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No. 40

House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SMITH of Nebraska).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 14, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ADRIAN SMITH to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2016, the Chair would now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 1 minute p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BISHOP of Utah) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:
God of mercy, thank You for giving us another day.

You alone can trace the deepest fault lines of history and read the highest aspirations of the human heart.

Bless the Members of the people's House today. Give them sound judgment and make them as practical as the American people who sent them here as their Representatives.

Help them to withstand open criticism when they know what is right before You and conscience. Often they are characterized by half-truths and attributed motives that are far beneath them. Uphold them at such times with personal integrity and compassion for those most in need.

Having called them to serve others to the best of their ability, lift them even higher by Your grace and power to live and work 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 South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

A PUBLIC SERVANT REMEMBERED

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

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the

memory of Washington County Commissioner Ted Bearth, who passed away last week.

Ted was elected to the county board in 2012 and was reelected in 2014, representing Washington County's Second District. However, Ted's long record of public service began more than 40 years ago, when he was elected to the Oakdale City Council in 1974. He spent an impressive 26 years of service as a city council member and mayor.

Ted's commitment to Minnesota and his community goes well beyond elected office. As a Marine Corps veteran, he was also involved in the Oakdale Veterans Memorial Committee.

Ted Bearth was a beloved member of our community and a dedicated public servant. Despite his declining health, he stayed involved and in touch with county staffers and fellow commissioners. He was known for his strong leadership and ability to forge lasting connections.

I wish Ted's family peace during this difficult time and assure them that he will be greatly missed by many Minnesotans.

IN HONOR OF NANCY DAVIS REAGAN

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, last week the American people lost a devoted public servant, Nancy Davis Reagan.

As a former staff member of the Reagan administration, I will always appreciate the devotion of Nancy Reagan to the American people, especially to her husband "Ronnie."

Nancy Reagan will always be cherished for how she inspired a Nation and showed that goodwill prevailed. She demonstrated that service by showing

□ 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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small acts could make a world of difference. Nancy's fierce love for her husband and her country was her service.

A passionate advocate for drug awareness and prevention, Nancy Reagan launched the "Just Say No" program to fight drug and alcohol abuse among young people to promote fulfilling lives. She strived to always make a positive impact for our citizens.

Mrs. Reagan showed that no act of kindness, no act of love, is too small to be meaningful. She practiced what she preached, living every day to the fullest. In every sense of the word, she was the very model of a First Lady, wife, and mother.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and may the President, by his actions, never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

Happy 13th birthday, Addison.

DINA KIM RECEIVES PRESIDENT'S VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARD

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Dina Kim, a senior at State College Area High School, located in Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District, on earning the national President's Volunteer Service Award.

This award honors people across the Nation who have volunteered 100 hours per year or more in service to their communities. Dina has worked for years as a translator for Compassion Korea and was a former volunteer in Malaysia, helping to teach English to refugee students.

Dina started volunteering with Compassion Korea when she was in fifth grade. The organization allows people from around the world to sponsor a child in need from another country. Dina works to translate letters from children to their sponsor families in Korean.

Dina Kim estimates that she has accumulated 600 hours of volunteer service both in State College, her former home in Texas, and in Malaysia.

She will graduate this year and plans to attend college, majoring in linguistics. She is an example of the great contributions young people can bring to the communities we serve. I congratulate Dina on this award and wish her the best of luck in the future.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 10, 2016.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on March 10, 2016 at 1:35 p.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 524.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 3 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 6 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1506

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. ROTHFUS) at 3 o'clock and 6 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

FAIR RATEPAYER ACCOUNTABILITY, TRANSPARENCY, AND EFFICIENCY STANDARDS ACT

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2984) to amend the Federal Power Act to provide that any inaction by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission that allows a rate change to go into effect shall be treated as an order by the Commission for purposes of rehearing and court review.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2984

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 "Fair Ratepayer Accountability, Transparency, and Efficiency Standards Act" or the "Fair RATES Act".

SEC. 2. AMENDMENT TO THE FEDERAL POWER ACT.

Subsection (d) of section 205 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 824d(d)) is amended by adding at the end the following: "Any absence of action by the Commission that allows a change to take effect under this sec-

tion, including the Commission allowing the sixty days' notice herein provided to expire without Commission action, shall be treated as an order issued by the Commission accepting such change for purposes of section 313."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

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

As we begin consideration of this legislation, I thank the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) for bringing this matter to the attention of our committee.

The Federal Power Act sets forth processes to set rates for electricity, including opportunities for the public to protest a rate change filed with FERC. New rates take effect if FERC approves them or if FERC fails to issue an order approving or denying the filed rate within 60 days. The failure to approve or deny a rate may result from agency delay or, in some limited cases, from a vote that results in a deadlocked Commission, for example, a 2-2 vote. In such cases, the rates become effective by operation of law even when these rates were not approved by a majority of Commissioners.

The Federal Power Act provides administrative redress for members of the public to protest Commission rate decisions. However, if these rates become effective by operation of law—for example, a deadlock, 2-2—the administrative processes are not available to the public because FERC did not actually issue an order for the public to protest. The public literally gets shut out.

I don't want to speak for the gentleman from Massachusetts, but I think some of his constituents recently experienced this firsthand. As a result of that and of the hard work of Mr. KENNEDY's, of his staff's, and of the committee staffs' on both sides of the aisle, this legislation was drafted, and we considered it in committee. We have it on the floor today, and I would urge all of the Members to support this important legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I thank the House for allowing me to discuss the Fair RATES Act, H.R. 2984, and for bringing it to the floor for a vote.

I also thank Chairman WHITFIELD, Chairman UPTON, Ranking Members

RUSH and PALLONE, as well as the committee staffs on both sides, for their work with our office to help this bill move forward. In particular, to echo Chairman WHITFIELD's comments, he has been an incredible partner with us as we have tried to move this bill forward, and I am truly grateful for his assistance in doing so.

Mr. Speaker, every year regulators in New England hold energy capacity auctions to ensure that we have sufficient energy that is generated to meet consumer demand. Two years ago, during an auction, there was a shortfall that triggered administrative pricing at triple the current capacity payments, skyrocketing from about \$1 billion to \$3 billion.

That rate increase hasn't even reached our constituents yet, and our region already pays the highest energy rates in the continental United States. Next June, a significant portion of their bills will triple due to that auction.

When the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission reviewed the rate increase, it was down to four commissioners and it deadlocked 2-2. One Democratic Commissioner and one Republican Commissioner raised concerns about whether those rates were just and reasonable for consumers. However, the rates took effect by operation of law without any action from FERC; and because there was no official decision by FERC, there was no decision to appeal, holding our constituents voiceless.

Another annual auction just took place last month with rates, again, that were three times higher than they are today. Those rates are, again, being reviewed by a shorthanded FERC, which sets up the potential for the exact same outcome of consumers, once again, being shut out of the process.

With bipartisan support and endorsements from the American Public Power Association, the New England Public Power Association, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, my bill, the Fair RATES Act, would simply ensure that avenues of good governance remain open. It provides that if at any time rate changes take effect by operation of law without Commission action, deadlocked or otherwise, aggrieved parties retain the right to protest those rates through the process that is outlined by the Federal Power Act.

I am the first to admit that this is a complex issue, but my bill is a simple fix to a complex problem. When we as lawmakers identify a flaw in one of our laws, especially one that unduly harms our constituents, it is our obligation to act to amend the law.

The unpredictability of my region's energy rates means families can't save for the future and local businesses can't grow. The least we can do is to ensure that they will never be held voiceless when their electric bills arrive at the end of each month; so I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to give particular thanks to the committee staffs on both the majority and minority sides, including Patrick Currier, Allison Trexler, Rick Kessler, Caitlin Haberman, and Alexander Ratner.

Finally, I have to acknowledge somebody on my own team, Eric Fins, who knows more about energy rates and capacity markets than he ever thought he would, and I am grateful for that. He is now writing a law school essay on the topic.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, I do want to thank the gentleman from Massachusetts, once again, for bringing this important issue before us.

We must allow the public to have administrative process relief, and this legislation will do that in those cases when FERC does not actually issue an order; so I would urge the passage of this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2984.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ENERGY EFFICIENT GOVERNMENT TECHNOLOGY ACT

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1268) to amend the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 to promote energy efficiency via information and computing technologies, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1268

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 "Energy Efficient Government Technology Act".

SEC. 2. ENERGY-EFFICIENT AND ENERGY-SAVING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES.

(a) AMENDMENT.—Subtitle C of title V of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (Public Law 110-140; 121 Stat. 1661) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 530. ENERGY-EFFICIENT AND ENERGY-SAVING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES.

"(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

"(1) DIRECTOR.—The term 'Director' means the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

"(2) INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY.—The term 'information technology' has the meaning given that term in section 11101 of title 40, United States Code.

"(b) DEVELOPMENT OF IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, each Federal agency shall coordinate with the Director, the Secretary, and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to develop an implementation strategy (that in-

cludes best practices and measurement and verification techniques) for the maintenance, purchase, and use by the Federal agency of energy-efficient and energy-saving information technologies, taking into consideration the performance goals established under subsection (d).

"(c) ADMINISTRATION.—In developing an implementation strategy under subsection (b), each Federal agency shall consider—

- "(1) advanced metering infrastructure;
- "(2) energy-efficient data center strategies and methods of increasing asset and infrastructure utilization;
- "(3) advanced power management tools;
- "(4) building information modeling, including building energy management;
- "(5) secure telework and travel substitution tools; and
- "(6) mechanisms to ensure that the agency realizes the energy cost savings brought about through increased efficiency and utilization.

"(d) PERFORMANCE GOALS.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Director, in consultation with the Secretary, shall establish performance goals for evaluating the efforts of Federal agencies in improving the maintenance, purchase, and use of energy-efficient and energy-saving information technology.

"(2) BEST PRACTICES.—The Chief Information Officers Council established under section 3603 of title 44, United States Code, shall recommend best practices for the attainment of the performance goals, which shall include Federal agency consideration of, to the extent applicable by law, the use of—

- "(A) energy savings performance contracting; and
- "(B) utility energy services contracting.

"(e) REPORTS.—

"(1) AGENCY REPORTS.—Each Federal agency shall include in the report of the agency under section 527 a description of the efforts and results of the agency under this section.

"(2) OMB GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY REPORTS AND SCORECARDS.—Effective beginning not later than October 1, 2017, the Director shall include in the annual report and scorecard of the Director required under section 528 a description of the efforts and results of Federal agencies under this section."

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of contents for the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 is amended by adding after the item relating to section 529 the following:

"Sec. 530. Energy-efficient and energy-saving information technologies."

SEC. 3. ENERGY EFFICIENT DATA CENTERS.

Section 453 of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17112) is amended—

- (1) in subsection (b)(2)(D)(iv), by striking "determined by the organization" and inserting "proposed by the stakeholders";
- (2) by striking subsection (b)(3); and
- (3) by striking subsections (c) through (g) and inserting the following:

"(c) STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT.—The Secretary and the Administrator shall carry out subsection (b) in collaboration with the information technology industry and other key stakeholders, with the goal of producing results that accurately reflect the most relevant and useful information available. In such collaboration, the Secretary and the Administrator shall pay particular attention to organizations that—

- "(1) have members with expertise in energy efficiency and in the development, operation, and functionality of data centers, information technology equipment, and software, such as representatives of hardware manufacturers, data center operators, and facility managers;

“(2) obtain and address input from Department of Energy National Laboratories or any college, university, research institution, industry association, company, or public interest group with applicable expertise;

“(3) follow—

“(A) commonly accepted procedures for the development of specifications; and

“(B) accredited standards development processes; and

“(4) have a mission to promote energy efficiency for data centers and information technology.

“(d) MEASUREMENTS AND SPECIFICATIONS.—The Secretary and the Administrator shall consider and assess the adequacy of the specifications, measurements, best practices, and benchmarks described in subsection (b) for use by the Federal Energy Management Program, the Energy Star Program, and other efficiency programs of the Department of Energy or the Environmental Protection Agency.

“(e) STUDY.—The Secretary, in collaboration with the Administrator, shall, not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of the Energy Efficient Government Technology Act, make available to the public an update to the Report to Congress on Server and Data Center Energy Efficiency published on August 2, 2007, under section 1 of Public Law 109-431 (120 Stat. 2920), that provides—

“(1) a comparison and gap analysis of the estimates and projections contained in the original report with new data regarding the period from 2008 through 2015;

“(2) an analysis considering the impact of information technologies, including virtualization and cloud computing, in the public and private sectors;

“(3) an evaluation of the impact of the combination of cloud platforms, mobile devices, social media, and big data on data center energy usage;

“(4) an evaluation of water usage in data centers and recommendations for reductions in such water usage; and

“(5) updated projections and recommendations for best practices through fiscal year 2020.

“(f) DATA CENTER ENERGY PRACTITIONER PROGRAM.—The Secretary, in collaboration with key stakeholders and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, shall maintain a data center energy practitioner program that leads to the certification of energy practitioners qualified to evaluate the energy usage and efficiency opportunities in Federal data centers. Each Federal agency shall consider having the data centers of the agency evaluated every 4 years, in accordance with section 543(f) of the National Energy Conservation Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 8253), by energy practitioners certified pursuant to such program.

“(g) OPEN DATA INITIATIVE.—The Secretary, in collaboration with key stakeholders and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, shall establish an open data initiative for Federal data center energy usage data, with the purpose of making such data available and accessible in a manner that encourages further data center innovation, optimization, and consolidation. In establishing the initiative, the Secretary shall consider the use of the online Data Center Maturity Model.

“(h) INTERNATIONAL SPECIFICATIONS AND METRICS.—The Secretary, in collaboration with key stakeholders, shall actively participate in efforts to harmonize global specifications and metrics for data center energy and water efficiency.

“(i) DATA CENTER UTILIZATION METRIC.—The Secretary, in collaboration with key stakeholders, shall facilitate the development of an efficiency metric that measures the energy efficiency of a data center (including equipment and facilities).

“(j) PROTECTION OF PROPRIETARY INFORMATION.—The Secretary and the Administrator shall not disclose any proprietary information or trade secrets provided by any individual or company for the purposes of carrying out this section or the programs and initiatives established under this section.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

□ 1515

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

I thank Representative ESHOO of California, a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee, for her work on this bill.

This legislation would require Federal agencies to coordinate with the Office of Management and Budget, the Department of Energy, and the Environmental Protection Agency to develop an implementation strategy, including best practices and measurement and verification techniques for the maintenance, purchase, and use of energy-efficient and energy-saving information technologies. OMB would be required to track and report on each agency's progress.

