 25 years in Congress, and they are what bring us together to try to help people. The Speaker should not use this opportunity to tear us apart.

I was here last night when we got the word through Congressman KING that the Speaker was going to pull this bill. And what the message said was, Well, we can do this in January. We'll do it sometime later in January in the new Congress.

□ 1040

As Congressman KING said, we can't wait. My district was devastated by this storm. I would ask of Speaker BOEHNER, come to Sea Bright, New Jersey. Drive through Sea Bright, New Jersey. It's a town that has less than 2,000 people. The business district is totally destroyed. One or two stores have reopened; the rest are still closed. Most of the people still have not been able to return to the town.

Go to Union Beach in New Jersey, also in my district, where you can see that now everything is exposed. We still have people that do not have a place to stay, that are looking for an apartment or staying in motels or looking for a trailer to be placed next to their home and still don't have it.

We need to rebuild now. We need to act now. We can't wait for the next Congress or another couple of weeks or another couple of months.

What I don't understand, Mr. Speaker, is how is it possible that this has become a political issue? It is clear that we're here today. We can vote on this. The votes are clearly there. We should have an open debate. That's what democracy is all about. And all of a sudden, because the Tea Party or some conservative element is worried that they have to vote on another spending bill, all of a sudden the Speaker says, well, we can't do this today. This is politicizing a situation that should not be political. It is another example of what I call the "do-nothing" Congress.

This Congress did very little. It had fewer bills passed than in anybody's

memory. Rather than go out on this negative note about not bringing up an emergency because of a hurricane, a devastating natural disaster, why not do something positive on a bipartisan basis, Mr. Speaker. Bring this up. Let us have an open debate. We're still here. Don't let this Congress die on this negative note. Let it build on a positive note, so when we come in and we're sworn in on Thursday, we can show that we can work on a bipartisan basis.

I have never seen anything like it. To me, it is just deplorable.

FAREWELL REMARKS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. RIVERA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. RIVERA. Mr. Speaker, as we close on the 112th Congress, I wish to express my gratitude to the residents of Florida's 25th Congressional District for having given me the honor and the privilege to serve them as their elected Representative in the United States Congress.

When my constituents first elected me to come to Congress, they did so with what I thought was a very clear mandate as to what the focus of the 112th Congress should be, and that is to restore fiscal responsibility to the Federal Government and begin moving our economy forward to create jobs. Here in the U.S. House of Representatives, I believe we have strived to meet the challenges that out-of-control spending have created in the form of yearly deficits and long-term debt accumulation. The 112th Congress' passage of the free trade agreements with Colombia and Panama and South Korea demonstrates what type of pro-economic growth and job-creation policies can be achieved when we place the Nation's long-term economic interests before parochial or short-term considerations.

Unfortunately, too often in the 112th Congress, our efforts here in the U.S. House of Representatives to restore fiscal responsibility to the Federal Government have not been met with the same sense of urgency by our governing partners in the United States Senate or the White House. Last evening's vote regarding a so-called fiscal cliff is yet another example of Washington's willingness to forego making difficult, long-term decisions regarding spending in deference to short-term fixes that do not solve our looming debt crisis. That same debt crisis, that is the real fiscal cliff that our Nation faces; because whether we realize it or not, the more our Nation climbs this mountain of debt—a mountain we ourselves are creating—the higher the cliffs will be.

I urge future Congresses to meet this challenge, take up the challenge in restoring fiscal responsibility with a renewed sense of vigor and urgency.

I also want to encourage my colleagues in the 113th Congress to apply that same sense of urgency to another

issue of great national importance: immigration reform. I clearly recognize what a contentious issue this is, pitting two fundamental American values—rule of law and compassion—against each other, but I would suggest that making this effort is crucial to America's future.

We need a sustained commitment to afford opportunity for all Americans, at least for young people, young people who, through no fault of their own, are now in limbo due to their undocumented status; young people who have been educated in our school systems; young people who are willing to achieve further academic excellence, who are willing to serve in our military and risk their lives. Can we not at least say that, if somebody is willing to die for America, the least we can do is give them a chance at life in America? I hope in the 113th Congress the answer to that question will be "yes."

So, Mr. Speaker, I end my remarks where I began, expressing my deep sense of gratitude for the honor and privilege granted me to serve in the 112th Congress. I have been blessed with a superb staff of dedicated professionals: my previous chief of staff, Steve Vermillion, may he rest in peace; my current Chief of Staff, Javi Correo; and my entire D.C. office staff. My district director, Alina Garcia, and my entire district office staff have all served this Congress, the people of Florida's 25th Congressional District, and our Nation with honor and distinction. My friends, supporters, and constituents have blessed me with their confidence.

And finally, my gratitude to my family, and particularly my mom, Daisy, who is a saint, whom I love dearly, and who has sacrificed everything so that I have the opportunity to serve and achieve the American Dream. Only in America can a child of a political refugee, a kid born on the wrong side of the tracks, grow up and be elected to serve in the United States House of Representatives. America is indeed the greatest country mankind has ever known.

May God bless you, Speaker, and my colleagues. May God bless the United States House of Representatives. May God bless the United States of America.

HURRICANE SANDY RELIEF

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. BISHOP) for 2½ minutes.

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise in solidarity with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle against the House Republican leadership's outrageous decision to refuse emergency assistance for our States to recover from the strongest storm to ravage our region in generations.

It's simply unconscionable that this Chamber would walk away from a region desperate for assistance in its greatest hour of need. We cannot ac-

cept this shockingly callous indifference of the leadership to the human suffering that our constituents and their fellow citizens continue to endure.

The leadership's decision stands in stark contrast to the immediate decisions to provide relief in the wake of every disaster that has befallen this Nation over the past many years. It comes in stark contrast to our Nation's call to provide well over \$100 billion to Louisiana and the Gulf States following that tragedy, the first \$62 billion of which was on its way to the Gulf States within 2 weeks of the storm.

More than 2 months after our region was struck, our constituents are still waiting for help. Our States are overextended and our constituents have reached the limits of their tolerance. They deserve more than the Federal Government's refusal to help, particularly after the Senate's strong bipartisan approval of the aid we need.

Our leadership has decided to pass up an important investment against future losses. Many of our districts remain exposed to future damage. My own district, for example, experienced two relatively routine storms in late December, but, nonetheless, those storms compounded the massive erosion along the south shore of Long Island. We simply cannot afford any further breaches, flooding, overwashing, or storm damage without incurring significant losses to our infrastructure and to our economy.

Mr. Speaker, let me close with this:

What do I say when I go home to my constituents in Mastic Beach, a working class community on Moriches Bay with a little over 5,000 homes, about a thousand of which sustained damage, a great many of which are unrepairable? Do I tell them that the Republican leadership of the House considers it entirely appropriate for their tax dollars to be used for recovery and repair in New Orleans, in Tuscaloosa, in Joplin, or anywhere else in this country where a natural disaster has occurred? Or do I tell them that when it's in their hour of need, the Republican leadership has decided to simply walk away? That's precisely the message that the Republican leadership is sending to my constituents.

They deserve better. The residents of all of the States that were ravaged by this storm deserve better. We must bring this bill to a vote immediately.

HURRICANE SANDY RELIEF

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RIVERA). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 2½ minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, as the 112th Congress ends with a whimper, not a bang, not so much finished as worn out, I was prepared to come to the floor this morning and talk about some of the unfinished business that we kicked down the road with a pro-

posal last night: a serious deficit reduction, the debt ceiling, tax reform. One thing I didn't expect to be confronted with is what you have been hearing from my colleagues today, that we do not have the time to address the disaster relief for Hurricane Sandy, which everybody thought was a given.

□ 1050

This is the crew that came to town shouting "read the bill," that they were going to have 72 hours' regular order to move in a fashion. They gave us 154 pages, 24,000 words nobody had read, but we at least thought we would be dealing today with this emergency assistance.

I am stunned, frankly, that we find ourselves in this situation, but we have 24 hours left. How hard would it be to take up a bill that was already overwhelmingly passed by the Senate? How hard could it be, based on the bipartisan expression last night of support for a bill that almost everybody hated and had reservations about but would come together for something they thought was important for the country?

Remember when rebuilding and renewing America was a bipartisan objective? Maybe we could take a little bit of that spirit of bipartisanship and cooperation last night and rise to the occasion in the next 24 hours to do something for the people who deserve our help and support. If not, then it ought to be the first order of business of the new Congress, and we ought not to go home this week until this matter is addressed.

THE POWER OF UNITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) for 2½ minutes.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by thanking my wife, Elizabeth, who is here in the gallery, for her constant support during my service in the United States Congress and to thank the people of Ohio's 10th Congressional District for their constant support, as well as the great congressional staff both at the district and at the D.C. level. I also, before I make further remarks, want to express my support for my colleagues from New York and New Jersey in their tireless efforts on behalf of their constituents who have suffered so grievously from Hurricane Sandy.

We must unite for the people, and that's really the idea of the United States. It's the unity of States, but it's even deeper than that. It's expressive of the unity of people that it's all for one and one for all. Our Nation's first motto, "E Pluribus Unum," out of many we are one, stresses the power of unity. The idea of human unity is implicit in this Nation.

In my visits across America, I discovered that there is an underlying unity which binds us as Americans and which calls us forward to a higher purpose. I

have also come to understand that our politics divide people. The politics of polarization and hyper-partisanship has become obviously quite destructive, nearly incapacitating our government. Yet at such a time, the hunger for unity is the greatest, but the ideological differences between us widen.

We need a new politics in America which unites people, which sets aside partisan differences for the greater good of the country, and which strives to reconnect with the greatness of the Nation and the goodness of the American people. But what would that politics look like? The rhetoric would change to one of mutual respect. The questioning of motives would end. The poison system of “pay to play” would be transformed by public financing, and our government would be rededicated to addressing the practical aspirations of the American people for jobs, for health care for all, for education for all, for retirement security for all, and for environmental security.

We need a new politics which creates jobs and celebrates the dignity of work. Our government must raise the status of working people and protect their rights. Our government must stress wealth creation over taxation, investment over debt, health over illness, peace over war, and liberty over surveillance.

We have the capacity of choosing and choosing again as we are involved in the most creative endeavor of human achievement actualizing the highest principles upon which this country was founded and infusing those principles into self-government. Unity. One Nation, under God, with liberty and justice for all.

A new America is waiting to emerge. Let us call it forward with the same sense of wonder and expectation that the Founders first evoked: the United States of America.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will remind Members to refrain from referring to occupants of the gallery.