In 2013, the U.S. data centers consumed an estimated 91 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity, enough electricity to power all of the households in New York City twice over; and, I might say, they are on track to reach 140 billion kilowatt-hours by 2020. This amounts to roughly 2 percent of all the electricity used in the U.S. each year. Federal data centers are responsible for at least 10 percent of all U.S. data center energy use.

Consequently, this bill seeks to improve the energy efficiency of Federal data centers by, in part, requiring the Department of Energy to update a 2007 report on data center energy efficiency and maintain a data center energy practitioner certification program. DOE also would establish an open data initiative to help share best practices and support further innovation and develop a metric that measures data center energy efficiency.

So this is a very important bill that focuses on efficiency in these Federal data centers, and I would urge all of the Members to support this legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise in support of H.R. 1268, the Energy Efficient Government Technology Act, sponsored by two Energy and Commerce Committee members, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ESHOO) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KINZINGER).

H.R. 1268 promotes the use of energy-efficient and energy-saving information technologies and practices across the Federal Government, especially in data centers.

The bill amends the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007, the EISA Act, to require Federal agencies to coordinate with OMB, DOE, and EPA in developing an implementation strategy for maintenance, purchase, and use of energy-efficient and energy-saving information technologies.

The legislation highlights specific items that should be considered in the strategy and sets performance goals to evaluate agencies' efforts. It would also amend EISA to require DOE and EPA to collaborate with stakeholders as they implement the data center efficiency program and other measures to improve data center efficiency.

This legislation was reported with unanimous consent last month by the Energy and Commerce Committee, and the provisions of H.R. 1268 previously passed committee in 2015 as part of H.R. 8.

I commend Ms. ESHOO and Mr. KINZINGER. This is good, bipartisan efficiency legislation that deserves all of our support.

I urge my colleagues to support its passage.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today in support of my legislation, the Energy Efficient Government Technology Act. I thank Chairman UPTON, Ranking Member PALLONE, and my legislative partner Congressman ADAM KINZINGER for their strong support of this bill.

This bill is all about bringing our federal government's IT and data centers into the 21st century. The federal government is the nation's largest landowner, employer, and energy user and should lead by example in this field. By requiring federal agencies to utilize the best technologies and energy management strategies, this legislation will reduce the federal government's energy use, save taxpayer dollars, and set the standard for the private sector.

Today, the world generates more data in twelve hours than was generated in all of human history prior to 2003. This data must be stored and processed at data centers which are the backbone of the 21st century economy but can be highly energy inefficient. While we now routinely hear about data centers, this was not the case when I began examining this issue over a decade ago. In those days I had to explain to my colleagues what a data center was. Today, most people understand that data centers are a critical part of our national infrastructure and are found in nearly every sector of our economy. According to the GSA, the federal government alone has

more than 2,000 data centers which store everything from Social Security and tax records to e-books at the Library of Congress.

Data centers are critical to our economy and our lives, but they can be extremely inefficient when it comes to energy use. Experts estimate that most data centers could slash their energy use by up to 80 or 90 percent by simply implementing existing technologies and best practices. Several Silicon Valley companies have taken the lead in developing efficient, sustainable data centers, but we can do much more across both the private sector and government.

H.R. 1268 will drive energy efficiency improvements across the government's IT and data centers by requiring federal agencies to:

1. Utilize the best technologies and energy management strategies;

2. Formulate specific goals and periodically evaluate their energy efficiency; and

3. Make data center energy usage statistics public in a way that empowers further innovation.

Importantly, the bill requires government agencies to formulate specific performance goals and a means to calculate overall cost savings. The Department of Energy estimates that implementation of best practices alone could reduce the government's data center energy bill by 20 to 40 percent. And the Center for Climate and Energy Solutions found that widespread adoption of energy efficient information technologies could save the federal government over \$5 billion in energy costs through 2020.

In 2005, I authored language in the Energy Policy Act which mandated an EPA study on the energy use and energy costs of data centers. This report was transmitted to Congress in 2007 and served as a driver of both private and public investment in energy efficiency. Based on widespread agreement across government, industry and academia, the bill before us today requires an update to this important report. H.R. 1268 also creates a new "Open Data" initiative to make federal data center energy usage statistics publicly available in a way that empowers further innovation.

The Energy Efficient Government Technology Act passed the House last Congress with 375 votes. It passed the House again in this Congress as part of H.R. 8, and it is included in the Senate's comprehensive energy bill which is currently being debated. This non-controversial, bipartisan bill has strong support from both industry and energy efficiency advocates, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1268, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FEDERAL POWER ACT AMENDMENT

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4427) to amend section 203 of the Federal Power Act, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.
The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4427

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

SECTION 1. CLARIFICATION OF FACILITY MERGER AUTHORIZATION.

Section 203(a)(1)(B) of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 824b(a)(1)(B)) is amended by striking "such facilities or any part thereof" and inserting "such facilities, or any part thereof, of a value in excess of \$10,000,000".

SEC. 2. NOTIFICATION FOR CERTAIN TRANSACTIONS.

Section 203(a) of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 824b(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(7)(A) Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this paragraph, the Commission shall promulgate a rule requiring any public utility that is seeking to merge or consolidate, directly or indirectly, its facilities subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission, or any part thereof, with those of any other person, to notify the Commission of such transaction not later than 30 days after the date on which the transaction is consummated if—

"(i) such facilities, or any part thereof, are of a value in excess of \$1,000,000; and

"(ii) such public utility is not required to secure an order of the Commission under paragraph (1)(B).

"(B) In establishing any notification requirement under subparagraph (A), the Commission shall, to the maximum extent practicable, minimize the paperwork burden resulting from the collection of information."

SEC. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE.

The amendment made by section 1 shall take effect 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

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

Section 203 of the Federal Power Act establishes requirements for the sale, disposition, merger, purchase, and acquisition of certain utility assets and facilities. In the Energy Policy Act of 2005, Congress amended section 203 by dividing the section into separate statutory subsections, adding a new subsection granting FERC jurisdiction to review sales of certain generating facilities and increasing the minimum monetary threshold from \$50,000 to \$10 million for three of the four statutory subsections. This monetary threshold serves as a floor to ensure that public utilities would only be required to file and FERC to review proposed trans-

actions of a minimal material significance.

As amended by Congress in 2005, the subsection in section 203 of the Federal Power Act that pertains to mergers and consolidations of FERC jurisdictional facilities did not include an express minimum monetary threshold of \$10 million or any other amount. FERC has since interpreted this statutory change as eliminating the de minimis exceptions for mergers and consolidations. As a result, mergers and consolidations of any amount, no matter how small, require FERC approval.

This legislation, H.R. 4427, which was introduced by Mr. POMPEO of Kansas, remedies this discrepancy by amending section 203 to expressly include a minimum monetary threshold of \$10 million for mergers and consolidations of FERC jurisdictional facilities, thereby mirroring the existing \$10 million monetary threshold set forth in the other three subsections of section 203.

As explained by the general counsel of FERC, "adding a \$10 million de minimis threshold to the 'merge and consolidate clause' . . . could ease the administrative burden on the Commission staff and the regulatory burden on industry without a significant negative effect on the Commission's regulatory responsibilities."

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to pass this legislation introduced by the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. POMPEO).

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise in support of H.R. 4427, legislation by the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. POMPEO), which would add a \$10 million threshold to trigger FERC review of a merger or consolidation under section 203 of the Federal Power Act.

This is a significant change to current law as established by the Energy Policy Act of 2005 that essentially did away with the Public Utilities Holding Company Act, PUHCA, as it had existed for 70 years, in order to reduce the burden on industry.

But it also fundamentally altered and strengthened section 203 of the Federal Power Act to protect against potential market abuses that might arise without the protections of PUHCA. With that reasonable compromise authored by then-Chairmen BARTON and Domenici, it earned the bipartisan support of Ranking Members Dingell and Bingaman.

Testimony we heard at a recent Energy and Power Subcommittee hearing highlighted that, last year, roughly 20 percent of section 203 applications fell beneath the \$10 million threshold. That is a significant number of applications.

Furthermore, in multiple conversations with FERC general counsel and others, it became clear that, if the bill were to be enacted in its original form, FERC would have no way to know if attempts were being made to evade the review threshold by structuring major

merger consolidation activity as a series of below-threshold consolidations. FERC has already told us that it has the tools to deal with efforts to evade review through such schemes if it finds out that they are occurring.

However, the clear problem was, which FERC acknowledged, that the bill, as introduced, would leave the Commission with no standardized way to acquire information to even know that these below-threshold transactions were actually occurring. I think we can all agree that FERC should not have to rely on trade publications or word of mouth to know that merger consolidation activity is occurring involving regulated entities.

The easiest way to address this problem is by requiring regulated entities engaging in merger or consolidation activity to simply have to notify FERC that a transaction is occurring, and that is exactly what the committee did when it adopted by voice vote an amendment by Subcommittee Ranking Member BOBBY RUSH.

The bill, as reported by the Energy and Commerce Committee, requires FERC to begin a rulemaking process to develop a short, simple notification process for transactions between \$1 million and \$10 million. The bill also includes statutory direction to FERC to minimize the notification burden on industry to the maximum extent possible.

What we envisioned is a standard form of a page or less, able to be completed online, that simply informs FERC that a transaction is occurring or has recently occurred, who is involved, what the appropriate amount of that transaction is, and a brief description of the transaction. The bill we are considering now also adds language requested by industry, supported by both the chairman and ranking member of the committee, which provides further certainty by setting a reporting deadline of not later than 30 days from the consummation of a reportable transaction.

I commend the gentleman from Illinois and the gentleman from Kansas, along with Chairman UPTON, Chairman WHITFIELD, and Ranking Member PAL-LONE, for coming together and addressing this issue. It is a sensible piece of legislation that reduces the burden not only on industry, Mr. Speaker, but also on the government, while ensuring the public good is protected.

I urge passage of the legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, as the gentleman from Massachusetts made reference, this bill will reduce regulatory burdens, bring important parity to the statute, while also protecting ratepayers by providing important notice requirements. I would urge its passage.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the

rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4427, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REINSTATING AND EXTENDING
DEADLINE FOR CONSTRUCTION
OF HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT
INVOLVING CLARK CANYON DAM

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2080) to reinstate and extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving Clark Canyon Dam.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2080

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

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF TIME FOR A FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION PROJECT INVOLVING CLARK CANYON DAM.

Notwithstanding the time period described in section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806) that would otherwise apply to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission project numbered 12429, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (referred to in this section as the "Commission") shall, at the request of the licensee for the project, and after reasonable notice and in accordance with the procedures of the Commission under that section, reinstate the license and extend the time period during which the licensee is required to commence construction of project works for the 3-year period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous material in the RECORD on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Montana (Mr. ZINKE), who is the author of this legislation.

□ 1530

Mr. ZINKE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in firm support of H.R. 2080, which reinstates and extends the deadline for construction of the Clark Canyon Dam hydroelectric project.

The dam is located outside of Dillon, Montana, and will provide critical electricity to both Montana and Idaho. That is why I am proud to have the entire Idaho delegation with me and the entirety of the Montana delegation in support of this bill.

The issue is the red tape. Despite the importance of the project, the red tape with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has created an impassable deadlock in it that won't allow for construction of it. Even though we all recognize that hydroelectric power is clean and it is appropriate and the project is enormously important to Montana and Idaho, the bureaucratic red tape has just prevented it from going forward.

This is why we are here. Congress must act, and Congress will act. I am sure my colleagues on the other side of the aisle will agree that this is a worthy project for Congress to use our authority and to introduce the legislation to authorize such projects and independently move ahead.

This is why I urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 2080.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2080, a bill sponsored and led by the gentleman from Montana (Mr. ZINKE) to reinstate and extend the deadline for commencement of construction on the hydroelectric project involving Clark Canyon Dam.

Mr. Speaker, on August 26, 2009, FERC licensed the Clark Canyon Dam project at the Bureau of Reclamation's Clark Canyon Dam on the Beaverhead River in Beaverhead County, Montana.

Section 13 of the Federal Power Act requires licensees to commence construction of the hydroelectric project within a time fixed by the license, no more than 2 years from its being issued. It also authorizes FERC to issue one extension of that deadline for no more than 2 years.

In March of 2015, FERC terminated the license for the Clark Canyon Dam hydroelectric project after the licensee did not commence construction by the already extended deadline of August 2013.

The bill authorizes FERC to reinstate the terminated license for the Clark Canyon Dam hydroelectric project to extend for 6 years the date by which the licensee is required to commence construction. FERC has no objections to this legislation, and the Committee on Energy and Commerce reported the bill by voice vote without dissent.

I hope my colleagues will support passage of H.R. 2080. I commend the gentleman from Montana for all his work in bringing this to the floor.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, this is an important piece of legislation to give additional time for the development of Clark Canyon Dam, for which a license has been issued in the past. I urge passage of this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2080.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the

rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXTENDING DEADLINE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT INVOLVING GIBSON DAM

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2081) to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving the Gibson Dam.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2081

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

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF TIME FOR FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION PROJECT INVOLVING GIBSON DAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the requirements of section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806) that would otherwise apply to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission project numbered 12478-003, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (referred to in this section as the “Commission”) may, at the request of the licensee for the project, and after reasonable notice and in accordance with the procedures of the Commission under that section, extend the time period during which the licensee is required to commence construction of the project for a 6-year period that begins on the date described in subsection (b).

(b) DATE DESCRIBED.—The date described in this subsection is the date of the expiration of the extension of the period required for commencement of construction for the project described in subsection (a) that was issued by the Commission prior to the date of enactment of this Act under section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Montana (Mr. ZINKE), the author of this legislation.

Mr. ZINKE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in firm support of H.R. 2081, which reinstates and extends the deadline for construction of the Gibson Dam hydroelectric project.

Similar to the project before, the Gibson Dam—this is situated in Augusta, Montana—is a partnership between the Greenfields Irrigation District of Fairfield, Montana, and Toll-

house Energy of Bellingham, Washington.

The project was officially licensed by FERC in 2014, and a 2-year extension was also granted that year. Unfortunately, delays once again in paperwork and redtape require that Congress act to extend the deadline.

I am fairly confident that my colleagues on the other side will also support this bill, being that the same issue before us is dams provide a clean source of power.

The project has been reviewed multiple times, and it is in the best interests of Montana and our country. The dam itself is important not only to Montana and local farming communities, but it also protects pivotal wildlife in areas around it.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2081.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, this legislation was reported unanimously out by the Committee on Energy and Commerce. I know of no objections to the bill. I commend Mr. ZINKE for his work on bringing it to the floor.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2081.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

EXTENDING DEADLINE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT NUMBERED 12642

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3447) to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3447

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

SECTION 1. EXTENSION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the time period specified in section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806) that would otherwise apply to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission project numbered 12642, the Commission may, at the request of the licensee for the project, and after reasonable notice, in accordance with the good faith, due diligence, and public interest requirements of that section and the Commission's procedures under that section, extend the

time period during which the licensee is required to commence the construction of the project for up to 3 consecutive 2-year periods from the date of the expiration of the extension originally issued by the Commission.

(b) REINSTATEMENT OF EXPIRED LICENSE.—If the period required for commencement of construction of the project described in subsection (a) has expired prior to the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commission shall reinstate the license effective as of the date of its expiration and the first extension authorized under subsection (a) shall take effect on the date of such expiration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to give a strong thanks to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOX) for her work on this legislation.

This, like the other two pieces of legislation that we have just passed, refers to a hydroelectric project, in North Carolina in this instance.

Like the facts in the other cases, after granting a license to commence construction of this project, FERC issued an order terminating the project license as a result of continued delays by the project applicant and other agencies.

This legislation requires FERC to reinstate the license and extend the start time for construction of the W. Kerr Scott Dam project for 6 years.

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

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, this legislation was reported unanimously out by the Committee on Energy and Commerce. I know of no objections to the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I urge the passage of this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3447, as amended

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

EXTENDING DEADLINE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT NUMBERED 12715

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4416) to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4416

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

SECTION 1. EXTENSION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the time period specified in section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806) that would otherwise apply to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission project numbered 12715, the Commission may, at the request of the licensee for the project, and after reasonable notice, in accordance with the good faith, due diligence, and public interest requirements of that section and the Commission's procedures under that section, extend the time period during which the licensee is required to commence the construction of the project for up to 3 consecutive 2-year periods from the date of the expiration of the extension originally issued by the Commission. Any obligation of the licensee for the payment of annual charges under section 10(e) of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 803(e)) shall commence upon conclusion of the time period to commence construction of the project, as extended by the Commission under this subsection.

(b) REINSTATEMENT OF EXPIRED LICENSE.—If the period required for commencement of construction of the project described in subsection (a) has expired prior to the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commission shall reinstate the license effective as of the date of its expiration and the first extension authorized under subsection (a) shall take effect on the date of such expiration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to give a special thanks to the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MCKINLEY) for his work on this legislation.

Like the other three before, this relates to a hydropower project, this one located at the Jennings Randolph Dam in West Virginia. Like the other cases, after granting a license to commence construction of this project, FERC issued an order terminating the project license as a result of continued delays by the project applicant and other agencies.

This legislation simply requires FERC to reinstate the license and extend the start time for construction of the Jennings Randolph Dam in West Virginia for 6 years.

I urge the passage of this legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, this legislation was reported unanimously by the Committee on Energy and Commerce. I know of no objections to the bill. I commend my colleague, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MCKINLEY), for bringing it to the floor.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4416.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

EXTENDING DEADLINE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT NUMBERED 13287

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4434) to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4434

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

SECTION 1. EXTENSION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the time period specified in section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806) that would otherwise apply to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission project numbered 13287, the Commission may, at the request of the licensee for the project, and after reasonable notice, in accordance with the good faith, due diligence, and public interest requirements of that section and the Commission's procedures under that section, extend the time period during which the licensee is required to commence the construction of the project for up to 4 consecutive 2-year periods from the date of the expiration of the time period required for commencement of construction prescribed in the license.

(b) REINSTATEMENT OF EXPIRED LICENSE.—If the period required for commencement of construction of the project described in subsection (a) has expired prior to the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commission may reinstate the license effective as of the date of its expiration and the first extension authorized under subsection (a) shall take effect on the date of such expiration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from

Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, once again, this is legislation extending, for 8 years in this case, construction of a hydropower project at the Collinsville Dam in New York.

I want to thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. GIBSON) for his work on this bill.

Once again, the FERC had issued a license to commence construction of this project. They then issued an order terminating the project because it did not meet certain time deadlines because of delays by the project applicant and other agencies.

This legislation simply requires FERC to reinstate the license and extend the start time for a period of 8 years. I urge the passage of this legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, this bill was reported unanimously by the Committee on Energy and Commerce. It has the support of a number of Democrats on the Committee on Energy and Commerce from New York who have been working with Mr. GIBSON on the legislation, including Mr. ENGEL, Mr. TONKO, and Ms. CLARKE. It was reported out, as I said, without dissent.

I urge passage of the bill.

I commend Mr. GIBSON for bringing it to the floor.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4434.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

EXTENDING DEADLINE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT NUMBERED 12737

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4411) to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.
The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4411

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

SECTION 1. EXTENSION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the time period specified in section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806) that would otherwise apply to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission project numbered 12737, the Commission may, at the request of the licensee for the project, and after reasonable notice, in accordance with the good faith, due diligence, and public interest requirements of that section and the Commission's procedures under that section, extend the time period during which the licensee is required to commence the construction of the project for up to 3 consecutive 2-year periods from the date of the expiration of the extension originally issued by the Commission.

(b) REINSTATEMENT OF EXPIRED LICENSE.—If the period required for commencement of construction of the project described in subsection (a) has expired prior to the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commission may reinstate the license for the project effective as of the date of its expiration and the first extension authorized under subsection (a) shall take effect on the date of such expiration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

□ 1545

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GRIFFITH), who is the author of this legislation.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Speaker, this bill, like the others before it dealing with dams, deals with a dam in Alleghany County, Virginia, the Gathright Dam project. It, too, was given a license. It, too, for various reasons amongst the agencies in the company seeking to build a hydroelectric dam or add to the project there, has not met the time constraints. This bill would extend that for up to 6 years. I would ask that we adopt it.

I would point out that this project would be a run-of-river project. In other words, it is not going to change the flow of the river in any way.

With that being said, Mr. Speaker, I ask that this bill be passed by the entire House.

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

Mr. Speaker, this legislation was reported out unanimously by the Energy and Commerce Committee. I know of no objections to the bill. I commend my colleague from Virginia (Mr. GRIFFITH) for bringing it to the floor.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I think the House may be setting a record today on hydro-power projects.

I urge passage of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4411.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXTENDING DEADLINE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT NUMBERED 12740

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4412) to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4412

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

SECTION 1. EXTENSION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the time period specified in section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806) that would otherwise apply to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission project numbered 12740, the Commission may, at the request of the licensee for the project, and after reasonable notice, in accordance with the good faith, due diligence, and public interest requirements of that section and the Commission's procedures under that section, extend the time period during which the licensee is required to commence the construction of the project for up to 3 consecutive 2-year periods from the date of the expiration of the extension originally issued by the Commission.

(b) REINSTATEMENT OF EXPIRED LICENSE.—If the period required for commencement of construction of the project described in subsection (a) has expired prior to the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commission may reinstate the license for the project effective as of the date of its expiration and the first extension authorized under subsection (a) shall take effect on the date of such expiration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

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

Before I get into a specific discussion of this legislation, I do want to thank the staff on both the Republican and Democratic side of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

I certainly want to thank Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. RUSH, and Mr. PALLONE for working with us on all of these important pieces of legislation.

Once again, this particular bill relates to a hydropower project at the Flannagan Dam in Virginia. I would like to thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GRIFFITH) for his work on this legislation.

I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GRIFFITH).

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Speaker, like the previous bills, this is a dam project in which the license was issued, but for various reasons, the timeline has expired or is about to expire, and this would give it up to an additional 6 years in which to get the project completed.

This, like the other one I mentioned, is also a run-of-river hydroelectric project, which means it won't change the flow of the river. None of the sports and recreational activities will be affected negatively in any way.

This is located in Dickenson County. It is the Flannagan project. I ask the House to approve this extension.

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

Mr. Speaker, I just want to conclude today by thanking committee staff from both sides of the aisle, again, on the Energy and Commerce Committee for all the work they put into making sure that the legislation today is possible. A tremendous amount of hours went into those efforts.

I also want to commend Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. RUSH, Mr. PALLONE, and Mr. UPTON for working in such a collaborative manner to get these bills to the floor today as well as the individual sponsors of the bill. Mr. GRIFFITH had two important pieces of legislation for his district.

Mr. Speaker, this specific piece of legislation was reported, again, unanimously by the Energy and Commerce Committee. I know of no objections to the bill. I urge its passage.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I also urge passage of H.R. 4412.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr.

WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4412.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONDEMNING VIOLATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW BY THE GOVERNMENT OF SYRIA

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 121) expressing the sense of the Congress condemning the gross violations of international law amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity by the Government of Syria, its allies, and other parties to the conflict in Syria, and asking the President to direct his Ambassador at the United Nations to promote the establishment of a war crimes tribunal where these crimes could be addressed, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 121

Whereas the Government of Syria, led by President Bashar al-Assad, has engaged in widespread torture and rape, employed starvation as a weapon of war, and massacred civilians, including through the use of chemical weapons, cluster munitions, and barrel bombs;

Whereas the vast majority of the civilians who have died in the Syrian conflict have been killed by the Government of Syria led by President Bashar al-Assad and its allies, specifically the Russian Federation, the Islamic Republic of Iran, and Iran's terrorist proxies including Hezbollah;

Whereas the Government of Syria reportedly has subjected nearly 1,000,000 civilians to devastating sieges and manipulated the delivery of humanitarian aid for its own gain, thereby weaponizing starvation against populations, such as in Madaya;

Whereas the Government of Syria continues to target schools, water, electric, and medical facilities as a way to deny civilians access to critical infrastructure and basic services;

Whereas the Government of Syria has conducted massive and widespread enforced disappearances, systematic torture, and killing, amounting to what the United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic recently described as "extermination" at the hands of the State;

Whereas the same Commission of Inquiry described these and other actions perpetrated by the Government of Syria as war crimes and crimes against humanity;

Whereas the Government of Syria and its allies have carried out mass atrocities without regard for international norms or human decency;

Whereas the Government of Syria and its allies have attacked various religious and ethnic minority populations in Syria, including Christians, Turkmens, and Ismaelis;

Whereas the Russian Federation has not only enabled the Government of Syria's perpetration of these crimes but has committed its own violations of international law by leading deliberate bombing campaigns on ci-

vilian targets including bakeries, hospitals, markets, and schools, contrary to United Nations Security Council Resolution 2254, adopted on December 18, 2015, which demanded "that all parties immediately cease any attacks against civilians and civilian objects";

Whereas the attacks by the Government of Syria and its allies have focused on civilian targets and the United States-backed opposition, and have led to the expansion of the Islamic State in Syria;

Whereas other parties to the conflict in Syria, including the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant and the al-Nusra Front, have engaged in torture, rape, summary execution of government soldiers, kidnapping for ransom, and violence against civilians;

Whereas these continued violations of international law, without any promise of accountability, jeopardize hope for establishing a meaningful and lasting peace through the Geneva and Vienna processes;

Whereas Syria is not a state-party to the Rome Statute and is not a member of the International Criminal Court;

Whereas the United States supports the collection and analysis of documentation related to the ongoing violations of human rights, the coordination of Syrian and international actors working on documentation and transitional justice efforts, and education and outreach on transitional justice concepts and processes, including efforts of the Syria Justice and Accountability Center sponsored by the United States and various other states and multilateral institutions;

Whereas the international community has previously established ad hoc or regional tribunals through the United Nations to bring justice in specific countries where war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide have been committed;

Whereas ad hoc or regional tribunals, including the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, and the Special Court for Sierra Leone, have successfully investigated and prosecuted war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide, and there are many positive lessons to be learned from such tribunals; and

Whereas any lasting, peaceful solution to the conflict in Syria must be based upon justice for all, including members of all factions, political parties, ethnicities, and religions: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress—

(1) strongly condemns the continued use of unlawful and indiscriminate violence against civilian populations by the Government of Syria, its allies, and other parties to the conflict;

(2) urges the United States and its partners to continue to demand and work toward the cessation of attacks on Syrian civilians by the Government of Syria, its allies, and other parties to the conflict;

(3) urges the Administration to establish additional mechanisms for the protection of civilians and to ensure consistent and equitable access to humanitarian aid for vulnerable populations;

(4) urges the United States to continue its support for efforts to collect and analyze documentation related to ongoing violations of human rights in Syria, and to prioritize the collection of evidence that can be used to support future prosecutions for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by the Government of Syria, its allies, and other parties to the conflict;

(5) urges the President to direct the United States representative to the United Nations to use the voice and vote of the United States to immediately promote the establishment of a Syrian war crimes tribunal, a

regional or international hybrid court to prosecute the perpetrators of grave crimes committed by the Government of Syria, its allies, and other parties to the conflict; and

(6) urges other nations to apprehend and deliver into the custody of such a Syrian war crimes tribunal persons indicted for war crimes, crimes against humanity, or genocide in Syria, and to provide information pertaining to such crimes to the tribunal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on this resolution.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the U.N. Security Council should move immediately to establish a Syrian war crimes tribunal. H. Con. Res. 121, which I introduced, is a bipartisan piece of legislation backed by Chairman ROYCE as well as by ELIOT ENGEL and others, calling upon the administration to pursue this policy goal, including using our voice and vote at the United Nations.

Mr. Speaker, past ad hoc/regional war crimes tribunals, including courts for Sierra Leone, Rwanda, and the former Yugoslavia, have made a significant difference, holding some of the worst mass murderers to account with successful prosecutions followed by long jail sentences.

Who can forget the picture of the infamous former President of Liberia, Charles Taylor, with his head bowed, incredulous that the Special Court for Sierra Leone in 2012 meted out a 50-year jail term for his crimes against humanity and war crimes.

According to the Syrian Center for Policy Research, approximately 5 years of wanton bloodshed in Syria has killed either directly or indirectly an estimated 470,000 people. Other estimates put the death toll at a quarter of a million.

While the United Nations long ago abandoned estimating the death toll due to its inability to verify the veracity of the numbers, the war in Syria has caused a massive loss of life, including genocide against Christians, Yazidis, and other religious minorities, especially women and children.

The International Syria Support Group, co-chaired by the United States and Russia, as we all know, brokered a cessation of hostilities that kicked in on February 27 that applies to all parties except ISIS and al-Nusra.

While we all hope and pray the ceasefire holds as it goes into the third week

and humanitarian groups gain access to sick, frail, and at-risk people, the atrocities committed against Syria's population demand accountability and justice.

There have been—I think I should point this out because many people who are following the news know this—numerous violations of the cease-fire by Assad and his forces.