HURRICANE SANDY RELIEF

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) for 2½ minutes.

Mr. RANGEL. I was just asking my friend, JOE CROWLEY, is there a legislative possibility that we could bring this to the floor. I think everybody has enough compassion for the Speaker after what he's been through with his own party trying to get some bills to the floor to understand that anything, even something this enormous, could have fallen between the cracks. What a great opportunity to say let's try to put these pieces together.

In any event, nobody has said it's impossible to do it; and if it's just a question of pride in terms of party unity, I can't think of anything at this time that would be better served than to

have all of America especially thank the Speaker for reconsidering trying to help the lives of tens of thousands of American people.

Once again, I don't know what my chances are going to be getting into Heaven, but the absence of listening to the compassionate support of the religious community is deafening to me. I know their strong position about same-sex marriage and about women controlling their bodies and all of those things. And I say, if you write the book, you have the rules, do what you have to do.

But, my God, when it comes to caring for people, not New York, New Jersey and Connecticut, not just the United States, but all over the world, can't there be some people that have compassion to know that this is what God expects us to do? That's why we say, in God we trust, because we're supposed to take care of fiscal calamities, which we fail, but the compassion is not in the parties, it's in the people. And these people could be your neighbors today and someone else's neighbor tomorrow.

And this great United States, what a great insurance policy to have, to have friends from different communities, different backgrounds to know, as we say in the hood, we got your back. That's what it's all about. People all over the world, when they have a problem, no matter what the political differences are, know that America will have enough compassion to put aside those differences and to send out our men, our women and our firefighters over there, to do what, to help.

How do we possibly explain to our kids and grandkids that when it came to Americans, when it came to people who fight and die for this country, that we not only didn't help, but worse than that, we turned our back on them?

HURRICANE SANDY RELIEF

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LOBIONDO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LOBIONDO. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to be here today. I did not think it was going to be necessary. But the Superstorm Sandy relief bill, I've heard a lot of people talking about it. This isn't about us as Members of Congress. This is about our constituents. Do you have any idea what it's like when someone else's life is ripped from their hands, lives are lost, all personal property is lost, businesses are lost, and the hope of the Federal Government coming in is what is keeping them alive and motivated, and now with no explanation, the rug is pulled out from all of us, but most of all our constituents?

This is a disaster on top of a disaster. We, all of us, I think I speak for all of us, when Katrina hit, 10 days later, \$60 billion, \$100 billion altogether. Now we have to hear from people in Florida, Louisiana, Texas, and Alabama, and,

yes, some people from California and the Midwest when they have a disaster and we were there for them that the rules are going to change for us and it is now not an emergency and the Federal Government doesn't have a role in this?

□ 1100

It's absurd, absolutely absurd. We demand nothing less than we have given the rest of the country. An emergency and disaster means emergency and disaster, and that's what we had. Go back and look at the videos. Go back and see how people were devastated. The people of the Northeast had something we have never seen before, and we're expecting the Federal Government to play their role and be there. That's the minimum that's expected.

We worked hard to put together a package in a bipartisan way. People are crying out for bipartisan action. We had this, Republicans and Democrats, shoulder to shoulder, working together, forming a package, giving a little bit here, giving a little bit there, working our other Members, building the votes, promising, anticipating that we would have today the finishing part of this.

I'm convinced we had the votes. I'm convinced we would have moved this forward. And for us in New Jersey, every day that is lost is a bigger disaster. This isn't about people getting a sun tan. This is about jobs and the economy, a \$40 billion tourism business that relies on the summer season. Who is going to come and vacation in a community that doesn't have a beach and whose town is devastated that normally comes there? The answer is nobody. So the bigger disaster is going to come in a couple of months from now, and the money into the pipeline is what we needed now. We needed it 5 minutes ago. We needed it 2 weeks ago. We don't need it a month from now. We need the Federal Government to step up so people's lives can be put back together.

We're all hit hard enough with the recession. On top of that, now we have to deal with the anxiety and the failure of Congress to act, to provide what is normally provided. Why all of the sudden are New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania, why are we the first States that have to answer to some new rules or some new formula that is going to come out about how we do these things? I don't ever remember a question with Katrina, that that \$60 billion was too big a number. I remember that they were showing how people's lives were devastated. Why are our constituents any less important than the constituents of the past who had devastation? All of this is real, and we need to find a way to move forward.

So, yes, there is anger and frustration. That is all rolled into this. We're going to stay united. We're going to work together. We're going to find a way to move this forward. But we need to make this absolutely crystal clear

that this is not about people in Congress; this is about constituents whose lives were ruined. We need to do the right thing, and we need to do it now.

HURRICANE SANDY RELIEF

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DOLD). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS) for 2½ minutes.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, last night when I came to the floor for the first time since I've been in this body, my heart was hurting. I understand politics, but this should not be about politics. This should be about leadership.

The first thing I want to do is to say to the Speaker, Come walk with me, Mr. Speaker. Come walk with me. Let's walk the beaches of the Rockaway Peninsula. You will see a peninsula where every soul, no matter whether you were rich or whether you were poor, no matter whether you were black or whether you were white, every individual, no matter what your religious belief was, every individual was affected by this storm, everyone.

Come walk with me, Mr. Speaker, as STENY HOYER did, and talk to the people, look into their eyes, understand their needs. Come walk with me, Mr. Speaker. Maybe then you can have the leadership that is necessary to get this bill passed today. Come walk with me, Mr. Speaker.

If you can't walk with me, Mr. Speaker, for any reason, then go walk with MICHAEL GRIMM. If it is a partisan issue for you—because it's not for me—go walk with MICHAEL GRIMM on Staten Island, Mr. Speaker. You will see the same pain that the people in the Rockaways have. It's the same pain because they're the same people. They are the American people. This is the United States of America, and this is the people's House.

We make jokes all the time about the Senate. The Senate stood up and passed the bill. This is the people's House, Mr. Speaker. We are supposed to do the right thing for the American people. I'm proud of being on the Foreign Affairs Committee, going all over the world and talking about what we've got to do and how we help folks, how we help other individuals all over this world.

We have Americans, Mr. Speaker, who are crying out for help, who are saying they don't know where their tomorrow is. We have Americans, Mr. Speaker, who are worried to this day right now that we may have another northeaster tomorrow. And with the sand gone and the dunes now down, we'll have another disaster. They're asking me as their Member, Will our government help us? Where are you?

Mr. Speaker, we need leadership. Come walk with me, Mr. Speaker. Come walk with me, and see the American people that are suffering.

LET'S FIGHT TOGETHER FOR A BETTER AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MURPHY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, thank you for your service and your friendship to our country.

I've been watching the media, Mr. Speaker, and hearing a lot of distortion of what happened in the House Chamber yesterday.

Let's recall that on December 31 at midnight, taxes went up for every taxpayer massively, the fiscal cliff. By the end of the evening, the House came together, working with the Senate, and reduced taxes for 99 percent of American taxpayers. We kept taxes lower for dividend income, capital gains. We maintained a higher child tax credit. We helped keep the marriage penalty from hurting families. We did all this in a permanent way. This is a big win. We have a lot of work to do, but that was a big win.

The President also promised that he would work with us to have further cuts in spending. We should hold him to that promise on both sides of the aisle. We have several serious issues to come in this 113th Congress. We have to deal with the debt ceiling, spending cuts, implementation and regulations in the health care law, improving the efficiency and effectiveness of government.

It's easy for people to look at any piece of legislation—I actually challenge people to find some piece of legislation here that was perfect. Any major bill has flaws. Even a rose has thorns, as they say. Let's understand that we will see success when we work together, not when we continue to snipe at each other's heels.

The challenges before us will only be dealt with by the courage we find within us to find the common ground between us and fight together for a better America.

HURRICANE SANDY RELIEF

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Mr. ANDREWS (New Jersey) for 2½ minutes.

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, we're here this morning for the fellow citizens who didn't put up a Christmas tree or light a menorah or celebrate their holiday at home this year because they have no home. We're here for the boardwalk merchants who are not going to be starting their businesses up again this Memorial Day along the boardwalk because there's no business, and there's no boardwalk. We're here because a lot of people's lives are devastated.

It's important to understand what we are and are not asking for. We are not asking that every Member of this Chamber follow our lead and vote "yes" in favor of the bill the Senate

has already passed. We are simply asking that every Member of this Chamber have the opportunity to vote on that bill.

□ 1110

President Kennedy said governing is choosing. We are prepared to choose an investment in the recovery of our neighbors and our country. We respect those who would make a different choice, but we cannot abide by those who would say they would make the choice of doing nothing at all, letting the clock run out on this Congress, which means that we'd have to start all over again. The people I talked about for whom we are here this morning, they need to start all over again. They need to get back to their homes, back to their businesses, back to their lives; and as we delay, we delay that possibility for them.

Every Member has the right to exercise his or her own conscience on any piece of legislation. No Member has the right to deprive the rest of us of the same opportunity for our constituents. We should meet today. We should vote today. We should move forward today.

HURRICANE SANDY RELIEF

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. REED) for 5 minutes.

Mr. REED. I rise today, Mr. Speaker, to join my colleagues on the other side of the aisle. I come from a district in New York that was not impacted by Hurricane Sandy, but I come to this floor today to express my frustration and my disappointment in the decision that was made to not bring up the Hurricane Sandy supplemental aid for the people of New York, New Jersey, Connecticut—our fellow citizens, Americans, who have suffered devastating impacts.

Now, I understand what some of the dynamics of this bill are about. I understand that the Senate has put forth a bill that many on my side of the aisle have expressed concern about—pork-type of activity that the Senate continues to engage in with fisheries and Smithsonian funding and things like that that don't really have much to do with Hurricane Sandy. But that's a separate issue that could have been addressed and should be addressed by this body in cleaning up that bill and in getting the aid, getting the resources to the people who are suffering today.

That was the intended plan, that we were going to let the will of the House speak—clean up the bill that the Senate had produced but, most importantly, do what is right for our fellow citizens because there is not a better purpose of the Federal Government, which is for the Federal Government to stand with our citizens when they are suffering the most, especially when they are suffering from a natural disaster such as Hurricane Sandy.

I join with my colleagues on the other side of the aisle in, again, asking

for our leadership to change the decision that was made to let the clock run out on this Congress and deal with this issue tomorrow. We don't have the luxury of waiting until tomorrow. These people are suffering today.