In an opinion piece in Newsweek a few hours ago, it was noted that “regime forces are openly bombing and, in some cases, launching ground operations to capture key rebel territory without making any pretense of attacking the Nusra Front.”

Further, the Syria Ceasefire Monitor “reports 111 violations as of March 9—almost all perpetuated by the Assad regime or Russian forces.”

A Syrian court is needed for all the past, present, and—God forbid—likely future atrocities being committed in Syria.

Rigorous investigations by a new Syrian court, followed by prosecutions, convictions, and serious jail time for perpetrators of crime on all sides will not only hold those responsible for war crimes accountable, but will send a clear message that such barbaric behavior has dire personal consequences. The victims and their loved ones, Mr. Speaker, deserve no less.

Can a U.N. Security Council resolution establishing a Syrian war crimes tribunal prevail? Yes, I believe. With a serious and sustained diplomatic push by the United States and other interested parties, past success in creating war crimes tribunals can, indeed, be prologue.

□ 1600

Notwithstanding Russia's solidarity with Serbia during the Balkan war, especially with Slobodan Milosevic, the International Criminal Court Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia was unanimously approved. Ditto for the special court in Sierra Leone in 2002. The Rwanda tribunal was created in 1994, with China choosing to abstain rather than to veto that court.

At a Syrian war crimes court, no one on any side who commits genocide, war crimes, or crimes against humanity would be precluded from prosecution.

As I said, in the early 1990s, the Russians knew that the Yugoslav court was designed to hold all transgressors liable, whether they be Bosnian or Croats and not just Serbians and, again, they didn't veto that particular court as it was established.

I believe the Russians and the Chinese can be persuaded to support or at least abstain from blocking establishment of such a court.

An ad hoc or a regional court has significant advantages over the International Criminal Court, or the ICC, as a venue for justice. For starters, neither Syria nor the United States is a member of the ICC, although mechanisms exist to push prosecutions there.

The ICC, however, has operated since 2002, and only boasts of only two, two,

just two, convictions. By way of contrast, the Yugoslav court convicted 80 people; Rwanda, 61; and Sierra Leone, 9. Moreover, a singularly focused Syrian tribunal that provides Syrians with a degree of ownership could significantly enhance its effectiveness.

I chaired a Congressional hearing on establishing a Syrian war crimes tribunal back in 2013, and included such great leaders as David Crane, the former prosecutor for the Special Court for Sierra Leone, and founder and chairman of the Syria Accountability Project.

Mr. Crane testified that the Syria Accountability Project has collected data “and built a framework by which President Assad and his henchmen”—this is his quote—“along with members of the opposition can be prosecuted openly and fairly.”

He and his team have “developed a crime base matrix which catalogs most of the incidents chronologically and highlights the violations of the Rome Statute, the Geneva Conventions, as well as domestic Syrian criminal law.”

Significantly, with respect to the ICC, Mr. Crane testified that “it lacks the capability and the political and diplomatic sophistication to handle such a mandate.”

Indeed, I would like to relay some words that I had with David Crane just a few hours ago; and he reminded us that it is important that the Congress continue the quest to seek justice for the oppressed and work on justice for the Syrian people, in particular, as we recall the fifth anniversary of the beginning of the civil war in that country. Tomorrow, March 15, marks the fifth anniversary of this horrific conflict.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, accountability that is aggressive, predictable, transparent, and applicable to all perpetrators of genocide and crimes against humanity on all sides of the divide must be pursued now.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I want to commend the gentleman from New Jersey for authoring and bringing this resolution to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, Syria and much of Iraq face two great evils. ISIS is well-known to us, and its evil is established by them on their own Web sites every day.

The second evil is the extremist Shiite alliance, consisting of Iran, Assad, Hezbollah, and many of the Shiite militias based in Baghdad to Basra. And, of course, this Shiite alliance is aided by Russia, although today there were reports that give us a glimmer of hope that Russia will be diminishing its role in the Syrian conflict.

The Shiite extremist alliance, I believe, is even more dangerous than ISIS since they include two state actors and a nuclear program. And the extremist Shiite alliance has killed more Americans than ISIS, from the Marines who died in Lebanon in the 1980s, to the IEDs that were manufactured in Iran and deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan.

There is a substantial difference in style between these two evil forces. When ISIS kills people, they put the beheadings on YouTube. When Assad kills thousands with his barrel bombs, or even with chemical weapons there for a while, Assad had the good taste to deny it. But different styles do not mask the fact that we are confronted with two great evils; and this resolution, I think, is an important step in dealing with those evils.

This resolution condemns the gross violation of international law, perpetrated by the Assad regime and those forces supporting Assad, which have amounted to war crimes and crimes against humanity.

We all hope that the current ceasefire holds and even holds better than it has, but 5 years of civil war in Syria has shown us the use of weapons we thought were relegated only to the history books, including chemical weapons used by the Syrian government against its own civilians.

Assad has conducted deliberate bombings of schools, hospitals, and humanitarian sites for the clear purpose of causing civilians to flee, and overall, he has conducted a brutal war that has killed hundreds of thousands of Syrians and sent millions fleeing the country.

He has been aided in this process by the Iran Revolutionary Guard Corps, whose chief spokesman redisclosed just last week how proud the Revolutionary Guard Corps is of helping Assad and how Tehran is helping to finance both Hezbollah and the Shiite militias that are helping Assad.

The resolution before us today makes specific mention of the role that Iran and the Shiite extremist militias are playing, and that is an important part of the resolution. So I agree with the gentleman from New Jersey. It is time to show the people who are committing these war crimes that there will be a tribunal, that they will be personally held to account.

And while I would hope that would drive home a message that would be relevant both to those who direct ISIS and those surrounding Assad, I think it will have a bigger impact on the generals around Assad who do not view themselves as martyrs, but view themselves as powerful individuals in Syria who would wish to travel and enjoy the good life with money they have stolen and taken from the Syrian people.

So I do not see that I have any speakers on our side, and I have been notified that I should not expect any, and for that reason, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I do want to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) for his very eloquent remarks and strong support for this resolution. I urge support and passage of this resolution.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH)

that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 121, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

DEFINING CERTAIN ATROCITIES AS WAR CRIMES, CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY, AND GENOCIDE

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 75) expressing the sense of Congress that those who commit or support atrocities against Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities, including Yezidis, Turkmen, Sabea-Mandean, Kaka'e, and Kurds, and who target them specifically for ethnic or religious reasons, are committing, and are hereby declared to be committing, "war crimes", "crimes against humanity", and "genocide", as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 75

Whereas Christians and other religious and ethnic minorities have been an integral part of the cultural fabric of the Middle East for millennia;

Whereas the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and associated extremists are committing egregious atrocities against ethnic and religious minorities in Iraq and Syria, including Christians (including Assyrian Chaldean Syriac, Armenian, and Melkite communities, among others), Yezidis, Turkmen, Shabak, Sabae-Mandean, and Kaka'i, among others;

Whereas ISIL specifically targets these religious and ethnic minorities, intending to kill them or force their submission, conversion, or expulsion;

Whereas religious and ethnic minorities have been murdered, subjugated, forced to emigrate, and subjected to grievous bodily and psychological harm, kidnapping, human trafficking, torture, and rape;

Whereas ISIL engages in, and publicly argues in favor of, the sexual enslavement of non-Muslim women, including pre-pubescent girls;

Whereas ISIL atrocities against Christians, Yezidis, and other minorities have included mass murder, crucifixions, beheadings, rape, torture, enslavement, the kidnapping of children, and other violence deliberately calculated to eliminate their communities from the so-called Islamic State;

Whereas ISIL has deliberately destroyed and looted numerous cultural sites, religious shrines, churches, monasteries, and museums in order to eradicate the cultures of ethnic and religious minorities from the territory it attempts to control;

Whereas these atrocities have been undertaken with the specific intent to bring about

the eradication of those communities and the destruction of their cultural heritage;

Whereas ISIL operations have in fact driven minority religious and ethnic communities from their ancestral homelands;

Whereas under applicable international law referenced in section 2441 of Title 18 of the United States Code, murder, torture, mutilation, rape, cruel treatment, and hostage-taking of non-combatants constitute war crimes;

Whereas crimes against humanity, as defined by the International Military Tribunal convened at Nuremberg in 1945, and in various international instruments since then, include murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation, and other inhumane acts committed against any civilian population, as well as persecution on political, racial, or religious grounds in connection with such crimes;

Whereas the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, signed and ratified by the United States, defines genocide as "any of the following acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: (a) Killing members of the group; (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group";

Whereas on August 7, 2014, Secretary of State John Kerry declared that "ISIL's campaign of terror against the innocent, including Yezidi and Christian minorities, and its grotesque and targeted acts of violence bear all the warning signs and hallmarks of genocide";

Whereas in August 2014, the United States conducted targeted airstrikes and humanitarian assistance operations to help break the siege of Mount Sinjar, saving the lives of thousands of Yezidi men, women, and children;

Whereas His Holiness, Pope Francis, has noted that "entire communities, especially – but not only – Christians and Yezidis have suffered and are still suffering inhuman violence because of their ethnic and religious identity" and that, for Christians being killed for their faith in the Middle East, "a form of genocide -- I insist on the word -- is taking place, and it must end";

Whereas a March 13, 2015, report by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights detailed "acts of violence perpetrated [by ISIL] against civilians because of their affiliation or perceived affiliation to an ethnic or religious group" and stated that "[i]t is reasonable to conclude that some of these incidents, considering the overall information, may constitute genocide";

Whereas in testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Committee on May 13, 2015, Dominican Sister Diana Momeka, whose convent was driven from Mosul, Iraq, described the ISIL offensive as "cultural and human genocide" and stated that today "[t]he only Christians that remain in the Plain of Nineveh are those who are held as hostages";

Whereas in December 2015, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's Simon-Skjoldt Center for the Prevention of Genocide issued a report focused on the treatment of minorities in Nineveh from June to August 2014, which found that ISIL had "targeted civilians based on group identity, committing mass atrocities to control, expel, and exterminate ethnic and religious minorities" and, in that context, "com-

mitted crimes against humanity, war crimes, and ethnic cleansing against [Christian, Yezidi, Turkmen, Shabak, Sabae-Mandean, and Kaka'i] communities in Nineva" and "perpetrated genocide against the Yezidi people";

Whereas on December 7, 2015, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom called on the United States Government "to designate the Christian, Yezidi, Shi'a, Turkmen, and Shabak communities of Iraq and Syria as victims of genocide by ISIL" and urged world leaders "to condemn the genocidal actions and crimes against humanity of ISIL that have been directed at these groups and other ethnic and religious groups";

Whereas on February 3, 2016, the European Parliament expressed the view that ISIL "is committing genocide against Christians and Yezidis, and other religious and ethnic minorities";

Whereas Syrian President Bashar al Assad's violence against the Syrian people has attracted foreign fighters from around the world, who have supported and committed ISIL atrocities; and

Whereas according to some estimates, the conflict among all parties to the Syrian civil war has killed 470,000 and displaced 11,000,000 people: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That—

(1) the atrocities perpetrated by ISIL against Christians, Yezidis, and other religious and ethnic minorities in Iraq and Syria constitute war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide;

(2) all governments, including the United States, and international organizations, including the United Nations and the Office of the Secretary-General, should call ISIL atrocities by their rightful names: war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide;

(3) the member states of the United Nations should coordinate urgently on measures to prevent further war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide in Iraq and Syria, and to punish those responsible for these ongoing crimes, including by the collection and preservation of evidence and, if necessary, the establishment and operation of appropriate tribunals;

(4) the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Lebanese Republic, the Republic of Turkey, and the Kurdistan Regional Government in Iraq are to be commended for, and supported in, their efforts to shelter and protect those fleeing the violence of ISIL and other combatants until they can safely return to their homes in Iraq and Syria; and

(5) the protracted Syrian civil war and the indiscriminate violence of the Assad regime have contributed to the growth of ISIL and will continue to do so as long as this conflict continues.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to thank JEFF FORTENBERRY and his lead cosponsor, ANNA ESHOO, for their extremely important resolution, H. Con. Res. 75, as amended, calling on the Obama administration to declare the annihilation of Christians, Yazidis, and other minorities, for what it is, a genocide.

On December 4 of last year, a coalition of prominent religious leaders wrote President Obama and stated, "Christian and Yazidi minorities in Iraq and Syria are being targeted for eradication in their ancient homelands solely because of their religious beliefs."

They had been prompted by reports of an "imminent" State Department finding that ISIS was committing genocide against the Yazidis, a finding they "wholeheartedly" endorsed, but were "deeply troubled," like we all were, that the genocide of Christians was going to be bypassed or excluded.

Apparently press reports had claimed that the rationale for excluding Christians was that, unlike the Yazidis, Christians had a choice to convert to Islam and pay an Islamic tax, or be killed, tortured, enslaved, or held hostage.

In direct rebuttal of that argument at a hearing that I held on December 9, Carl Anderson, the Supreme Knight of the Knights of Columbus, stated:

Many times the payment of the tax is not presented as an option for these Christians. In instances where the Yazidi tax has been enacted or extracted, it has failed to ensure that the Christians could live as Christians, that they were protected from rival jihadists, or even other members of ISIS, or that the amendment of payment was not raised over time until it became impossible for some of them to pay, causing the family's home, and even their children, to be confiscated, and the adults to be killed or forced to become Muslims.

It is a very, very poor argument that has been made by the State Department, so we believe they have made this. Hopefully, they will rectify it.

Let me also point out to my colleagues that the Genocide Convention defines genocide as "the killing and certain other acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group."

The religious leaders who signed the December 4 letter compiled extensive files supporting a finding that ISIS' treatment of Iraqi and Syrian Christians absolutely meets this definition. They include:

Evidence of ISIS assassinations of church leaders; mass murders; torture, kidnapping for ransom in the Christian communities of Iraq and Syria; sexual enslavement and systematic rape of Christian girls and women; its practices of forcible conversions to Islam; its destruction of churches, monasteries, cemeteries, and Christian artifacts; and its theft of lands and wealth from Christian clergy and laity alike.

They went on to cite "ISIS' own public statements taking credit for mass

murder of Christians, and expressing its intent eliminate Christian communities from the Islamic State."

The letter recounted how "ISIS jihadis have stamped Christian homes in Mosul with the red letter N for Nazareth in the summer of 2014," pointing out how the "elimination of Christians in other towns and cities in Iraq and Syria began long beforehand."

Mr. Speaker, I held a hearing 3 years ago extolling and urging the administration to recognize the genocide against Christians, and our witnesses, the private witnesses who spoke, gave instance after instance of crimes against Christians that were done simply because they were Christians.