I talked to my colleagues of the districts that were impacted by this devastating storm, and I have heard the horror stories, and I've heard the stories of suffering of the many millions of people who were impacted in New Jersey and New York outside of my district. I think it is right and it is just and it is proper for us to hear the stories of those individuals and to make sure that we stand with them and take this bill up now rather than kick it to the next Congress. God knows when we will actually get to it in that congressional session.

So I join my colleagues on both sides of the aisle. Let us do what is right, Mr. Speaker. Bring this bill to the floor, and get on with the business of attending to our fellow citizens as Americans.

HURRICANE SANDY RELIEF

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL) for 2½ minutes.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I want to wish you the best. I'm glad there's one more Democrat, but I'm not glad that you're leaving. You're a gentleman.

Look, I don't think that this is time for a pedantic debate. As we say in Jersey, it is time calmly, coolly to take the gloves off. This is the time. There is precedent here. I would suggest to the Governors that they should bring us to court. It's fitting.

Not only did we pass the money for Katrina in a very short period of time—part of it was by a voice vote. Can you imagine? Part of it was by a voice vote within a few days after that disaster. Mr. CANTOR voted for Katrina aid; Mr. BOEHNER did; Mr. RYAN did; Mr. MCCARTHY did, as did nearly every Member of the Congress from the New Jersey and New York regions. In fact, New Jersey and the other States that were hit by Sandy are some of the biggest donor States, that is, we send a lot of taxes to the Federal Government. Now we need our colleagues to step up to the plate.

As everyone knows, Sandy caused significant damage. In Bergen County, north Jersey—my district—first responders had to evacuate entire towns when the Hackensack River rose over a berm. The Moonachie Police Department will soon be housing trailers and be reimbursed. So let them come to north Jersey. Let them come to Connecticut at the shore of Jersey. Let them come to Long Island and Staten Island and Pennsylvania and Maryland. Let them come. Let them see. The mayor of Little Ferry is just one of the many people in that community whose house was decimated by the high water.

Look, we are, unfortunately, dealing with a schizophrenic leadership on the other side. Let's call it for what it is. Let's not mince words. State and local finances, which are already stretched too thin, allow for the limited or no ability of an area to rebuild alone. Because of the storm, the result will be one of depressed tax collections. We've been working with the Members of the House Ways and Means Committee to draft legislation modeled on tax relief.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, good luck to you. God bless your family.

God bless all of you for coming here this morning. We thought we'd have a shortened week, but our work is still ahead of us. This is the time to stop debating and take the gloves off—Jersey style.

IN HONOR OF STATE POLICE TROOPER PHILIP BATTEL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GRIFFITH) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on a different subject, one that I think we can all be pleased about. I rise in honor of Virginia State Police Trooper Philip Battel, a devoted public servant.

In the early hours of Friday, December 28, 2012, Trooper Battel saved three lives from a burning home. Trooper Battel was actually assisting the Saltville Police and Smyth County deputies in the search for a stolen car, which had been involved in an earlier police chase, when he noticed an orange hue off in the distance. He decided to investigate.

When Trooper Battel reached the area in question, much to his surprise he saw a home completely engulfed in flames. He banged on the door, but there was no answer. He made the selfless decision to enter the burning home and investigate. He began yelling and making noise. His activity in the house awoke the three residents, who had no idea that their home was burning down around them. His actions led to their ultimate escape from the home and from the fire. They're all in good health. Their lives were saved, and the lives of two of their pets were saved.

Trooper Battel's heroic actions and service to the community are to be commended. I am honored to pay tribute to him. Please join me in thanking Trooper Battel for all that he has done for the people of southwest Virginia.

Mr. Speaker, if I may, it has been my experience in working with the State police over many decades that they always respond in fine fashion and that they rise to the occasion. Trooper Battel is just another example in a long history of the good work and heroism of the Virginia State police.

□ 1120

HURRICANE SANDY RELIEF

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from

Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO) for 2½ minutes.

Ms. DELAURO. Writing at the time of Katrina, Harvard Professor Michael Ignatieff called the Constitution "a contract of citizenship" that promises, first and foremost, protection. That government will help "citizens to protect their families and possessions from forces beyond their control."

He writes:

In America, a citizen has a claim of right on the resources of his or her government when they simply cannot help themselves.

When disasters strike, they test whether the contract is respected in a citizen's hour of need. When the levees broke, the contract of American citizenship failed. Mr. Speaker, the levees broke. They broke in Connecticut, in New York, and New Jersey. Government is about helping families recover and rebuild from major disasters like Superstorm Sandy.

In a shocking display of neglect, this House majority decided not to allow a vote on disaster aid funds so desperately needed to recover and repair from this storm. Hurricane Sandy was one of the most severe storms to hit Connecticut in our State's history. All across our region, families' houses were destroyed and lives were upended.

And whether it has been a fire in the West, a tornado in the Midwest, a hurricane in the gulf coast, or a storm in the Northeast, this body acted. We didn't say no. It was a resounding "yes" to help because it is the central responsibility of this institution to act on behalf of the American people.

And yet here we are 2 months since Sandy destroyed thousands of homes and businesses, took 100 lives across this Nation. This House majority said "no" on a vote for disaster assistance to help millions of people get back on their feet again. The Republican leadership has broken that contract of citizenship. They have said "no" to my constituents in Stratford, in Milford, in New Haven, East Haven, West Haven, Branford, North Branford and Guilford. They said "no" to the rest of the towns in Connecticut and in New York and New Jersey. They broke the contract of citizenship. They said: You are on your own.

My friends, our people cannot be on their own. We have a central responsibility to act on behalf of the American people when they are overwhelmed in circumstances that they had no control over. Let us act. Let us act today to restore that faith and confidence in the American government.

HURRICANE SANDY RELIEF

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT) for 2½ minutes.

Mr. HOLT. Well, you've heard it. Our constituents' lives were devastated by the Sandy disaster. It has now been about 9 weeks since Hurricane Sandy brought the winds and the tidal surges.

In central New Jersey and Connecticut, in New York, people are hurting. Towns have exhausted their emergency funds and exhausted their borrowing capacity. In other disasters, such as the disaster associated with Katrina or with wildfires or with any number of other natural disasters, this body has acted and aid has been provided quickly.

And yet today, the Speaker is going to allow the 112th Congress to adjourn before passing the much-needed disaster relief package. The Senate acted on this bill. The aid package here was well constructed. It was ready. All we needed was a vote. And the delay is significant. It adds significantly to the hurt. It is not an exaggeration to say that lives are on the line. People are living wherever they can. They don't have the shelter. They don't have the businesses. They don't have their lives. And the Speaker just walks away. That compounds the disaster. The delay compounds the disaster.

It has been said: Well, FEMA has some money already in their account that will last for many weeks. But we're not just talking about FEMA, we're talking about HUD. More than a billion dollars, actually billions of housing aid. The Army Corps of Engineers, the National Oceanic and Atmosphere Administration, the Department of Interior, the Agriculture Department for food and emergency watershed protection, the EPA for safe drinking water—all of this was in this well-constructed package.

Now, it has often been said that the governing principle of the Republican leadership is "you're on your own." That might actually be a conscientious principle if they really believe in their hearts that your Social Security should be privately invested or you should pay for a college without government help. But this, to say you're on your own after a disaster is inconsiderate. It breaks our trust. It violates an understanding, and it hurts people.

HURRICANE SANDY RELIEF

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) for 2½ minutes.

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, this kind of petty partisan posturing is absolutely disgraceful. It's an act of spiteful indifference that will go down in history as a low point in a low era. Shame on this House. This House acted quickly after Katrina, voting over \$60 billion in less than 2 weeks. It acted quickly for Ike and Gustav and the tornadoes in Alabama. We were there for other regions of this country. This country has to be there for the Northeast. Twenty-four States were affected. It has been called the second-worst natural disaster in the history of our country, affecting over 17 million people in the most densely populated area of America.

We cannot turn our backs on this entire region. Every Governor, every

mayor has talked to the Republican leadership. They were assured the money would be there. We cannot rebuild or start to repair without the resources being in place.

The Northeast are donor States. We give far more to the Federal Government in taxes than what comes back to us. Yet when the natural disaster struck our people, we lost lives. We lost businesses, homes, complete devastation of the largest subway system in our country, moving 8 million people a day. Where is the aid and where is the support?

Mr. Speaker, introduce the Senate bill tomorrow. Let's come back into session, vote it on Friday. Let's put the aid in place, the American way of being there to help people. You can't pick and choose that certain areas get disaster relief, but the area that is the most hard-hit in the history of our country does not receive the relief? The disaster aid that has been there for other people? We have been there for you. You need to be there for the Northeast. It is devastated. We need Federal aid. You cannot repair hospitals, subway systems, major infrastructures without the support of the Federal Government.

Mr. Speaker, do not turn your back on America and a region of America. You need to support in a bipartisan way the aid that is so desperately needed for the most densely populated area of our country after the second-worst storm in the history of our country.

HURRICANE SANDY RELIEF

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) for 5 minutes.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, the two-tiered amendment disaster relief bill that we had hoped to bring to the floor to get us to the \$60 billion that is desperately needed to assist families, businesses, and municipalities devastated by Superstorm Sandy. Our appeal—and it's a bipartisan appeal—is that there is still time to bring this vital legislation to the floor for a vote back to the Senate and then down to the President for signature.

Numerous towns in my district, Mr. Speaker, as well as our friends in New York and further north, are still coping with and recovering from the most destructive storm ever in our region—and perhaps the second or third most costly in all of American history.

Today, families lack housing. Businesses are in shambles, and municipalities have been decimated.

In New Jersey, some 346,000 housing units were damaged or destroyed, with 22,000 units rendered absolutely uninhabitable.

□ 1130

An estimated 11,000 housing choice vouchers will be needed to ensure that residents at least have a roof over their heads this winter.

Approximately 100,000 new storm-related unemployment claims have been filed in New Jersey, 100,000, attributable to the storm.

Over 235,000 people in New Jersey have already registered with FEMA for individual assistance.

Seventy-five percent of New Jersey's small businesses were adversely affected, 10 percent of which, or nearly 19,000 businesses, sustained damage of \$250,000 or more, far in excess of the loss to businesses from Katrina. Total business losses are estimated to be a whopping \$8.3 billion.

Furthermore, an estimated 10,000 structures statewide will need to be demolished, and 1,000 sites across New Jersey will require remediation after hazardous materials discharge.

Fifty-one schools sustained serious damage, including six that will not reopen this school year.

Transit, roads, and bridges have been damaged to the tune of \$2.9 billion, which includes 294 damaged railcars and 75 damaged locomotives.

One of the main roads that runs through my district, Route 35, will require an estimated \$120 million to repair.

Power and gas lines are expected to cost roughly \$1 billion, understandably, given that, at the peak, power outages left 2.4 million people in the dark.

Waste and water and sewer will require about \$3 billion to repair and to protect.

Hospitals, assisted living, and other health facilities will have seen over \$150 million worth of storm damage. These facts—and there are many more—underscore the devastation unleashed by Sandy, and it is without precedent.

I would say to my colleagues that no recovery is ever accomplished in a single year, but it's about predictability and the certainty of funds to rebuild and to restore that ensures that the work proceeds immediately, comprehensively, efficaciously, and without interruption.

Mr. Speaker, for days and weeks, like many of my colleagues, after that horrible storm hit, I met with hundreds, even thousands of tenacious women and men who, despite crippling losses, were determined to rebuild.

I'll never forget one resident in Belmar who came up to me the day after Superstorm Sandy, and said, I've lost everything, but at least I'm alive.

We need to now backstop these individuals. We need to ensure that the monies are there, that they flow quickly but prudently to ensure that they can rebuild, and their homes and businesses and community.

You know, Congress assisted those pummeled by Hurricane Katrina in 2005 with \$62 billion in a mere 2 weeks. We are now past 2 months. And we need to be clear: The President didn't send to Sandy Relief package to Congress December 7. There was a loss of several weeks, but we do have a proposal. It's about 25 percent less than what the affected States have said they needed.

New Jersey, New York and the other estimates about \$30 billion. It's down at approximately \$60 billion, so it is less.

And I've seen and gone through the numbers that my State has sent to Congress as well as to the President. They are very well vetted.

Governor Chris Christie used to be a U.S. attorney. Many of the people around him are former prosecutors. Their tough and disciplined. They hate waste, fraud, and abuse, and they're trying to ensure that the money is there in the amounts needed to make a difference in the lives of your constituents.

Finally, let me just say, Mr. Speaker, we need to act now. As my colleague before me said a moment ago, New Jersey especially as well as New York, are contributing States not takers. We get back far less from the Federal Government than we pay in every year. That's a good thing. We have very, very good businesses that really provide employment for our people.

But we've been devastated, and I would hope and urge the Speaker to bring the Sandy Relief bill to the floor as quickly as possible, hopefully today, tomorrow, but as quickly as possible, because the people who have suffered, the victims, deserve no less.

HURRICANE SANDY RELIEF

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI) for 2½ minutes.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, here we are again today in wonder over the decision that we think has been made by the Republican leadership in the House not to bring legislation to the floor that addresses the needs of those affected by Sandy.

Here's the thing: Everyone who heard about this since last night, when so many Members from the New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, other delegations came to the floor to speak about this, said, Don't tell me that. Don't tell me that. Don't tell me that, even though everyone has seen very clearly the devastating damage that was caused by Sandy and the need for people to have assistance, the House would not take up the bill.

Don't tell me that, even though the Senate passed a very strong bill addressing the well-documented needs of the people of the affected region, the House is not taking up the bill.

Don't tell me that, although the region, the leadership, the Governor of New York, Governor Cuomo; the Governor of New Jersey, Governor Christie; the Governor of Connecticut, Governor Malloy; the Mayor of New York, Mayor Bloomberg; and others have immediately addressed the needs to the extent possible by them in their areas and have documented the needs very carefully as to what Federal participation was needed, don't tell me that the House of Representatives is going to ignore that.

Mr. Speaker, much has been said about the need for more civility in politics and in government, and that civility perhaps relates to how we speak to each other and how we curb our enthusiasm about issues we care a great deal about and question, perhaps, motivation of others.

But the real civility that people expect is how this Congress treats them and treats their needs. And never is that tested more clearly than in time of a natural disaster, because that's when people feel the most helpless. That's the time when they see whether the government is there for them or not. That is the time where—they're not going to be made whole, most of these people. Hopefully, what they replace will be a good substitute, and maybe it can open a door to something new for them.

But by and large, it's a long road back. But that first few steps of it, the emergency relief that was provided by the localities and now needs to be compensated for, the next stage of recovery is so essential to the character of a community.

As Mr. TONKO said after the storms last year, it affected the character of the communities in his district, and that was 2011. Here we are at the end of 2012, having some of the same regions hit again by nature with the suddenness and the severity and the power of water and, in some places, fire, and just earth-shattering earth, wind, fire in terms of how it affects people.

So as I said last night, nature pulled the rug out from under people, literally and figuratively, in their communities and in their homes, in their schools and in their workplace, and then are we to say to them, Now Congress is going to pull the rug out from under you in terms of your hopes and expectations of meeting the needs?

Don't tell me that. We can't tell our constituents that. That would not rise to the level of civility for us to turn our backs and ignore their needs. It's just plain wrong.

So I'm hopeful that perhaps those making this decision have not been affected by—almost everywhere, whether we're talking about Katrina or California, with earthquakes, drought, flood, fire, you name it, we get it all. With the Northeast being hit, once, twice, within 2011 and 2012, with Missouri, with Iowa—I visited Iowa and saw the effect of the floods there. It was devastating. It's really hard, unless you see it, to understand the impact that it has.

The most compelling reason is the look in the eyes of people who ask, What are we going to do to help? How can we help them? And what is our answer? We're just too busy. It's not a priority.

That's just not civil.

So let's honor our responsibility, which is, again, the place where people place their trust. They ignore government. They don't like government. They don't want this; they don't want

that. But in times like this, in time of emergency, is really when we prove our worth.

□ 1140

Let's prove our worth and urge the Speaker to bring this legislation to the floor and quickly deal with it while the Senate is still there, it can be sent to the President for his signature, and hope can flow from here, instead of a sense of wonderment, of "Don't tell me that." Let us be able to tell people we feel their pain. We know what they're going through. We can never really know, but we can certainly appreciate their interest in our doing what is right for them.

So, again, I hope and pray. Because we pray for these people. We pray for them all the time. They're in our prayers. Some have lost loved ones. We pray for them. How much prayer would it take for this Congress to find it in their hearts and in their heads to do the right thing? Let's pray that we don't have to tell them that we weren't there for them.

2013: YEAR OF SPENDING CUTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, last night, House Speaker JOHN BOEHNER released a statement outlining his many objectives for the new year, stating:

Now the focus turns to spending. The American people reelected a Republican majority in the House, and we will use that in 2013 to hold the President accountable for the 'balanced' approach he promised, meaning significant spending cuts and reforms to the entitlement programs that are driving our country deeper and deeper into debt.

Our national debt has grown to an outrageous \$16 trillion. This not only endangers our national security, but senior citizens are threatened with devalued dollars and it also places our children, grandchildren, and future generations at risk of higher taxes with little to no access to the entitlement programs to which they have faithfully contributed. House Republicans understand and are dedicated to resolving our Nation's debt crisis over the next year by reforming our Tax Code, preserving and protecting our entitlement programs, and controlling our spending.

Congratulations to Coach Steve Spurrier, President Harris Pastides and his wonderful wife, Patricia Pastides, and the USC Gamecocks, as well as Coach Dabo Swinney and President Jim Barker and his dedicated wife, Marcia Barker, and the Clemson Tigers for extraordinary Bowl victories.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

HURRICANE SANDY RELIEF

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO) for 2½ minutes.

Mr. TONKO. Just yesterday, Americans celebrated New Year's Day. They ushered in 2013. As we rang in the new year, the usual message of hope that accompanies the new year—any new year—rang hollow for millions of Americans because of actions taken at the close of that New Year's Day here late last night. People were met with the devastating news that we were not going to take up a measure that would respond to Superstorm Sandy.

And so I rise today to ask the leadership of this House, the people's House, to respond accordingly to the needs of people. I make this request not through some political calculus but rather through the lens of caring and concern and compassion, which ought to be the hallmark of this great institution. We ought not forget that the role that we play here calls upon our moral responsibility to engage our actions and our compassion and empathy for the people we represent or perhaps do not represent directly. Because we, I believe, need to relate to that measurement of compassion to family, friends, neighbors and yes, at times, total strangers.

I make this request sensitized by a situation in my district, the 21st Congressional District at the time, in upstate New York, just about a year-plus before the devastation of Sandy. The torturous treatment of Mother Nature through Irene and Lee on that congressional district, my congressional district, stole lives, wiped away livestock, flooded homes, tore away the hopes and dreams of individuals, and found people abandoned, having lost everything for which they ever worked. And I witnessed how people responded to that tragedy. They picked up and mustered the strength. But they required government to be their partner at that very dark moment in their lives. Having witnessed that pain, having visited communities and having talked with the people, shared tears with the people, I understand that now this situation, in a much more densely populated area of our State, and in neighboring States, requires our assistance, immediate assistance, to respond with compassion.

Mr. Speaker, and leadership of this House, I implore you to respond with compassion and empathy and bring us to the floor to acknowledge and support the funding for Superstorm Sandy.

HURRICANE SANDY RELIEF

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY) for 1 minute.

Mr. COURTNEY. When Hurricane Sandy struck on October 29 in eastern Connecticut's Long Island Sound with 90-mile-per-hour winds and high tide, it

created a path of destruction never seen before. Homes were wiped out, utility infrastructure was wiped out, transportation infrastructure was wiped out. But what was so inspiring about it was that the first responders acted—police, fire, Coast Guard, the Governor of Connecticut, local and municipal officials. They acted. In the weeks since then, the Senate has acted. President Obama declared an emergency on October 30. The Department of Homeland Security acted. The only place that hasn't acted is the House of Representatives, where last night, in the dark of the night, the Speaker announced that he was abandoning the people of northeastern America and allowing the Hurricane Sandy relief bill to die.

That is unacceptable. The people who acted—the first responders, the caregivers, the local officials—they deserve better. The local officials, the Members of Congress for the Northeast, in a bipartisan way, deserve better. The Speaker must reverse his decision. It is time to act today.

PASS THE SAFER ACT TODAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) for 1 minute.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, in 1985, 13-year-old Lavinia Masters went to sleep in her bedroom, which should be the safest place on Earth for children. But a few hours later, she was woken up by an outlaw who sexually assaulted her and put a knife to her throat. She went to the hospital. DNA evidence was taken from her. She did everything she was supposed to do. But that evidence sat, untested, on a dusty crime lab shelf for 20 years while the perpetrator ran loose somewhere in Texas. When the kit was finally tested, police discovered that Kevin Turner had committed this crime. Justice could not occur for Lavinia because the statute of limitations had run.