At a December 9 hearing, we heard from four witnesses. I mentioned one a moment ago, Carl Anderson, from the Knights of Columbus. We also heard from Dr. Stanton, of Genocide Watch, who said, "Failure to call ISIS' mass murder of Christians, Shia, Muslims, and other groups in addition to the Yazidis by its proper name, genocide, would be an act of denial as grave as the U.S. refusal to recognize the Rwanda genocide back in 1994."

□ 1615

Bishop Kalabat, a Chaldean bishop, was extremely pointed in his remarks when he said that "the Obama administration, including President Obama himself, have neglected to mention that the ISIS atrocities were committed against Christians. They rightly mention atrocities committed in Iraq against the Yazidis, and they are horrific." The bishop went on, "But there are also atrocities of rape, killings, crucifixions, beheadings, hangings that the Syrian and Iraqi Christians have endured, and they are intentionally omitted." He compellingly stated that "the U.S. Government should not turn a blind eye to the genocidal atrocities faced by Iraq's ethnic and religious minorities, including the Christians, the Yazidis, and others."

Finally, in very, very powerful testimony, the head of Yazidi Human Rights Organization-International, Mr. Ismail, stated that though his people, the Yazidis, were on the verge of annihilation, he called upon the administration not to neglect the others who are also on the verge of annihilation, and said, "the Yazidis and the Chaldo-Assyrian Christians face this genocide together."

Now is the time to act. We cannot let the cries of the victims go unheeded as we once did when we confronted the genocide in Rwanda and other genocides that have occurred around the world. Mr. Speaker, I therefore urge my colleagues to vote for H. Con. Res. 75.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I rise in strong support of the resolution.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution deals with the crimes of ISIS.

I want to thank my colleague from California, ANNA ESHOO, and our colleague from Nebraska, JEFF FORTENBERRY, for their drafting of this resolution which I and so many others have cosponsored, and I want to thank the chair and ranking member of our committee for their work in preparing the amendment that we adopted in committee.

This resolution, H. Con. Res. 75, identifies the violent acts of ISIS by their right name: war crimes, crimes against humanity, and, where appropriate, genocide. We could and will be conducting a complete analysis in the future to identify which atrocities of ISIS are merely war crimes and which atrocities of ISIS are part of an overall systemic genocide. But it is clear that at least some of the war crimes are part of a planned genocide against religious minorities in the areas that ISIS occupies.

This resolution also includes a call upon the United States and all the states of the U.N. to conduct measures designed to prevent these crimes and genocide in the future. Now, it is said that People of the Book, most relevantly Christians, are being told by ISIS that they only have to pay a jizya and they will be allowed to live, a special tax imposed upon them. But the fact is that we know that the Yazidis are not even given that option but are subject to extermination; whereas, Christians may be told to pay the tax and then, when they run out of money, be executed because they are not paying more. So we know that ISIS is guilty of crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide.

In addition to passing this resolution, we ought to focus on the most significant thing the United States is doing against ISIS, and that, of course, is our airstrikes. I believe our airstrikes have been subject to rules of engagement that are far too limited. For example, we have learned that we try to cut off ISIS' flow of money by hitting the tanker trucks that are taking the oil out of ISIS areas for sale, but we are only hitting those trucks when they are parked, not when they are moving.

It is true that, if you hit a moving truck, you may kill the driver, and that driver may be an ISIS soldier or may be a civilian; but if you look at the strategic bombing that we engaged in during World War II, not just the strategic bombing of Germany, but the strategic bombing of occupied France and occupied Belgium and so many other occupied countries, you will see that we hit munitions plants and transportation tanker trucks whether or not those people operating the transportation devices and operating in the munitions plants were civilian or military.

If we are going to get serious against ISIS, we have to be willing not to target civilians but, instead, to do everything we can to prevent killing civilians; but we have to be willing to hit

strategic targets even if we are not 100 percent sure that all civilian casualties will be avoided.

So I look forward to our working both diplomatically and militarily for the destruction of ISIS and eventually holding ISIS' leaders to account for their war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY), the author of H. Con. Res 75.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, first, let me thank my colleague and good friend, Congressman CHRIS SMITH of New Jersey, for his tireless efforts on a whole, broad spectrum of assaults on human dignity. He is constantly trying to elevate the conscience of this body and the worldwide community. I thank the chairman, as well, for coordinating this effort and speaking favorably to it, as well as Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL, who passed this through the Foreign Affairs Committee.

I need to also, because she is not here, thank ANNA ESHOO, a Democratic colleague from California.

We are living in a time when our country looks at Congress and sees stagnation, anger, and gridlock and not being able to get things done. What we have before us today is a bipartisan resolution. It has risen above the petty and difficult differences that we often work out here on the floor of the House of Representatives. It has risen above it because of its essential nature. Not only is there a grave injustice happening in the Middle East to the people, to the Christians, Yazidis, and other religious minorities who have as much a right to be in their ancient homeland as anyone else, but this is a threat against civilization itself.

When a group of people, ISIS—8th century barbarians with 21st century weapons—can systematically try to exterminate another group of people simply because of their faith tradition, violating the sacred space of individuality, conscience, and religious liberty, you undermine the entire system for international order building out of rule of law and proper social interaction—civilization itself. That is why so many Members have come together here in a bipartisan, bipartisan way and said, "Enough."

This is a genocide against Christians and Yazidis. It is a crime against humanity and against others, as well, who are suffering because of their religious faith.

By the way, it should be noted that the group of people who have been most killed by ISIS are innocent Muslims, as well.

This is an important resolution to speak clearly about what is happening in the land.

Why is it important? Because it raises the international consciousness,

and it compels the responsible communities of the world to act. Secondly, it creates the potential preconditions for when there is a security settlement in the Middle East that will allow these ancient faith traditions to reintegrate back into their homeland and continue to contribute to the once-rich tapestry that made up the Middle East.

That is why this is so essential. It is just. The responsible communities of the world must act, and it is essential for international order and international stability if there is going to be a chance for any type of hope and long-lasting viability of order and tranquility in that area.

As my colleague, Mr. SMITH, mentioned, Genocide Watch has labeled this genocide. The International Association of Genocide Scholars has called this genocide. The Yazidi Human Rights Organization-International has said this is genocide. Pope Francis has said that this is genocide and has decried the scandal of silence and the scandal of indifference in this regard—again, another reason why action by this body is so essential.

In addition to that, I want to leave you with one quick story.

I represent the largest Yazidi community in America. I have been dealing with this community for many, many years, many of whom resettled in Lincoln, Nebraska, because they were given special visas to come to America because they worked side by side with our soldiers during the Iraq war as translators. Because of the grave threat that they were under, they were given special privileges to become citizens here, and many settled in my State of Nebraska, my hometown, Lincoln.

I have been working with the community for a number of years about a number of concerns. About a year and a half ago, a group came to see me. Young men who had worked as translators were on the verge of tears. They were passionate and angry. I don't blame them for being angry. Their mothers, their sisters, and their family members were trapped on Mount Sinjar. They were pleading with me: Congressman, act. Do something now. We can't wait.

To the Obama administration's credit, shortly thereafter—and the House had passed a resolution creating some groundwork for trying to stop the annihilation of Yazidis—the Obama administration, President Obama, acted, and I am thankful for that.

This week we have an opportunity to continue to plead and urge the State Department to act as well. I know they are under an evaluation as to this real genocide that is happening. I respect their process, but I think the facts are clear; and it is my sincere hope that Secretary Kerry and the State Department will meet their lawful deadline this week and declare this fact: there is a genocide against Christians and Yazidis, and civilization itself is at stake.

I thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) for yielding me the time.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to thank Mr. FORTENBERRY for his very eloquent remarks and for reminding us that this is an existential threat to Christians, but really, as well, to civilization. I thank him again for the resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Staten Island, New York (Mr. DONOVAN). He is a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) for allowing me this time to express and rise in support of H. Con. Res. 75.

When considering the long history of civilization, we look back in horror at the unimaginable pain mankind is capable of inflicting on itself, and each succeeding generation wonders how a people stood idly by as warring factions destroyed innocent life and property.

Last year, the world watched a beach turned red as executioners sawed off the heads of 21 Coptic Christians on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. Two weeks ago, terrorists stormed a retirement home full of nuns caring for the elderly and frail. And in the months in between, ISIS systematically killed or enslaved thousands of Yazidi people.

Scripture speaks of perseverance and endurance in faith under siege and not growing weary. Matthew says:

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of their righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven.

But that doesn't excuse our silence. Political correctness cannot stand in the way of our moral obligation as a free and decent people. I support the resolution and hope we can have the moral conviction to call this massacre what it is: genocide.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas, Judge POE, the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade.

Mr. POE of Texas. I thank the gentleman for yielding time.

Mr. Speaker, ISIS, this evil group, has been intentionally targeting Christians worldwide because of their religious belief. ISIS not only targets Christians, it targets any religious group, including some Muslims who disagree with them.

As the previous speaker from New York mentioned, they are proud of the fact that they murder people, that they behead people, and that they put their murders on television for the world to see. These atrocities committed by this terrorist group in the name of a perverted jihad religion are the worst crimes we have seen in our lifetime.

More than that, ISIS' massacres of religious and ethnic minorities fits the definition of genocide. The definition of genocide is clear. It is the deliberate and systematic destruction of a racial or cultural group. That is exactly what ISIS is doing. ISIS has already forced hundreds of thousands of Christians to leave their ancestral homes.

□ 1630

For the first time since Jesus, there are almost no Christians left in this part of the world. There were 1.5 million Christians in Iraq in 2003—1.5 million. Since that time, terrorists have either killed or forced Christians to run for their lives.

Today, 13 years later, there are 66 percent fewer Christians in this area. Some of those who could not get out before ISIS came in and took over their areas have been tortured, crucified, executed, and murdered in the most inhumane possible ways, tortured because of their belief.

ISIS has not only targeted Christians, it has targeted other communities. The Yazidi community of Iraq has been tortured. ISIS slaughtered almost all of the men in one community on Mount Sinjar and then sold the women and the girls off into slavery, this demonic desire of theirs, and gave them to their fighters. It is just another example of tragic cases of genocide in world history.

ISIS will not stop, Mr. Speaker, exterminating these people, until they bow down to their ideology, and their ideology is based on hate. ISIS does not just target those under its control. The terrorists seek to cleanse the world, the whole world, from all people who do not accept their belief, including other Muslims.

It is time the United States and the rest of the world make it clear to all what ISIS is doing. We must denounce murder, this genocide, that is occurring because of people's religious belief.

I am glad that this resolution is coming forward. I am proud to be a cosponsor of H. Con. Res. 75.

Mr. Speaker, justice demands ISIS be held accountable for what it does. Justice must be done. After all, isn't justice what we do in the United States?

And that is just the way it is.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I commend the gentleman from Texas for his speech and the gentleman from Nebraska who spoke earlier for his introduction of this resolution, along with my colleague, ANNA ESHOO, from California. And, of course, I commend CHRIS SMITH for a lifetime of work on human rights.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes to close.

I thank my good friend, Mr. SHERMAN, for his good, bipartisan, strong remarks expressed today during both of these debates on the war crimes tribunal and now on Mr. FORTENBERRY'S

genocide resolution, another bipartisan piece of legislation.

I want to thank my colleagues for their moving words today. Judge POE, again, hit the nail right on the head, as did our friend from New York.

I think we need to say it and we need to say it with exclamation points, that declaring genocide is a solemn and extremely serious step not to be taken lightly.

I am very proud of the work that the Foreign Affairs Committee did. I want to thank our chairman, ED ROYCE, and the ranking member, ELIOT ENGEL, for their work on this resolution.

All of us understand the seriousness of calling crimes genocide. It represents an assertion that a legal definition has been met and that we are witnessing acts of physical and mental violence intended to destroy a group in whole or in part.

The targeted depravity of ISIS against the Yazidis, Christians, and other minorities more—I will say it again—more than meets that definition.

But far more than the legality, speaking clearly of genocide, is an appeal to the conscience of the world. It evokes the moral gravity and the imperative of never again.

The United States must not wait any longer to find its voice and call these bloody purges what they are: genocide. We and our partners must defeat ISIS so that Christians, Yazidis, all religious communities, and all the people of Syria and Iraq, can live in peace, free from this grotesque persecution.

I urge passage of the resolution.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 75, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

DEVELOPING A STRATEGY TO OBTAIN OBSERVER STATUS FOR TAIWAN IN THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL POLICE ORGANIZATION

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 2426) to direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 2426

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

SECTION 1. PARTICIPATION OF TAIWAN IN THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL POLICE ORGANIZATION.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Safety, security and peace is important to every citizen of the world, and shared information ensuring wide assistance among police authorities of nations for expeditious dissemination of information regarding criminal activities greatly assists in these efforts.

(2) Direct and unobstructed participation in the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) is beneficial for all nations and their police authorities. Internationally shared information with authorized police authorities is vital to peacekeeping efforts.

(3) With a history dating back to 1914, the role of INTERPOL is defined in its constitution: "To ensure and promote the widest possible mutual assistance between all criminal police authorities within the limits of the laws existing in the different countries and in the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights."

(4) Ongoing international threats, including international networks of terrorism, show the ongoing necessity to be ever inclusive of nations willing to work together to combat criminal activity. The ability of police authorities to coordinate, preempt, and act swiftly and in unison is an essential element of crisis prevention and response.

(5) Taiwan maintained full membership in INTERPOL starting in 1964 through its National Police Administration but was ejected in 1984 when the People's Republic of China (PRC) applied for membership.

(6) Nonmembership prevents Taiwan from gaining access to INTERPOL's I-24/7 global police communications system, which provides real-time information on criminals and global criminal activities. Taiwan is relegated to second-hand information from friendly nations, including the United States.

(7) Taiwan is unable to swiftly share information on criminals and suspicious activity with the international community, leaving a huge void in the global crime-fighting efforts and leaving the entire world at risk.

(8) The United States, in the 1994 Taiwan Policy Review, declared its intention to support Taiwan's participation in appropriate international organizations and has consistently reiterated that support.

(9) Following the enactment of Public Law 108-235, a law authorizing the Secretary of State to initiate and implement a plan to endorse and obtain observer status for Taiwan at the annual summit of the World Health Assembly and subsequent advocacy by the United States, Taiwan was granted observer status to the World Health Assembly for six consecutive years since 2009. Both prior to and in its capacity as an observer, Taiwan has contributed significantly to the international community's collective efforts in pandemic control, monitoring, early warning, and other related matters.