Mr. Speaker, Lavinia is not alone. There are 400,000 untested rape kits with DNA evidence in the United States. That's why I have introduced, along with Congresswoman MALONEY of New York, the SAFER Act. And we can pass it today by unanimous consent. This is a bipartisan piece of legislation. New Yorker, Texan, Democrat, and Republicans, speaking different languages, it doesn't get much more bipartisan than that. This act would allow funds to be used to test untested sexual assault kits for DNA evidence so justice can be done for victims.

And that's just the way it is.

HURRICANE SANDY RELIEF

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. HIMES) for 1 minute.

Mr. HIMES. I remember two things of that horrible night that Sandy hit my community in Fairfield County, Connecticut. Of course, I remember the

devastation and the damage that we have so detailed this morning in this Chamber. But I remember something else: the response of the people who stood up and said, I will help. The firefighters of Old Greenwich, the Red Cross in Bridgeport, the churches that opened to serve soup and to keep people warm, schools that were opened to address the fact that people didn't have homes.

Mr. Speaker, let me tell you about Lieutenant Russ Neary of the Easton Fire Department, who left his wife and two daughters behind that night to go serve the people of Easton. I attended his funeral several days later because he was killed that night doing what is best about all of us, which is that we stand up and we say we will help in times of crisis.

Every charitable instinct, every dignified thing, everything that is noble about what those people did that night is denied by the decision of the Republican leadership to not bring up Sandy today and to leave desperate and vulnerable people hanging.

Mr. Speaker, reverse your decision now, and let's do the right thing by our people.

HURRICANE SANDY RELIEF

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. CLARKE) for 1 minute.

Ms. CLARKE of New York. I rise today to express my feelings of anger, frustration, and disbelief that the Republican leadership has failed to fulfill this promise on emergency supplemental disaster aid for the victims of Superstorm Sandy. Even though we were able to put our political differences aside to prevent an economic disaster, I am stunned and saddened that this compromise came at the expense of much-needed relief. Like my colleagues from the Northeast, I feel betrayed. There were 305,000 housing units destroyed and 265,000 businesses affected. I'm a proud native of Brooklyn, New York, and it pains me to see the travesties that have affected my hometown.

I'm in disbelief at the callousness with which this matter has been dispensed with. It is truly an embarrassment and a sad day that the House of Representatives has become a body so entangled in political one-upmanship that it is unable to come to the aid of Americans whose lives have suddenly been destroyed and turned upside down. This funding would have not only rebuilt the community's infrastructure but begun the healing process so sorely needed.

Mr. Speaker, we need your leadership today. Please bring this matter to the floor for a vote.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Debate may not continue past 11:50 a.m.

Mr. HOYER. Is it in order to ask unanimous consent to extend that time for 1 minute?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Unfortunately, the Chair cannot entertain that request during morning-hour debate.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may revise and extend their remarks on the issue that has been before the House in these 5-minute speeches.

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

There was no objection.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 50 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON) at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: God of the universe, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

As the Members of the people's House gather on this final day of the 112th Congress, we ask Your blessing upon them.

May our Nation's citizens be grateful for their service rendered these past 2 years, but also justified in their hope that those returning for the new Congress, and those joining them, will move toward ever greater accomplishments to benefit our great Nation.

Bless as well those who leave Congress this day. May they be successful and productive in whatever their future endeavors.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. CROWLEY led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Repub-

lic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under clause 5(d) of rule XX, the Chair announces to the House that, in light of the resignation of the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT), the whole number of the House is 431.

The Chair will entertain up to 2 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

HURRICANE SANDY RELIEF

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

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, as the only New York City member of the Appropriations Committee, what I saw last night is something that I hadn't seen before. Whenever a disaster hit any part of this country, we always got together and found the funds to deal with the issue. We didn't worry about what section of the country it was for or what kind of disaster, we came together and we did it.

In addition, there was something that happened last night that doesn't bode well for this House, and that is that if there's one thing we still have in this House, in spite of all our problems, is that when we give our word, we keep it.

We were given their word that that bill would come up last night or no later than today. To walk away from the people of New York, Connecticut, and New Jersey, to walk away from all of these people who are suffering right now is really shameful.

But there is still time. That bill can come before us today and we can pass it today. And that's the call. Don't turn your back on the victims of Sandy. Come together as a country, as a Congress, and take care of this now.

FAREWELL REMARKS TO CONGRESS

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

Mr. PLATTS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in my final time as a Member of the House of Representatives, as a retiring Member, just to express my gratitude to the people of the 19th Congressional District of Pennsylvania for allowing me the privilege, for the last 12 years, to serve. I'm a 12-year-term-limit guy, and it's hard to believe that 12 years have come and gone already. But it's been a great privilege to serve with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle. It's been an experience I will forever remember.

In addition to my constituents back home, my wife, Leslie, is in the gallery today, and I certainly have to convey my thanks to her for standing by me all these years. It's certainly a family commitment, and it's one we've been

honored to have and to do to the best of our ability in serving the people of our community.

A final comment: While I've loved what I've done and I've been proud to serve, I also understand that what I do and what we do pales in comparison to those who serve us in uniform. As a Nation, as a citizenry, can we always keep our men and women in uniform in our thoughts and prayers, along with their families who make tremendous sacrifices so that we can be so blessed here as Americans.

So thank you again and God bless.

□ 1210

EXPRESSIONS OF GRATITUDE

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

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank my constituents in Washington's Sixth District for supporting me over the last 36 years.

I want to thank Leader PELOSI and Whip HOYER for supporting me as ranking Democratic member on the House Appropriations Committee, and most of all the Democratic Caucus for allowing me to chair the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee and the Defense Subcommittee.

I want to thank Chairman HAL ROGERS and Chairman BILL YOUNG for working together to restore regular order in the Appropriations Committee and strengthening America's military strength and especially supporting the men and women serving us in our services.

I will miss my colleagues in the House, but will remember my friends in this great institution, the people's House.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 12 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1235

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON) at 12 o'clock and 35 minutes p.m.

SEXUAL ASSAULT FORENSIC EVIDENCE REPORTING ACT OF 2012

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (S. 3250) to amend the DNA Analysis Backlog Elimination Act of 2000 to provide for Debbie Smith grants for auditing sexual assault evidence backlogs and to establish a Sexual Assault Forensic

Evidence Registry, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object—and I will not object—I would like to thank the gentleman from Texas and his colleague from Texas (Mr. POE) and our colleague from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) for their hard work on this bill, which would make funding for the testing of DNA rape kits and eliminating the rape kit background more possible. A lot of people will be made much safer because of this, and I thank the gentleman for his leadership.

I withdraw my reservation.

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

There was no objection.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 3250

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 “Sexual Assault Forensic Evidence Reporting Act of 2012” or the “SAFER Act of 2012”.

SEC. 2. DEBBIE SMITH GRANTS FOR AUDITING SEXUAL ASSAULT EVIDENCE BACKLOGS.

Section 2 of the DNA Analysis Backlog Elimination Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 14135) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(6) To conduct an audit consistent with subsection (n) of the samples of sexual assault evidence that are in the possession of the State or unit of local government and are awaiting testing.

“(7) To ensure that the collection and processing of DNA evidence by law enforcement agencies from crimes, including sexual assault and other violent crimes against persons, is carried out in an appropriate and timely manner and in accordance with the protocols and practices developed under subsection (o)(1).”;

(2) in subsection (c), by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(4) ALLOCATION OF GRANT AWARDS FOR AUDITS.—For each of fiscal years 2014 through 2017, not less than 5 percent, but not more than 7 percent, of the grant amounts distributed under paragraph (1) shall, if sufficient applications to justify such amounts are received by the Attorney General, be awarded for purposes described in subsection (a)(6), provided that none of the funds required to be distributed under this paragraph shall decrease or otherwise limit the availability of funds required to be awarded to States or units of local government under paragraph (3).”;

(3) by adding at the end the following new subsections:

“(n) USE OF FUNDS FOR AUDITING SEXUAL ASSAULT EVIDENCE BACKLOGS.—

“(1) ELIGIBILITY.—The Attorney General may award a grant under this section to a State or unit of local government for the purpose described in subsection (a)(6) only if the State or unit of local government—

“(A) submits a plan for performing the audit of samples described in such subsection; and

“(B) includes in such plan a good-faith estimate of the number of such samples.

“(2) GRANT CONDITIONS.—A State or unit of local government receiving a grant for the purpose described in subsection (a)(6)—

“(A) may not enter into any contract or agreement with any non-governmental vendor laboratory to conduct an audit described in subsection (a)(6); and

“(B) shall—

“(i) not later than 1 year after receiving the grant, complete the audit referred to in paragraph (1)(A) in accordance with the plan submitted under such paragraph;

“(ii) not later than 60 days after receiving possession of a sample of sexual assault evidence that was not in the possession of the State or unit of local government at the time of the initiation of an audit under paragraph (1)(A), subject to paragraph (4)(F), include in any required reports under clause (v), the information listed under paragraph (4)(B);

“(iii) for each sample of sexual assault evidence that is identified as awaiting testing as part of the audit referred to in paragraph (1)(A)—

“(I) assign a unique numeric or alphanumeric identifier to each sample of sexual assault evidence that is in the possession of the State or unit of local government and is awaiting testing; and

“(II) identify the date or dates after which the State or unit of local government would be barred by any applicable statutes of limitations from prosecuting a perpetrator of the sexual assault to which the sample relates;

“(iv) provide that—

“(I) the chief law enforcement officer of the State or unit of local government, respectively, is the individual responsible for the compliance of the State or unit of local government, respectively, with the reporting requirements described in clause (v); or

“(II) the designee of such officer may fulfill the responsibility described in subclause (I) so long as such designee is an employee of the State or unit of local government, respectively, and is not an employee of any governmental laboratory or non-governmental vendor laboratory; and

“(v) comply with all grantee reporting requirements described in paragraph (4).

“(3) EXTENSION OF INITIAL DEADLINE.—The Attorney General may grant an extension of the deadline under paragraph (2)(B)(i) to a State or unit of local government that demonstrates that more time is required for compliance with such paragraph.