(10) INTERPOL's constitution allows for observers at its meetings by "police bodies which are not members of the Organization".

(b) TAIWAN'S PARTICIPATION IN INTERPOL.—The Secretary of State shall—

(1) develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in INTERPOL and at other related meetings, activities, and mechanisms thereafter; and

(2) instruct INTERPOL Washington to officially request observer status for Taiwan in

INTERPOL and to actively urge INTERPOL member states to support such observer status and participation for Taiwan.

(c) REPORT CONCERNING OBSERVER STATUS FOR TAIWAN IN INTERPOL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall transmit to Congress a report, in unclassified form, describing the United States strategy to endorse and obtain observer status for Taiwan in appropriate international organizations, including INTERPOL, and at other related meetings, activities, and mechanisms thereafter. The report shall include the following:

(1) A description of the efforts the Secretary has made to encourage member states to promote Taiwan's bid to obtain observer status in appropriate international organizations, including INTERPOL.

(2) A description of the actions the Secretary will take to endorse and obtain observer status for Taiwan in appropriate international organizations, including INTERPOL, and at other related meetings, activities, and mechanisms thereafter.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of S. 2426, the Senate version of a bill that previously passed the House with strong bipartisan support.

I especially want to commend Chairman MATT SALMON for authoring the House version of this important measure and Senator GARDNER for doing the same on the Senate side. Their leadership on this issue is much appreciated.

Mr. Speaker, the legislation before us today will help secure observer status for Taiwan at INTERPOL. The bill requires the Secretary of State to develop and execute a strategy to ensure that Taiwan participates in INTERPOL's next general assembly meeting in Indonesia. With this piece of legislation, we are sending a clear message that safety and security are a priority.

Taiwan, Mr. Speaker, as we all know, is a model of democratization and openness, a thriving nation of 23 million people. Its successful transition from authoritarianism to a thriving democracy is a shining example for so many other nations.

The sole reason that Taiwan is excluded from the international organizations is the persistent opposition of the communist government of mainland China.

But China's opposition puts politics over the safety and security of people. In a world where terrorism and international drug and human trafficking networks are global in scope, the response must be coordinated globally as well.

At this time, Taiwan relies on delayed, secondhand information from the United States about international criminals and criminal activities, making it more vulnerable to security threats. Likewise, Taiwan cannot share

the law enforcement information it gathers to the benefit of INTERPOL members.

It makes no sense to exclude Taiwan from INTERPOL due to a political pique, just as it makes no sense to exclude Taiwan from the World Health Organization, another example of the government of mainland China putting politics over the health and safety of people.

But there is another reason for having a good global citizen such as Taiwan as a member of INTERPOL: INTERPOL is an organization that is in need of reform.

A number of authoritarian countries abuse the INTERPOL red notice system not against criminals, but to harass political dissidents and exiles who are unable to travel internationally for fear that they will be arrested and face extradition in their home country, where they suffer persecution, imprisonment, and even death.

For example, Jacob Ostreicher, a legitimate American businessman who was the victim of an extortion ring involving corrupt Bolivian Government officials and jailed in Bolivia, a matter on which my subcommittee held three hearings and for which I traveled to Bolivia with our colleague NYDIA VELÁZQUEZ, has, since his return to the United States, discovered that he has been red-noticed by vindictive Bolivian Government officials.

The red notice effectively prevents him from traveling abroad. He is currently going through a time-consuming and costly process to clear his name.

To help encourage reform at INTERPOL, we should welcome democracies such as Taiwan.

I also believe strengthening Taiwan's law enforcement capabilities benefits American citizens as much as it does the Taiwanese.

Every year, Mr. Speaker, tens of thousands of Americans travel to Taiwan, and this bill will certainly help Taiwan's police protect American citizens and other internationalists as they travel to Taiwan. It is a good bill. It is an important bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise in strong support of this bill. Just to put the legislative history in the RECORD, the House passed H.R. 1853 overwhelmingly late last year. In fact, the vote on this floor was 392-0.

We sent the bill to the Senate. Instead of acting on the House bill, the Senate xeroxed our bill, put their own name on it, and now sends it back here.

If I was driven by ego, I might try to serve in the other body. But the decision to send the bill back to us with their own names on it is a trend we are seeing in the Foreign Affairs area, a trend that I do not condemn because it allows us here on this floor to consider well-drafted House bills twice and to vote on them twice and to emphasize to the administration how serious we are about their being enacted.

I want to thank the Senate author for his decision that we consider this bill a second time. The vote last time was 392-0. My hope is that we have a similar vote today.

I commend the gentleman from New Jersey for describing why this bill is important. Since I have previously commented how important it is that we discuss Foreign Affairs bills not once, but twice, on the floor of this House, I would be remiss if I did not add my own comments.

When this bill was introduced in the House, it was by the chair and ranking member of the Asia and the Pacific Subcommittee, Mr. SALMON and myself.

I appreciate the Senate commending our draftsmanship, since imitation is the most sincere form of flattery.

Why is this bill necessary? Because Taiwan functions day to day as an independent country and it needs to function in that manner inside international organizations.

To date, Taiwan has been admitted to only one international organization, the World Health Organization, and there it has only observer status.

The fiction that Taiwan acts as, functions as, a part of China complicates and interferes with so many international organizations, but it should not be allowed to interfere with law enforcement against criminal gangs and international criminal syndicates.

As things stand now, Taiwan gets some of the information it needs from the international police organization known as INTERPOL, but it is not consistently made available. It is not reliable.

Taiwan doesn't have realtime access to INTERPOL's networks and systems. This doesn't just hurt the people of Taiwan, but hurts people all over the world who are potential victims of criminals who cannot be apprehended because we don't have an efficient sharing of information as part of this multilateral law enforcement agency.

It is for this reason that the bill directs the President to develop a strategy to obtain at least observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, or INTERPOL.

I commend the gentleman from New Jersey for managing this bill here today, and I commend the chairman of the Asia and the Pacific Subcommittee, Mr. SALMON, for introducing this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1645

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE), the chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs' Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade.

Mr. POE of Texas. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, before I left Houston early this morning, I met with President Ma from Taiwan, and we had an interesting and wonderful discussion.

Taiwan and the United States share a lot in common. Historically, during World War II, for example, all the way up until today, the United States has been a great partner with Taiwan so as to make sure that area of the world is free, that it is a democracy. It is a thriving democracy and the folks in Taiwan are proud of the fact of the relationship that they have with the United States. This is another way that we can help this thriving area, this thriving democracy, stay up to date on the world criminal gangs that are roaming throughout the world.

Organized crime is an international crime now, Mr. Speaker, as you being a former judge would know. They are more sophisticated and they are more in-depth about how they promote their criminal syndicates throughout the world. Most importantly, it is international. Crime has now moved to sophistication beyond what it was when both the gentleman from Tennessee and I were practicing at the courthouse as judges.

Why not help out this organization, this group of people—Taiwan, 20 million-plus individuals—so that it can keep up with the information and the intelligence about crime, which affects the whole world?

It affects not only free societies, it affects societies that aren't so free.

INTERPOL is the group. It is the organization that tracks international crime. Taiwan should have this information. It should have at least observer status to know what is going on with these criminal syndicates throughout the world. China doesn't want Taiwan to have INTERPOL access or even observer status. It is a political thing for China. As my friend from New Jersey mentioned, China, it would seem, would want Taiwan to have access to information about criminals—or outlaws, as we call them.

This is an important piece of legislation. As the ranking member pointed out so eloquently, it is such a good piece of legislation that the Senate just copied it, put its name on it, and sent it back to us because it wants us to vote on it twice. We will vote on it twice and we will show all concerned, especially the folks in Taiwan and the international community, that we support its right to know the information about criminals that lurk throughout the world.

And that is just the way it is.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, Taiwan already missed the INTERPOL General Assembly meeting that took place last fall in Kigali, Rwanda. Our hope is that with the passage of this bill, the United States will be able to figure out a way for Taiwan to observe the General Assembly meeting later this year in Indonesia.

It is time that we insist that Taiwan be an observer to INTERPOL so that

everyone can benefit from increased safety and security. Blocking Taiwan from INTERPOL is not in the interest of any nation. And as Judge POE just mentioned a moment ago, even the People's Republic of China would benefit because this is all about trying to catch and to inhibit criminals from moving effortlessly across borders; so it is in its interest as well not to block Taiwan.

I urge my colleagues to support the Salmon-Sherman bill which is before us today.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I stand in strong support of S. 2426, directing the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL).

Last year, I supported H.R. 1853, which passed here in the House of Representatives, directing the Administration to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), and for other purposes.

As the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations, the empowerment of law enforcement in order that they be able to carry out their mandate in upholding the rule of law and preservation of peace and security are imperatives I believe we must continue to seek to facilitate here in the homeland as well as in the global community from Nigeria to Taiwan and everywhere in between to maintain global stability and combat violent extremism.

Our world today is fraught with global terrorism, with groups such as ISIL, Boko Haram, al-Shabab and their other affiliates, utilizing information sharing and technologies to advance their vitriolic causes.

This is why organizing, inclusion and empowerment of nations willing to work together to combat domestic and global terrorism is in our global and national security interest.

This measure facilitates the United States' and the global community's ability to move swiftly to empower police and law enforcement in our collective efforts of coordinating, preempting and acting swiftly in unison, strategically in combatting terrorism, crisis prevention and response and maintaining, peace, security, law, order and respect for the rule of law.

I join this bipartisan measure which seeks to facilitate INTERPOL member states' efforts to promote Taiwan's ability to bid to obtain observer status in the INTERPOL.

Indeed, since 1964, Taiwan had maintained full membership, but was ejected 20 years later when the People's Republic of China (PRC) applied for membership.

Part of what the United States Administration can do is to take the lead in endorsing Taiwan in obtaining its observer status.

Let me underscore that the Administration and our Secretary of State are doing a fantastic job in diplomatic efforts on behalf of our nation, earning us goodwill in the global community.

The United States has expressed its affirmative intentions in support of Taiwan's participation in appropriate international organizations, as delineated in the 1994 Taiwan Policy Review.

For instance, Public Law 108-235 authorized the Secretary of State to initiate and im-

plement a plan to endorse and obtain observer status at the annual World Health Assembly for six consecutive years, owing to Taiwan's significant contribution to the global community's efforts of addressing pandemic control and global public health issues of our day.

Indeed, the INTERPOL's constitution allows observer status at meetings by police entities who are not members of the Organization.

The current status of non-membership status precludes Taiwan from gaining access to INTERPOL's I-24/7 global communications systems, an important real time information sharing infrastructure on domestic and global criminals.

The current state of affairs relegates Taiwan to hearsay or second hand information from friendly nations such as the United States.

This impedes Taiwan's ability to move swiftly in information acquisition as it relates to its domestic and global crime fighting efforts.

As a senior member of the Committee on Homeland Security, global and national security efforts and infrastructures that promote global communications to achieve peace and stability are very important to me.

This measure seeks to protect our security interests in Taiwan as well as the global security of the world.

Taiwan's inaccessibility to critical information readily made available to its law enforcement forces places our entire world at risk.

This measure seeks to facilitate Taiwan's direct and unobstructed participation in the International Criminal Police which promotes global security.

I support and urge the support of this measure because it is beneficial for all nations and their police authorities to be able to share information with authorized police authorities in their law enforcement and peacekeeping efforts in combatting local and global crimes, including the contemporary crime of violent extremism.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this measure, which would direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, also known as INTERPOL.

As a co-chair of the Congressional Taiwan Caucus, I support the dynamic U.S.-Taiwan relationship based on our shared values, deep economic ties, and a history of close collaboration.

Gaining observer status for Taiwan in INTERPOL would further enhance U.S.-Taiwan relations and provide for a pragmatic integration of Taiwan into an international compact.

Taiwan's contributions to INTERPOL will strengthen law enforcement initiatives to fight human trafficking, arms smuggling, terrorism, and other criminal threats.

Integrating Taiwan into an international law enforcement body like INTERPOL increases communication and information sharing to the benefit of the people of Taiwan and INTERPOL member countries.

This is a practical step that serves the interests of the U.S., Taiwan, and INTERPOL, and I would urge my colleagues to support this measure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 2426.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

AIRPORT AND AIRWAY EXTENSION ACT OF 2016

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4721) to amend title 49, United States Code, to extend authorizations for the airport improvement program, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the funding and expenditure authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4721

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the “Airport and Airway Extension Act of 2016”.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—AIRPORT AND AIRWAY PROGRAMS

- Sec. 101. Extension of airport improvement program.
- Sec. 102. Extension of expiring authorities.
- Sec. 103. Federal Aviation Administration operations.
- Sec. 104. Air navigation facilities and equipment.
- Sec. 105. Research, engineering, and development.
- Sec. 106. Funding for aviation programs.
- Sec. 107. Essential air service.

TITLE II—REVENUE PROVISIONS

- Sec. 201. Expenditure authority from Airport and Airway Trust Fund.
- Sec. 202. Extension of taxes funding Airport and Airway Trust Fund.

TITLE I—AIRPORT AND AIRWAY PROGRAMS

SEC. 101. EXTENSION OF AIRPORT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.

(a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 48103(a) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking “and \$1,675,000,000 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on March 31, 2016” and inserting “and \$2,645,218,579 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016”.

(2) OBLIGATION OF AMOUNTS.—Subject to limitations specified in advance in appropriation Acts, sums made available pursuant to the amendment made by paragraph (1) may be obligated at any time through September 30, 2016, and shall remain available until expended.

(3) PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION.—For purposes of calculating funding apportionments and meeting other requirements under sections 47114, 47115, 47116, and 47117 of title 49, United States Code, for the period beginning

on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall—

(A) first calculate such funding apportionments on an annualized basis as if the total amount available under section 48103 of such title for fiscal year 2016 were \$3,350,000,000; and

(B) then reduce by 21 percent—

(i) all funding apportionments calculated under subparagraph (A); and

(ii) amounts available pursuant to sections 47117(b) and 47117(f)(2) of such title.

(b) PROJECT GRANT AUTHORITY.—Section 47104(c) of title 49, United States Code, is amended in the matter preceding paragraph (1) by striking “March 31, 2016,” and inserting “July 15, 2016.”

SEC. 102. EXTENSION OF EXPIRING AUTHORITIES.

(a) Section 41743(e)(2) of title 49, United States Code, is amended in the first sentence by inserting “and \$3,948,087 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016,” before “to carry out this section”.

(b) Section 47107(r)(3) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking “April 1, 2016” and inserting “July 16, 2016”.

(c) Section 47115(j) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking “March 31, 2016” and inserting “July 15, 2016”.

(d) Section 47124(b)(3)(E) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking “and not more than \$5,175,000 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on March 31, 2016,” and inserting “and not more than \$8,172,541 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016.”

(e) Section 47141(f) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking “March 31, 2016” and inserting “July 15, 2016”.

(f) Section 186(d) of the Vision 100—Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act (117 Stat. 2518) is amended by striking “March 31, 2016,” and inserting “July 15, 2016.”

(g) Section 409(d) of the Vision 100—Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act (49 U.S.C. 41731 note) is amended by striking “March 31, 2016” and inserting “July 15, 2016”.

(h) Section 411(h) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 42301 prec. note) is amended by striking “March 31, 2016” and inserting “July 15, 2016”.

(i) Section 822(k) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (49 U.S.C. 47141 note) is amended by striking “March 31, 2016” and inserting “July 15, 2016”.

(j) The amendments made by this section shall take effect on March 31, 2016.

SEC. 103. FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION OPERATIONS.

Section 106(k) of title 49, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (1)(E) and inserting the following:

“(E) \$7,824,891,355 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016.”; and

(2) in paragraph (3) by striking “March 31, 2016,” and inserting “July 15, 2016.”

SEC. 104. AIR NAVIGATION FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT.

Section 48101(a)(5) of title 49, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(5) \$2,254,357,923 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016.”

SEC. 105. RESEARCH, ENGINEERING, AND DEVELOPMENT.

Section 48102(a)(9) of title 49, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(9) \$131,076,503 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016.”

SEC. 106. FUNDING FOR AVIATION PROGRAMS.

The budget authority authorized in this Act, including the amendments made by this

Act, shall be deemed to satisfy the requirements of subsections (a)(1)(B) and (a)(2) of section 48114 of title 49, United States Code, for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016.

SEC. 107. ESSENTIAL AIR SERVICE.

Section 41742(a)(2) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking “and \$77,500,000 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on March 31, 2016,” and inserting “and \$138,183,060 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on July 15, 2016.”

TITLE II—REVENUE PROVISIONS

SEC. 201. EXPENDITURE AUTHORITY FROM AIRPORT AND AIRWAY TRUST FUND.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 9502(d) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) by striking “April 1, 2016” in the matter preceding subparagraph (A) and inserting “April 1, 2017”, and

(B) by striking the semicolon at the end of subparagraph (A) and inserting “or the Airport and Airway Extension Act of 2016 or any specified extension;”, and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(7) SPECIFIED EXTENSION.—For purposes of paragraph (1), the term ‘specified extension’ means any provision of law enacted after the date of the enactment of this paragraph and before April 1, 2017, but only to the extent that such provision of law provides for the extension (including authorization of additional amounts) of an existing authority (determined as of the date of the enactment of this paragraph) for a period ending not later than March 31, 2017, under one or more of the following:

“(A) Section 106, 41742, 41743, 47104, 47107, 47114, 47115, 47116, 47117, 47124, 47141, 48101, 48102, 48103, or 48114 of title 49, United States Code.

“(B) Section 186(d) or 409(d) of the Vision 100—Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act.

“(C) Section 140(c)(1), 411(h), or 822(k) of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012.”

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 9502(e)(2) of such Code is amended by striking “April 1, 2016” and inserting “April 1, 2017”.

SEC. 202. EXTENSION OF TAXES FUNDING AIRPORT AND AIRWAY TRUST FUND.

(a) FUEL TAXES.—Section 4081(d)(2)(B) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking “March 31, 2016” and inserting “March 31, 2017”.

(b) TICKET TAXES.—

(1) PERSONS.—Section 4261(k)(1)(A)(ii) of such Code is amended by striking “March 31, 2016” and inserting “March 31, 2017”.

(2) PROPERTY.—Section 4271(d)(1)(A)(ii) of such Code is amended by striking “March 31, 2016” and inserting “March 31, 2017”.

(c) FRACTIONAL OWNERSHIP PROGRAMS.—

(1) TREATMENT AS NON-COMMERCIAL AVIATION.—Section 4083(b) of such Code is amended by striking “April 1, 2016” and inserting “April 1, 2017”.

(2) EXEMPTION FROM TICKET TAXES.—Section 4261(j) of such Code is amended by striking “March 31, 2016” and inserting “March 31, 2017”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) and the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to

include extraneous materials on H.R. 4721.

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise in support of H.R. 4721, the Airport and Airway Extension Act of 2016.

This bill extends the authorization of the Federal Aviation Administration programs through July 15, 2016. The bill also extends the revenue collection authorities for the Airport and Airway Trust Fund through March 31, 2017. The current FAA authorization expires at the end of this month.

Without this bill, the authority to collect aviation taxes will lapse, depriving the trust fund of more than \$30 million per day. That is \$30 million a day for air traffic control, airport development, and other aviation programs that can never be recovered.

Additionally, airports will be unable to receive grant money that has already been awarded to them, putting dozens of construction projects across the country at risk of delay, cost overrun, or cancellation.

H.R. 4721 will avoid these unnecessary consequences while Congress works to finish a long-term aviation bill.

On February 11, the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee approved H.R. 4441, the Aviation Innovation, Reform, and Reauthorization Act, or the AIRR Act.

The AIRR Act provides the transformational reform we need to modernize our antiquated air traffic control systems; to ensure the system is safe and efficient; and to ensure the U.S. leads the world in aviation.

The AIRR Act takes ATC out of the Federal bureaucracy and establishes an independent, not-for-profit corporation to provide and modernize ATC service. This corporation will be governed by an independent board and representatives of the public interest. This independent entity will provide a service. It will not be given the public airspace.

And the FAA will continue to be our Nation's aviation safety regulator. Let me stress that the FAA will continue to be the Nation's aviation safety regulator and that Congress will have full oversight over that entity.

The bill includes protections for general aviation and for service to rural communities. This structure gets ATC away from political infighting and from an FAA management structure that has wasted billions of dollars in trying to modernize the system.

I believe this reform will benefit passengers first, our communities, all system users, and will ultimately save taxpayers and the traveling public billions of dollars.

The AIRR Act also streamlines the FAA certification process so as to improve America's competitiveness and to protect jobs. It includes a robust safety title, protects investment in air-

port infrastructure, and promotes passenger service reforms.

We have worked every step of the way under an open process in order to address concerns and find common ground to move forward. In the markup, the committee approved 44 amendments, mostly on a bipartisan basis, to make the AIRR Act a better bill; but our work isn't done yet. With so much at stake, it is critical that we get this reform right.

We are working with Members in the House to get the ball over the goal line. Last week, Members of the Senate Commerce Committee introduced its FAA reauthorization bill, and I look forward to working with Chairman THUNE. We have worked well with the Senate Commerce Committee on the highway bill, on passenger rail reform, and on a Surface Transportation Board reauthorization. I believe we can be successful on an aviation bill as well.

I am confident that we can produce a transformational FAA bill that will restore our global leadership position in aviation and ensure that the United States has the safest, most efficient aviation system in the world. In the meantime, we need to pass this short-term extension, and I urge all of my colleagues to support it.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Here we are in the first or second short-term extension of the FAA, hopefully the last. The Senate has introduced a bill and I have had an opportunity to review the Senate bill. If you put the bills side by side, you will find very substantial agreement. In fact, there is very substantial agreement in the House over many of the critical provisions of the bill that relate to safety, to the future regulation of drones, to flight attendant risk, and numerous other provisions that were agreed upon during the markup.

The one major disagreement between the House and the Senate bills is the same disagreement that exists here in the House, which is over the privatization of the air traffic operations in this country.

I am not going to regurgitate the entire debate again here on the floor. The point is, with both bills being so similar, absent privatization, we could move well within the temporary extension.

In fact, we could probably have a bill done—well, we are not here very much. Congress is having, I think, a record few number of legislative days this year—but whenever we are going to be around again. I think there is a week in April and maybe a couple of days in May when we are going to be here and we could get this done. That seems to me to be the more prudent course.

The chairman and I do agree on what needs to be addressed at the FAA. First off, the biggest problem the FAA has is the United States Congress—the stupid shutdowns, sequestration, and other things which have interrupted critical

work, including procurement, and which have certainly interrupted the orderly operation of the air traffic control system.

How do we protect the FAA from Congress and idiots who want to shut down the government?

That is a tough one. I propose mandatory spending. The FAA is virtually self-funding. With the current tax structure and without adopting a controversial new private fee structure that would be put through by the non-profit corporation, the existing tax structure can pay for virtually 100 percent of the FAA, as it is, on an ongoing basis. If we adopted some efficiencies with a couple of other reforms, it would be in very, very robust shape and we would no longer have to rebut the idiocy of government shutdowns.

Now, there are certainly other parts of the government I care about that shouldn't be shut down, but at least mandatory spending here, like with Social Security checks and veterans' benefits, would say no, this is critical; it will continue even if, for some reason, Congress is so dysfunctional as to shut down funding for the government.

Secondly, procurement. Congress has been trying to reform procurement at the FAA since 1996. Unfortunately, back then, Congress didn't mandate procurement reforms. They merely gave the FAA license to depart from Federal procurement procedures if they so wished. In the end, unfortunately, either through the initiative of the FAA's or perhaps of some of the people down at the Office of Management and Budget, the procurement reforms were not done. In fact, they ended up with a system that is pretty much the same as the other, which is perhaps even less functional than those of other Federal agencies.

Finally, personnel. Again, in 1996—20 years ago—Congress, in recognizing this problem, gave the FAA the opportunity, the discretion, to adopt different personnel procedures, particularly as it relates to the mid-level bureaucratic bulge in the agency which does lead to some analysis, paralysis, and other problems that slow down needed measures or actions by the FAA.

I offered a very simple amendment that addressed those three things. It shouldn't be controversial. It says let the FAA fund itself with the existing tax structure and make that mandatory spending so we never shut them down again. Let's have procurement reforms and personnel reforms that are mandatory.

□ 1700

Unfortunately, that amendment failed and, instead, this privatization proposal prevailed. But that now has brought us to this point where, what is the path forward?

Okay. We are now going to extend this agency temporarily until just before the longest summer break in history for Congress. Well, I guess back in

the 1940s and 1950s they used to take the summers off. But at least since the invention and installation of air-conditioning, it is the longest summer break in history.

So we have to get it done before then. Otherwise, Congress won't be back until sometime in September for a couple of days when it is not likely to do any major legislation.

The stability and the predictability that we need with the FAA, the reforms we need—not just the ones I mentioned, but the reforms in drones, the reforms to give flight attendants the same mandatory rest hours and many, many other provisions—that are in agreement between the House and the Senate should not have to wait.

So I would hope that we won't drag this out until just before Congress adjourns and, instead, that we move forward with all dispatch after the Senate acts this week, if the Senate acts this week—you never can predict the Senate—and begin to correlate the few differences that I see between the bills.

Then, at some point, I think it will be time to give up on the privatization proposal and move forward and put this bill into place.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, just a couple of points to point out. Again, we talk about privatization, but this is a not-for-profit corporation that is going to be governed by the stakeholders.

The government will have representatives, and the others that use the system will be on there to make sure that this entity operates in the most efficient, safe manner possible. Just to point out, over 50 countries around the world have done this and they have done it successfully.

As the gentleman points out, in the bill that we passed, there is much agreement, but there are significant differences on this point.

The gentleman also points out, which I agree with, Congress is part of the problem. It is not just the bureaucrats at FAA. It is the way Congress funds things.

His solution to mandatory spending, though, I would oppose significantly because that takes the Congress out of the equation. It gives the FAA money.

They will get it automatically without Congress going through appropriations or any kind of real oversight by Congress. If it comes down to it, it will be very difficult to change. The track record is very, very clear.

As the gentleman points out, over time we have reformed over and over and over, given the FAA the ability to do things that other agencies don't have.

But to paraphrase my good friend and colleague from Oregon who has said this a number of times, the only agency worse than the Department of Defense for procurement is the FAA. They just can't get it right. And Congress is an accomplice in that failure.

So, again, that reform I think will go great distances to make this a modern FAA system, to be able to get it to operate with the GPS-based systems, give us much more capacity, improve the airspace, decrease the time it takes to fly places for the traveling public, and decrease the amount of energy burned up, which will be good for the environment.

Again, I will continue to work with my colleagues and with the Senate to try to do something, which, really, its time has come, to significantly reform the FAA and do something that, again, over 50 countries have done. Britain, Germany, Australia, New Zealand, our allies around the world have done it successfully and with very, very safe results.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, well, let's just set the record straight. Only two countries have privatized. That is Canada and Great Britain.

In the case of Great Britain, the government and the taxpayers had to come in and bail out the corporation. In the case of Canada, it was a very prolonged transition, 7 or 8 years, which would set back NextGen for a generation. So those were not without their problems.

There is a MITRE report, which looks at all of the other conversions around the world which were government corporations, not private corporations. So there are only two that have gone to private corporations.

All the other countries that have changed over have gone to government corporations, and they also had transition issues. I mean, it is very instructive.

We haven't held hearings on the MITRE report or the recent GAO report that point to the potential for disruption and seeing that this proposal won't cause the sorts of disruptions that happened in other countries.

On the issue of mandatory spending, we would still, as the authorizers, have the authority to direct that agency much more so than we will have if we give it to a private corporation.

According to the most recent CBO report, they deem that this corporation will be mandatory spending and it will be a private corporation which will have the authority to tax.

So we are giving authority to a private corporation to establish some sort of a fee or tax structure—they can't tax; so it will be fees of some sort—a fee for the amount of space that you take up in an airplane when you are flying over the country—who knows what those fees will be—we don't know—which would be potentially disruptive and potentially disadvantage other users of the system, which is why you have all the regional airlines that fly 62 percent of the flights every day opposed to this bill.

You have Delta Air Lines, the largest airline, opposed to bill. You have the

Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association opposed to this bill. You have business aviation opposed to this proposal because they don't know what this fee structure will be and how it might or might not discriminate against them.

So what I propose is that you keep the existing structure, which everybody can live with. Now, the airlines don't like it because every time I buy an airline ticket and I pay the excise tax, the airlines say that is their money.

I say no. That is actually a tax that is levied on me, as a passenger, which goes to the government. It is not their money.

But they think they can create a system where it won't be taking money out of their pocket, which they say the excise taxes do. But I don't know where the \$10 billion or so a year is going to come to.

Then, of course, the Office of Management and Budget also in this report found last week that, with mandatory spending by this private corporation, there will be a \$19.848 billion deficit over a 10-year period.