“(4) SEXUAL ASSAULT FORENSIC EVIDENCE REPORTS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—For not less than 12 months after the completion of an initial count of sexual assault evidence that is awaiting testing during an audit referred to in paragraph (1)(A), a State or unit of local government that receives a grant award under subsection (a)(6) shall, not less than every 60 days, submit a report to the Department of Justice, on a form prescribed by the Attorney General, which shall contain the information required under subparagraph (B).

“(B) CONTENTS OF REPORTS.—A report under this paragraph shall contain the following information:

“(i) The name of the State or unit of local government filing the report.

“(ii) The period of dates covered by the report.

“(iii) The cumulative total number of samples of sexual assault evidence that, at the end of the reporting period—

“(I) are in the possession of the State or unit of local government at the reporting period;

“(II) are awaiting testing; and

“(III) the State or unit of local government has determined should undergo DNA or other appropriate forensic analyses.

“(iv) The cumulative total number of samples of sexual assault evidence in the possession of the State or unit of local government that, at the end of the reporting period, the State or unit of local government has determined should not undergo DNA or other appropriate forensic analyses, provided that the reporting form shall allow for the State or unit of local government, at its sole discretion, to explain the reasoning for this determination in some or all cases.

“(v) The cumulative total number of samples of sexual assault evidence in a total under clause (iii) that have been submitted to a laboratory for DNA or other appropriate forensic analyses.

“(vi) The cumulative total number of samples of sexual assault evidence identified by an audit referred to in paragraph (1)(A) or under paragraph (2)(B)(i) for which DNA or other appropriate forensic analysis has been completed at the end of the reporting period.

“(vii) The total number of samples of sexual assault evidence identified by the State or unit of local government under paragraph (2)(B)(ii), since the previous reporting period.

“(viii) The cumulative total number of samples of sexual assault evidence described under clause (iii) for which the State or unit of local government will be barred within 12 months by any applicable statute of limitations from prosecuting a perpetrator of the sexual assault to which the sample relates.

“(C) PUBLICATION OF REPORTS.—Not later than 7 days after the submission of a report under this paragraph by a State or unit of local government, the Attorney General shall, subject to subparagraph (D), publish and disseminate a facsimile of the full contents of such report on an appropriate internet website.

“(D) PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION.—The Attorney General shall ensure that any information published and disseminated as part of a report under this paragraph, which reports information under this subsection, does not include personally identifiable information or details about a sexual assault that might lead to the identification of the individuals involved.

“(E) OPTIONAL REPORTING.—The Attorney General shall—

“(i) at the discretion of a State or unit of local government required to file a report under subparagraph (A), allow such State or unit of local government, at their sole discretion, to submit such reports on a more frequent basis; and

“(ii) make available to all States and units of local government the reporting form created pursuant to subparagraph (A), whether or not they are required to submit such reports, and allow such States or units of local government, at their sole discretion, to submit such reports for publication.

“(F) SAMPLES EXEMPT FROM REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—The reporting requirements described in paragraph (2) shall not apply to a sample of sexual assault evidence that—

“(i) is not considered criminal evidence (such as a sample collected anonymously from a victim who is unwilling to make a criminal complaint); or

“(ii) relates to a sexual assault for which the prosecution of each perpetrator is barred by a statute of limitations.

“(5) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

“(A) AWAITING TESTING.—The term ‘awaiting testing’ means, with respect to a sample of sexual assault evidence, that—

“(i) the sample has been collected and is in the possession of a State or unit of local government;

“(ii) DNA and other appropriate forensic analyses have not been performed on such sample; and

“(iii) the sample is related to a criminal case or investigation in which final disposition has not yet been reached.

“(B) FINAL DISPOSITION.—The term ‘final disposition’ means, with respect to a criminal case or investigation to which a sample of sexual assault evidence relates—

“(i) the conviction or acquittal of all suspected perpetrators of the crime involved;

“(ii) a determination by the State or unit of local government in possession of the sample that the case is unfounded; or

“(iii) a declaration by the victim of the crime involved that the act constituting the basis of the crime was not committed.

“(C) POSSESSION.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘possession’, used with respect to possession of a sample of sexual assault evidence by a State or unit of local government, includes possession by an individual who is acting as an agent of the State or unit of local government for the collection of the sample.

“(ii) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in clause (i) shall be construed to create or amend any Federal rights or privileges for non-governmental vendor laboratories described in regulations promulgated under section 210303 of the DNA Identification Act of 1994 (42 U.S.C. 14131).

“(o) ESTABLISHMENT OF PROTOCOLS, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, AND DEFINITIONS.—

“(1) PROTOCOLS AND PRACTICES.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of the SAFER Act of 2012, the Director, in consultation with Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies and government laboratories, shall develop and publish a description of protocols and practices the Director considers appropriate for the accurate, timely, and effective collection and processing of DNA evidence, including protocols and practices specific to sexual assault cases, which shall address appropriate steps in the investigation of cases that might involve DNA evidence, including—

“(A) how to determine—

“(i) which evidence is to be collected by law enforcement personnel and forwarded for testing;

“(ii) the preferred order in which evidence from the same case is to be tested; and

“(iii) what information to take into account when establishing the order in which evidence from different cases is to be tested;

“(B) the establishment of a reasonable period of time in which evidence is to be forwarded by emergency response providers, law enforcement personnel, and prosecutors to a laboratory for testing;

“(C) the establishment of reasonable periods of time in which each stage of analytical laboratory testing is to be completed;

“(D) systems to encourage communication within a State or unit of local government among emergency response providers, law enforcement personnel, prosecutors, courts, defense counsel, crime laboratory personnel, and crime victims regarding the status of crime scene evidence to be tested; and

“(E) standards for conducting the audit of the backlog for DNA case work in sexual assault cases required under subsection (n).

“(2) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING.—The Director shall make available technical assistance and training to support States and units of local government in adopting and implementing the protocols and practices developed under paragraph (1) on and after the date on which the protocols and practices are published.

“(3) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection, the terms ‘awaiting testing’ and ‘possession’ have the meanings given those terms in subsection (n).”

SEC. 3. REPORTS TO CONGRESS.

Not later than 90 days after the end of each fiscal year for which a grant is made for the

purpose described in section 2(a)(6) of the DNA Analysis Backlog Elimination Act of 2000, as amended by section 2, the Attorney General shall submit to Congress a report that—

(1) lists the States and units of local government that have been awarded such grants and the amount of the grant received by each such State or unit of local government;

(2) states the number of extensions granted by the Attorney General under section 2(n)(3) of the DNA Analysis Backlog Elimination Act of 2000, as added by section 2; and

(3) summarizes the processing status of the samples of sexual assault evidence identified in Sexual Assault Forensic Evidence Reports established under section 2(o)(4) of the DNA Analysis Backlog Act of 2000, including the number of samples that have not been tested.

SEC. 4. REDUCING THE RAPE KIT BACKLOG.

Section 2(c)(3) of the DNA Analysis Backlog Elimination Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 14135(c)(3)) is amended—

(a) in subparagraph (B), by striking “2014” and inserting “2018”; and

(b) by adding at the end the following:

“(3) For each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018, not less than 75 percent of the total grant amounts shall be awarded for a combination of purposes under paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) of subsection (a).”

SEC. 5. OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY.

All grants awarded by the Department of Justice that are authorized under this Act shall be subject to the following:

(1) AUDIT REQUIREMENT.—Beginning in fiscal year 2013, and each fiscal year thereafter, the Inspector General of the Department of Justice shall conduct audits of recipients of grants under this Act to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse of funds by grantees. The Inspector General shall determine the appropriate number of grantees to be audited each year.

(2) MANDATORY EXCLUSION.—A recipient of grant funds under this Act that is found to have an unresolved audit finding shall not be eligible to receive grant funds under this Act during the 2 fiscal years beginning after the 12-month period described in paragraph (5).

(3) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this Act, the Attorney General shall give priority to eligible entities that, during the 3 fiscal years before submitting an application for a grant under this Act, did not have an unresolved audit finding showing a violation in the terms or conditions of a Department of Justice grant program.

(4) REIMBURSEMENT.—If an entity is awarded grant funds under this Act during the 2-fiscal-year period in which the entity is barred from receiving grants under paragraph (2), the Attorney General shall—

(A) deposit an amount equal to the grant funds that were improperly awarded to the grantee into the General Fund of the Treasury; and

(B) seek to recoup the costs of the repayment to the fund from the grant recipient that was erroneously awarded grant funds.

(5) DEFINED TERM.—In this section, the term “unresolved audit finding” means an audit report finding in the final audit report of the Inspector General of the Department of Justice that the grantee has utilized grant funds for an unauthorized expenditure or otherwise unallowable cost that is not closed or resolved within a 12-month period beginning on the date when the final audit report is issued.

(6) NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION REQUIREMENTS.—

(A) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this section and the grant programs described in this Act, the term “nonprofit organization” means an organization that is de-

scribed in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and is exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of such Code.

(B) PROHIBITION.—The Attorney General shall not award a grant under any grant program described in this Act to a nonprofit organization that holds money in offshore accounts for the purpose of avoiding paying the tax described in section 511(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

(C) DISCLOSURE.—Each nonprofit organization that is awarded a grant under a grant program described in this Act and uses the procedures prescribed in regulations to create a rebuttable presumption of reasonableness for the compensation of its officers, directors, trustees and key employees, shall disclose to the Attorney General, in the application for the grant, the process for determining such compensation, including the independent persons involved in reviewing and approving such compensation, the comparability data used, and contemporaneous substantiation of the deliberation and decision. Upon request, the Attorney General shall make the information disclosed under this subsection available for public inspection.

(7) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Unless otherwise explicitly provided in authorizing legislation, not more than 7.5 percent of the amounts authorized to be appropriated under this Act may be used by the Attorney General for salaries and administrative expenses of the Department of Justice.

(8) CONFERENCE EXPENDITURES.—

(A) LIMITATION.—No amounts authorized to be appropriated to the Department of Justice under this Act may be used by the Attorney General or by any individual or organization awarded discretionary funds through a cooperative agreement under this Act, to host or support any expenditure for conferences that uses more than \$20,000 in Department funds, unless the Deputy Attorney General or the appropriate Assistant Attorney General, Director, or principal deputy as the Deputy Attorney General may designate, provides prior written authorization that the funds may be expended to host a conference.

(B) WRITTEN APPROVAL.—Written approval under subparagraph (A) shall include a written estimate of all costs associated with the conference, including the cost of all food and beverages, audio/visual equipment, honoraria for speakers, and any entertainment.

(C) REPORT.—The Deputy Attorney General shall submit an annual report to the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives on all conference expenditures approved by operation of this paragraph.

(9) PROHIBITION ON LOBBYING ACTIVITY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Amounts authorized to be appropriated under this Act may not be utilized by any grant recipient to—

(i) lobby any representative of the Department of Justice regarding the award of grant funding; or

(ii) lobby any representative of a Federal, state, local, or tribal government regarding the award of grant funding.

(B) PENALTY.—If the Attorney General determines that any recipient of a grant under this Act has violated subparagraph (A), the Attorney General shall—

(i) require the grant recipient to repay the grant in full; and

(ii) prohibit the grant recipient from receiving another grant under this Act for not less than 5 years.

SEC. 6. SUNSET.

Effective on December 31, 2018, subsections (a)(6) and (n) of section 2 of the DNA Analysis Backlog Elimination Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 14135(a)(6) and (n)) are repealed.

AMENDMENTS OFFERED BY MR. SMITH OF TEXAS

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I have amendments at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the amendments.

The Clerk read as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Sexual Assault Forensic Evidence Reporting Act of 2012” or the “SAFER Act of 2012”.

SEC. 2. DEBBIE SMITH GRANTS FOR AUDITING SEXUAL ASSAULT EVIDENCE BACKLOGS.

Section 2 of the DNA Analysis Backlog Elimination Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 14135) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(6) To conduct an audit consistent with subsection (n) of the samples of sexual assault evidence that are in the possession of the State or unit of local government and are awaiting testing.

“(7) To ensure that the collection and processing of sexual assault evidence that is awaiting testing is carried out in an appropriate and timely manner and in accordance with the advisory guidelines developed under subsection (o)(1).”;

(2) in subsection (c), by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(4) ALLOCATION OF GRANT AWARDS FOR AUDITS.—For each of fiscal years 2014 through 2017, not less than 5 percent, but not more than 7 percent, of the grant amounts distributed under paragraph (1) shall, if sufficient applications to justify such amounts are received by the Attorney General, be awarded for purposes described in subsection (a)(6), provided that none of the funds required to be distributed under this paragraph shall decrease or otherwise limit the availability of funds required to be awarded to States or units of local government under paragraph (3).”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new subsections:

“(n) USE OF FUNDS FOR AUDITING SEXUAL ASSAULT EVIDENCE BACKLOGS.—

“(I) ELIGIBILITY.—The Attorney General may award a grant under this section to a State or unit of local government for the purpose described in subsection (a)(6) only if the State or unit of local government—

“(A) submits a plan for performing the audit of samples described in such subsection; and

“(B) includes in such plan a good-faith estimate of the number of such samples.

“(2) GRANT CONDITIONS.—A State or unit of local government receiving a grant for the purpose described in subsection (a)(6)—

“(A) may not enter into any contract or agreement with any non-governmental vendor laboratory to conduct an audit described in subsection (a)(6); and

“(B) shall—

“(i) not later than 1 year after receiving the grant, complete the audit referred to in paragraph (1)(A) in accordance with the plan submitted under such paragraph;

“(ii) not later than 60 days after receiving possession of a sample of sexual assault evidence that was not in the possession of the State or unit of local government at the time of the initiation of an audit under paragraph (1)(A), subject to paragraph (4)(F), include in any required reports under clause (v), the information listed under paragraph (4)(B);

“(iii) for each sample of sexual assault evidence that is identified as awaiting testing as part of the audit referred to in paragraph (1)(A)—

“(I) assign a unique numeric or alphanumeric identifier to each sample of sexual assault evidence that is in the possession of the State or

unit of local government and is awaiting testing; and

“(II) identify the date or dates after which the State or unit of local government would be barred by any applicable statutes of limitations from prosecuting a perpetrator of the sexual assault to which the sample relates;

“(iv) provide that—

“(1) the chief law enforcement officer of the State or unit of local government, respectively, is the individual responsible for the compliance of the State or unit of local government, respectively, with the reporting requirements described in clause (v); or

“(II) the designee of such officer may fulfill the responsibility described in subclause (I) so long as such designee is an employee of the State or unit of local government, respectively, and is not an employee of any governmental laboratory or non-governmental vendor laboratory; and

“(v) comply with all grantee reporting requirements described in paragraph (4).

“(3) EXTENSION OF INITIAL DEADLINE.—The Attorney General may grant an extension of the deadline under paragraph (2)(B)(i) to a State or unit of local government that demonstrates that more time is required for compliance with such paragraph.

“(4) SEXUAL ASSAULT FORENSIC EVIDENCE REPORTS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—For not less than 12 months after the completion of an initial count of sexual assault evidence that is awaiting testing during an audit referred to in paragraph (1)(A), a State or unit of local government that receives a grant award under subsection (a)(6) shall, not less than every 60 days, submit a report to the Department of Justice, on a form prescribed by the Attorney General, which shall contain the information required under subparagraph (B).

“(B) CONTENTS OF REPORTS.—A report under this paragraph shall contain the following information:

“(i) The name of the State or unit of local government filing the report.

“(ii) The period of dates covered by the report.

“(iii) The cumulative total number of samples of sexual assault evidence that, at the end of the reporting period—

“(I) are in the possession of the State or unit of local government at the reporting period;

“(II) are awaiting testing; and

“(III) the State or unit of local government has determined should undergo DNA or other appropriate forensic analyses.

“(iv) The cumulative total number of samples of sexual assault evidence in the possession of the State or unit of local government that, at the end of the reporting period, the State or unit of local government has determined should not undergo DNA or other appropriate forensic analyses, provided that the reporting form shall allow for the State or unit of local government, at its sole discretion, to explain the reasoning for this determination in some or all cases.

“(v) The cumulative total number of samples of sexual assault evidence in a total under clause (iii) that have been submitted to a laboratory for DNA or other appropriate forensic analyses.

“(vi) The cumulative total number of samples of sexual assault evidence identified by an audit referred to in paragraph (1)(A) or under paragraph (2)(B)(ii) for which DNA or other appropriate forensic analysis has been completed at the end of the reporting period.

“(vii) The total number of samples of sexual assault evidence identified by the State or unit of local government under paragraph (2)(B)(ii), since the previous reporting period.

“(viii) The cumulative total number of samples of sexual assault evidence described under clause (iii) for which the State or unit of local government will be barred within 12 months by any applicable statute of limitations from prosecuting a perpetrator of the sexual assault to which the sample relates.

“(C) PUBLICATION OF REPORTS.—Not later than 7 days after the submission of a report under this paragraph by a State or unit of local government, the Attorney General shall, subject to subparagraph (D), publish and disseminate a facsimile of the full contents of such report on an appropriate internet website.

“(D) PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION.—The Attorney General shall ensure that any information published and disseminated as part of a report under this paragraph, which reports information under this subsection, does not include personally identifiable information or details about a sexual assault that might lead to the identification of the individuals involved.

“(E) OPTIONAL REPORTING.—The Attorney General shall—

“(i) at the discretion of a State or unit of local government required to file a report under subparagraph (A), allow such State or unit of local government, at their sole discretion, to submit such reports on a more frequent basis; and

“(ii) make available to all States and units of local government the reporting form created pursuant to subparagraph (A), whether or not they are required to submit such reports, and allow such States or units of local government, at their sole discretion, to submit such reports for publication.

“(F) SAMPLES EXEMPT FROM REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—The reporting requirements described in paragraph (2) shall not apply to a sample of sexual assault evidence that—

“(i) is not considered criminal evidence (such as a sample collected anonymously from a victim who is unwilling to make a criminal complaint); or

“(ii) relates to a sexual assault for which the prosecution of each perpetrator is barred by a statute of limitations.

“(5) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

“(A) AWAITING TESTING.—The term ‘awaiting testing’ means, with respect to a sample of sexual assault evidence, that—

“(i) the sample has been collected and is in the possession of a State or unit of local government;

“(ii) DNA and other appropriate forensic analyses have not been performed on such sample; and

“(iii) the sample is related to a criminal case or investigation in which final disposition has not yet been reached.

“(B) FINAL DISPOSITION.—The term ‘final disposition’ means, with respect to a criminal case or investigation to which a sample of sexual assault evidence relates—

“(i) the conviction or acquittal of all suspected perpetrators of the crime involved;

“(ii) a determination by the State or unit of local government in possession of the sample that the case is unfounded; or

“(iii) a declaration by the victim of the crime involved that the act constituting the basis of the crime was not committed.

“(C) POSSESSION.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘possession’, used with respect to possession of a sample of sexual assault evidence by a State or unit of local government, includes possession by an individual who is acting as an agent of the State or unit of local government for the collection of the sample.

“(ii) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in clause (i) shall be construed to create or amend any Federal rights or privileges for non-governmental vendor laboratories described in regulations promulgated under section 210303 of the DNA Identification Act of 1994 (42 U.S.C. 14131).

“(o) ESTABLISHMENT OF ADVISORY GUIDELINES, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, AND DEFINITIONS.—

“(I) ADVISORY GUIDELINES.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of the SAFER Act of 2012, the Attorney General, in consultation with Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies and government laboratories, shall develop and publish a report containing advisory guidelines the Attorney General considers appropriate for the accurate,

timely, and effective collection and processing of sexual assault evidence that is awaiting testing, which shall address appropriate steps in the investigation of cases that might involve sexual assault evidence that is awaiting testing, including only—

“(A) how to determine—

“(i) which evidence is to be collected by law enforcement personnel and forwarded for testing; and

“(ii) what information to take into account when establishing the order in which evidence from different cases is to be tested;

“(B) the establishment of a reasonable period of time in which evidence is to be forwarded by emergency response providers, law enforcement personnel, and prosecutors to a laboratory for testing;

“(C) systems to encourage communication within a State or unit of local government among emergency response providers, law enforcement personnel, prosecutors, courts, crime laboratory personnel, and crime victims regarding the status of sexual assault evidence to be tested; and

“(D) standards for conducting the audit of the backlog of sexual assault evidence that is awaiting testing required under subsection (n).”

“(2) **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING.**—The Attorney General shall make available technical assistance and training to support States and units of local government in adopting and implementing the guidelines developed under paragraph (1) on and after the date on which the guidelines are published.

“(3) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this subsection, the terms ‘awaiting testing’ and ‘possession’ have the meanings given those terms in subsection (n).”

SEC. 3. REPORTS TO CONGRESS.

Not later than 90 days after the end of each fiscal year for which a grant is made for the purpose described in section 2(a)(6) of the DNA Analysis Backlog Elimination Act of 2000, as amended by section 2, the Attorney General shall submit to Congress a report that—

(1) lists the States and units of local government that have been awarded such grants and the amount of the grant received by each such State or unit of local government;

(2) states the number of extensions granted by the Attorney General under section 2(n)(3) of the DNA Analysis Backlog Elimination Act of 2000, as added by section 2; and

(3) summarizes the processing status of the samples of sexual assault evidence identified in Sexual Assault Forensic Evidence Reports established under section 2(o)(4) of the DNA Analysis Backlog Act of 2000, including the number of samples that have not been tested.

SEC. 4. REDUCING THE RAPE KIT BACKLOG.

Section 2(c)(3) of the DNA Analysis Backlog Elimination Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 14135(c)(3)) is amended—

(a) in subparagraph (B), by striking “2014” and inserting “2018”; and

(b) by adding at the end the following:

“(3) For each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018, not less than 75 percent of the total grant amounts shall be awarded for a combination of purposes under paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) of subsection (a).”

SEC. 5. OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY.

All grants awarded by the Department of Justice that are authorized under this Act shall be subject to the following:

(1) **AUDIT REQUIREMENT.**—Beginning in fiscal year 2013, and each fiscal year thereafter, the Inspector General of the Department of Justice shall conduct audits of recipients of grants under this Act to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse of funds by grantees. The Inspector General shall determine the appropriate number of grantees to be audited each year.

(2) **MANDATORY EXCLUSION.**—A recipient of grant funds under this Act that is found to have an unresolved audit finding shall not be eligible

to receive grant funds under this Act during the 2 fiscal years beginning after the 12-month period described in paragraph (5).

(3) **PRIORITY.**—In awarding grants under this Act, the Attorney General shall give priority to eligible entities that, during the 3 fiscal years before submitting an application for a grant under this Act, did not have an unresolved audit finding showing a violation in the terms or conditions of a Department of Justice grant program.

(4) **REIMBURSEMENT.**—If an entity is awarded grant funds under this Act during the 2-fiscal-year period in which the entity is barred from receiving grants under paragraph (2), the Attorney General shall—

(A) deposit an amount equal to the grant funds that were improperly awarded to the grantee into the General Fund of the Treasury; and

(B) seek to recoup the costs of the repayment to the fund from the grant recipient that was erroneously awarded grant funds.

(5) **DEFINED TERM.**—In this section, the term “unresolved audit finding” means an audit report finding in the final audit report of the Inspector General of the Department of Justice that the grantee has utilized grant funds for an unauthorized expenditure or otherwise unallowable cost that is not closed or resolved within a 12-month period beginning on the date when the final audit report is issued.

(6) **NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION REQUIREMENTS.**—

(A) **DEFINITION.**—For purposes of this section and the grant programs described in this Act, the term “nonprofit organization” means an organization that is described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and is exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of such Code.

(B) **PROHIBITION.**—The Attorney General shall not award a grant under any grant program described in this Act to a nonprofit organization that holds money in offshore accounts for the purpose of avoiding paying the tax described in section 511(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

(C) **DISCLOSURE.**—Each nonprofit organization that is awarded a grant under a grant program described in this Act and uses the procedures prescribed in regulations to create a rebuttable presumption of reasonableness for the compensation of its officers, directors, trustees and key employees, shall disclose to the Attorney General, in the application for the grant, the process for determining such compensation, including the independent persons involved in reviewing and approving such compensation, the comparability data used, and contemporaneous substantiation of the deliberation and decision. Upon request, the Attorney General shall make the information disclosed under this subsection available for public inspection.

(7) **ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.**—Unless otherwise explicitly provided in authorizing legislation, not more than 7.5 percent of the amounts authorized to be appropriated under this Act may be used by the Attorney General for salaries and administrative expenses of the Department of Justice.

(8) **CONFERENCE EXPENDITURES.**—

(A) **LIMITATION.**—No amounts authorized to be appropriated to the Department of Justice under this Act may be used by the Attorney General or by any individual or organization awarded discretionary funds through a cooperative agreement under this Act, to host or support any expenditure for conferences that uses more than \$20,000 in Department funds, unless the Deputy Attorney General or the appropriate Assistant Attorney General, Director, or principal deputy as the Deputy Attorney General may designate, provides prior written authorization that the funds may be expended to host a conference.

(B) **WRITTEN APPROVAL.**—Written approval under subparagraph (A) shall include a written

estimate of all costs associated with the conference, including the cost of all food and beverages, audio/visual equipment, honoraria for speakers, and any entertainment.

(C) **REPORT.**—The Deputy Attorney General shall submit an annual report to the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives on all conference expenditures approved by operation of this paragraph.

(9) **PROHIBITION ON LOBBYING ACTIVITY.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Amounts authorized to be appropriated under this Act may not be utilized by any grant recipient to—

(i) lobby any representative of the Department of Justice regarding the award of grant funding; or

(ii) lobby any representative of a Federal, State, local, or tribal government regarding the award of grant funding.

(B) **PENALTY.**—If the Attorney General determines that any recipient of a grant under this Act has violated subparagraph (A), the Attorney General shall—

(i) require the grant recipient to repay the grant in full; and

(ii) prohibit the grant recipient from receiving another grant under this Act for not less than 5 years.

SEC. 6. SUNSET.

Effective on December 31, 2018, subsections (a)(6) and (n) of section 2 of the DNA Analysis Backlog Elimination Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 14135(a)(6) and (n)) are repealed.

Amend the title so as to read: “A bill to amend the DNA Analysis Backlog Elimination Act of 2000 to provide for Debbie Smith grants for auditing sexual assault evidence backlogs, and for other purposes.”

Mr. SMITH of Texas (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading.

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

There was no objection.

The amendments were agreed to.

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

SPACE EXPLORATION SUSTAINABILITY ACT

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker’s table the bill (H.R. 6586) to extend the application of certain space launch liability provisions through 2014, with the Senate amendment thereto, and concur in the Senate amendment.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the Senate amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Senate amendment:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Space Exploration Sustainability Act”.

SEC. 2. ASSURANCE OF CORE CAPABILITIES.

Section 203 of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C. 18313) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(c) **SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING HUMAN SPACE FLIGHT CAPABILITY ASSURANCE.**—It is the sense of Congress that the Administrator shall

proceed with the utilization of the ISS, technology development, and follow-on transportation systems (including the Space Launch System, multi-purpose crew vehicle, and commercial crew and cargo transportation capabilities) under titles III and IV of this Act in a manner that ensures—

“(1) that these capabilities remain inherently complementary and interrelated;

“(2) a balance of the development, sustainment, and use of each of these capabilities, which are of critical importance to the viability and sustainability of the U.S. space program; and

“(3) that resources required to support the timely and sustainable development of these capabilities authorized in either title III or title IV of this Act are not derived from a reduction in resources for the capabilities authorized in the other title.

“(d) LIMITATION.—Nothing in subsection (c) shall apply to or affect any capability authorized by any other title of this Act”.

SEC. 3. EXTENSION OF CERTAIN SPACE LAUNCH LIABILITY PROVISIONS.

Section 50915(f) of title 51, United States Code, is amended by striking “December 31, 2012” and inserting “December 31, 2013”.

SEC. 4. EXEMPTION FROM INKSNA.

Section 7(1)(B) of the Iran, North Korea, and Syria Nonproliferation Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 note) is amended—

(1) by striking “, or for the purchase of goods or services relating to human space flight, that are”; and

(2) by striking “prior to July 1, 2016” and inserting “prior to December 31, 2020”.

Mr. SMITH of Texas (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading.

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

There was no objection.

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

There was no objection.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 11 a.m. tomorrow.

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

There was no objection.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 38 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, January 3, 2013, at 11 a.m.

**EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS,
ETC.**

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

9017. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Patrick J. O'Reilly, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

9018. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Certification Related to Condition 27(C)(i) of Senate Executive Resolution 75 to Advise and Consent to the Ratification of the Chemical Weapons Convention, Subject to Certain Conditions; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

9019. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Education, transmitting Semiannual Report to Congress of the Office of the Inspector General for the period April 1, 2012, through September 30, 2012; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

9020. A letter from the Auditor, District of Columbia, transmitting a report titled, “Audit of the Closure and Consolidation of 23 D.C. Public Schools.”; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

9021. A letter from the Chairman, National Transportation Safety Board, transmitting the Board's report on competitive sourcing efforts for fiscal year 2012; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

9022. A letter from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting the Office's semiannual report from the office of the Inspector General and the Management Response for the period April 1, 2012, through September 30, 2012; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

9023. A letter from the Administrator, Small Business Administration, transmitting the Administration's semiannual report from the office of the Inspector General for the period April 1 through September 30, 2012; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

9024. A letter from the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting the Department's report on the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act for 2012; to the Committee on House Administration.

9025. A letter from the Chief Administrative Officer, transmitting the quarterly report of receipts and expenditures of appropriations and other funds for the period October 1, 2012 through December 31, 2012 as

compiled by the Chief Administrative Officer, pursuant to 2 U.S.C. 104a Public Law 88-454; (H. Doc. No. 112-160); to the Committee on House Administration and ordered to be printed.

**REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON
PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS**

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. BACHUS: Committee on Financial Services. Fourth Semiannual Report on the Activity of the Committee on Financial Services for the 112th Congress (Rept. 112-742). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN: Committee on Foreign Affairs. Legislative Review and Oversight Activities of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, One Hundred Twelfth Congress (Rept. 112-743). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. MCKEON: Committee on Armed Services. Fourth Semiannual Report on the Activities of the Committee on Armed Services for the One Hundred Twelfth Congress (Rept. 112-744). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HALL: Committee on Science, Space, and Technology. Fourth Semiannual Report of Activities of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology (Rept. 112-745). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII,

Mr. STEARNS introduced a resolution (H. Res. 845) amending the Rules of the House of Representatives to establish a standing Committee on Repeals; which was referred to the Committee on Rules.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 751: Ms. ESHOO, Mr. SCHIFF, and Ms. MOORE.

H.R. 3395: Mr. RAHALL.

H.R. 3625: Mr. PERLMUTTER.

H.R. 4373: Mr. MARKEY.

H.R. 5989: Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. LOEBSACK, Ms. NORTON, and Mr. CICILLINE.

H.R. 6490: Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. PAULSEN, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, and Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 6589: Mr. GOHMERT.

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