Let me repeat that. Mandatory spending by a private corporation assessing some sort of new fee structure on users of the system, including passengers, and the OMB says that that would increase the Federal deficit by \$19.848 billion.

Of course, the majority is always free to waive the rules and they can ignore that. I mean, the rules have been waived numerous times to create more deficit around here, just by the discussion on the other side that they want to address the deficit whenever we eliminate taxes, waive the rules, and pretend that actually eliminating taxes will raise money or it is budget-neutral.

I guess, in this case, they could waive the rules and say the mandatory spending by the private corporation that will lead to additional deficit doesn't matter and it doesn't exist.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for pointing out the potential for a prolonged period to get to NextGen.

We forget it has been a prolonged period. For over 20 years, we have been trying to get NextGen in the current system, and we haven't been able to get it.

It is the GAO, it is the Inspector General of the Transportation Department, and it is numerous reports that have said there is no end in sight as to when we can get NextGen, a GPS-based system.

Let me just point out—the gentleman mentioned Canada, which is a model we are looking at very closely. We certainly have made it to be an American model. But what has Canada done?

Canada, in this type of system, a not-for-profit corporation—which this corporation will not be able to raise taxes,

will not be able to put taxes. It will go to a user fee-based system.

What has Canada done? They have decreased the cost of those user fees by 30 percent over the last 20 years, a 30 percent decrease.

What they are doing this year is that the Canadian Nav Can will launch its first batch of satellites, and over the next 13, 14 months, until the next year of 2017, they will launch 70-plus satellites. They will have visibility of 100 percent of the world's global airspace.

Today all of us together see about 30 percent. The Canadians will do this based on a system that we are trying to move toward to implement. So it has been a great success for Canada. It has lower costs. They are going to have a system that is deployed. It is safe.

The only good news about Canada doing it is that they are one of our best allies. It is not the Russians and the Chinese doing it. If they were doing it, we would be hell-bent on trying to get this done.

Let me just point back to, this is a system that the stakeholders will be in charge of at the board level. The FAA will still be the regulatory agency.

So, again, this is something that is a long time coming. The Clinton administration tried to do it. The Bush administration tried to do it.

The time has come. We should do this. We should not let the Canadians have the ability that we don't have, even though they are our allies.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

We have been down this path somewhat exhaustively, except we haven't held exhaustive hearings to bring in the stakeholders, poke at this idea, see if there are alternatives and other ways to make the FAA into a more efficient agency.

Actually, the Canadians are not launching a satellite. They are putting a module on a satellite, and they are allowing people to actually license in or lease in with them, which the FAA could do.

That is not the critical part of the infrastructure we need here in the U.S. That satellite-based system will not be able to improve the ground-based system that we have here in terms of our very, very busy airports. We land more planes in a day at LaGuardia than Canada lands in—I don't know how many days.

So the issue of our system and more efficiency in our system depends on many things, including one thing which is a glaring omission in both the House and Senate bills: runways, aprons, terminals. Guess what. Both the House bill and the Senate bill stiff the airports.

We haven't allowed them to assess a reasonable increase in the passenger facility charge in many, many, many years. So even if this system becomes more efficient, one way or another, at some point, you can't get more planes into LaGuardia without building an-

other runway. That is not going to happen. So we can't even talk about that.

There are other places where we could improve efficiency with another runway, where you could improve efficiency with more terminal space, more gates, more apron. Yet, the airports are not being allowed to assess a user fee to get there.

I actually was an original advocate for the passenger facility charge many years ago when I saw the unfairness of the previous system.

I live in Springfield, Oregon, across the river from Eugene. Eugene has the airport on their property. They had to build a new airport, and they could only assess the fees in taxes against the people of Eugene. Yet, people from Corvallis, people from Springfield, people from Roseburg, all use that airport.

So I thought it would be only fair to assess a passenger facility charge for those sorts of improvements, which I probably enjoy more than most people, flying more than most people. But we haven't allowed an increase in that, and certainly the costs of construction have not gotten any cheaper.

Many of the airports are bonded out. They don't have the capability of issuing more bonds without more revenue flow, but we seem to be ignoring that.

So if you want to look at the system to increase efficiency as a whole and to help the passenger experience, you have got to look at the system as a whole, and I am afraid we are a little bit short there.

Back to the corporate model, we don't know what the user fees will be, which, again, is why business aviation, general aviation, the Nation's largest airline and the regional airlines, which fly 62 percent of the airplanes every day, are all opposed to this black hole.

□ 1715

Suddenly we are going to have a private corporation that assesses some sort of user fee, which is raising more than \$10 billion a year to pay for itself, and then the gentleman says that safety will remain with the FAA. It will, with no funding.

So it is a crisis that every once in a while, you know, idiots take over, and we shut down the government, and that messes up air traffic control, and then we go into sequestration. But it is okay if they shut down every inspector in the FAA and everything else that goes into safety in the FAA and everything that goes into certification at the FAA because that will all remain with the vestigial agency over in the general fund with no funding source, because the assumption is all of the existing excise taxes are going to be repealed and replaced by new, unknown user fees by the private entity.

So what is that new system and how and where is the money going to come from for safety, for certification and all the other critical functions of the FAA? That is left to the total discretion of Congress, with no funding

source. At least today you can look at that and say: Well, we are paying for 93 percent of it through taxes that are being raised, that are dedicated; all we have got to do is come up with 7 percent. But now it will be: Wow, we have got to come up with 100 percent to fund those inspectors and those certifiers and all those people over there. Wow, this is great; let's bifurcate the agency. Plus the communications problem.

And, by the way, the certifiers will have to certify the new systems that the private corporation is proposing to put in place, so the certifiers are now laid off because of a dumb government shutdown but, hey, they can move ahead over here. Well, no, they can't move ahead. They can't deploy any new systems because they are user fee-based, and these people over here are general fund-based.

So I do not believe this solves the problem. I think it would be better to say, if you want to do this, do it the way President Clinton did propose, which is a government corporation. He did not propose privatization. Virtually the vast majority of the countries in the world have gone with government corporations. If you do that, you don't have some of the bizarre problems that they are trying to work around here with the Constitution, which prohibits giving regulatory authority to a private entity.

Well, they work around that by saying everything the corporation wants to do has to be approved by the Secretary, who, by the way, will have a giant new office of experts to advise him or her on whether or not to approve the new fee structure, whether or not to approve the new routes, whether or not to approve this or that or anything that is regulatory in nature. That all still has to go back to the Secretary, who, by the way, is subject to Congress and the appropriations process and political appointment.

We aren't solving the problem. If this goes forward, you are not solving the problem. I posit that you are creating more.

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

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, how much time is remaining on our side?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Pennsylvania has 11½ minutes remaining.

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

Mr. Speaker, I will say, point out for the Record, correct the Record, first, the gentleman is correct: Canada is not launching satellites. They are launching modules to go on satellites by the corporation that they own about half of to deploy this GPS-based system. So, the gentleman is correct. Technically they are not satellites, but they are components to go on satellites which will, in fact, see 100 percent of the global airspace, which America should be doing.

The next thing I would like to correct is we have had numerous hearings

on this. We have had over half a dozen hearings. In fact, we had one just before we marked the bill up. We have had over 12—I think maybe even 14 or 15—roundtable discussions with both sides of the aisle and stakeholders from all over the industries who sat there and talked to us about what they thought is good and what is bad.

The concern about safety—as I said, safety stays in government, and today the FAA safety certification portion of it is paid by the general fund. That is appropriate. The other fees, the taxes, we plan to eliminate most of those taxes, eliminate those taxes and go to a user fee-based system.

There is plenty of money there. That will go to run the ATC system. This way it will be in a user fee-based system, which history has shown us what Canada has done. History has shown us, I think, in many, many cases, when you take something outside the government that can go outside the government, it is run more efficiently. We will get out of the starts and the stops of the appropriations process, of the government shutdowns, of the 23 extensions last time.

This will be a better program. And the Secretary and the FAA will still maintain that regulatory oversight, which, in fact, means that Congress will maintain regulatory oversight. And I don't know when Congress has not had oversight and, in many cases, screwed up many of the private industries in this country by our overreach and our oversight by putting rules and regulations in place that don't work. In the case of the FAA, we rolled those back in many cases, let them go outside the Federal Government human resources rules and regulations. What did they do? They just kept on doing the same old thing.

So this is an opportunity for us, again, with extensive hearings, with extensive experience around the world, looking at people who have done it successfully. Again, I believe the time has come for us to do this, to make this a modern aviation system that I believe will improve safety, although we have an incredibly safe system today.

It will reduce the cost for the traveling public. It will make their flight times faster, more efficient, and it will be good for the environment. I don't see, really, anything in this that many, many Members of this House can't embrace.

I will continue to talk about it and continue to push it because I really believe the time is now to have a modern air traffic control system that will be the envy of the world, just as our aviation system, our airlines, the development of our airlines, and our manufacturers have been for years. If we don't do it, I think we stand to diminish ourselves in the world.

Ladies and gentlemen, we invented aviation. We ought to make sure that we continue to be the leaders in the world when it comes to aviation, whether it is flying planes, building

planes, or controlling the airspace in the most efficient and safe way.

Again, I urge all my colleagues to support this short-term extension that is on the floor today.

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

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, this short-term bill to extend the FAA authorization for three months and tax revenue for one year gives us more time to negotiate bipartisan reforms that are needed. While I will support this extension, I'm concerned that Republicans are using this bill to buy time for privatization.

Let me be clear: we should not privatize the FAA. Privatizing the FAA would put control of our skies in the hands of a private corporation that put profits over passenger safety. It gives that private corporation the power to tax the flying public who have no alternative. It would increase complexity and lead to higher costs for passengers. It would reduce air service to small and rural communities. And it hands a private corporation billions of dollars' worth of taxpayers' property and other assets—free of charge.

Capt. Chesley Sullenberger, the US Airways pilot who landed his disabled aircraft on the Hudson River in 2009, agrees. He told POLITICO: "There ought to be other, better ways to make sure that air traffic control has long-term, consistent funding for capital improvements other than eviscerating access to the air traffic control system for anyone other than airlines."

I think we can all agree that there are improvements that can and should be made to the FAA, and this bill gives us time to work toward them. But we should not cloak those improvements in a bill that gives up Congress's jurisdiction and harms taxpayers.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4721.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 22 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of Georgia) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4596, SMALL BUSINESS BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT ACT, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3797, SATISFYING ENERGY NEEDS AND SAVING THE ENVIRONMENT ACT

Mr. STIVERS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 114-453) on the resolution (H. Res. 640) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4596) to ensure that small business providers of broadband Internet access service can devote resources to broadband deployment rather than compliance with cumbersome regulatory requirements, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3797) to establish the bases by which the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency shall issue, implement, and enforce certain emission limitations and allocations for existing electric utility steam generating units that convert coal refuse into energy, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

S. 2426, by the yeas and nays;

H. Con. Res. 75, by the yeas and nays;

H. Con. Res. 121, by the yeas and nays.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

DEVELOPING A STRATEGY TO OBTAIN OBSERVER STATUS FOR TAIWAN IN THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL POLICE ORGANIZATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 2426) to direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 381, nays 0, not voting 52, as follows:

[Roll No. 111]

YEAS—381

Abraham	Amash	Barr
Aderholt	Amodei	Barton
Aguilar	Ashford	Bass
Allen	Barletta	Beatty

Benishek
Bera
Beyer
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Boyle, Brendan
F.
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clawson (FL)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Cook
Cooper
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Dold
Donovan
Doyle, Michael
F.
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Emmer (MN)
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah

Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Fox
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grijalva
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hahn
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Himes
Hinojosa
Holding
Honda
Hoyer
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Kantrowitz
Kapo
Kasich
Kawela
Keating
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildeer
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
Kinzinger (IL)
Klomeyer
Knight
Kuster
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
LoBiondo
Loehsack
Lofgren
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham
(NM)
Luján, Ben Ray
(NM)
Lummis
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matsui
McCarthy
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Nolan
Norcross
Nugent
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Paulsen
Payne
Pelosi
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (NC)
Price, Tom
Quigley
Rangel
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Russell
Salmon

Sánchez, Linda
T.
Sanford
Sarbanes
Schalise
Schakowsky
Schradler
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Shimkus
Simpson
Sinema
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Adams
Babin
Becerra
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Conyers
Costa
Davis, Danny
Doggett
Duckworth
Duffy
Eilmlers (NC)
Frelinghuysen
Graves (MO)
Grayson
Gutiérrez
Heck (NV)
Herrera Beutler
Higgins
Huffman
Hunter
Israel
Johnson (GA)
Joyce
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
King (NY)
Kirkpatrick
Langevin
Lipinski
Maloney,
Carolyn
McCaul
Noem

Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Westerman
Westmoreland
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, as amended.
This is a 5-minute vote.
The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 393, nays 0, not voting 40, as follows:

[Roll No. 112]
YEAS—393
Abraham
Aderholt
Aguiar
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Ashford
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Benishek
Bera
Beyer
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Boyle, Brendan
F.
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clawson (FL)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Cook
Cooper
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Dold
Donovan
Doyle, Michael
F.
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Emmer (MN)
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Dold
Donovan
Doyle, Michael
F.
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Emmer (MN)
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Kantrowitz
Kapo
Kasich
Kawela
Keating
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildeer
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
Kinzinger (IL)
Klomeyer
Knight
Kuster
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
LoBiondo
Loehsack
Lofgren
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham
(NM)
Luján, Ben Ray
(NM)
Lummis
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matsui
McCarthy
McCauley
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)

NOT VOTING—52

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE
The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1847

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:
Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 111, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted “yes.”

DEFINING CERTAIN ATROCITIES AS WAR CRIMES, CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY, AND GENOCIDE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 75) expressing the sense of Congress that those who commit or support atrocities against Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities, including Yezidis, Turkmen, Sabea-Mandean, Kaka'e, and Kurds, and who target them specifically for ethnic or religious reasons, are committing, and are hereby declared to be committing, “war crimes”, “crimes against humanity”, and “genocide”, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Nolan
Norcross
Nugent
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Paulsen
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (NC)
Price, Tom
Quigley
Rangel
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Richmond

Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Russell
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda
T.
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)

Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Westerman
Westmoreland
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

CONDEMNING VIOLATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW BY THE GOVERNMENT OF SYRIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 121) expressing the sense of the Congress condemning the gross violations of international law amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity by the Government of Syria, its allies, and other parties to the conflict in Syria, and asking the President to direct his Ambassador at the United Nations to promote the establishment of a war crimes tribunal where these crimes could be addressed, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 392, nays 3, not voting 38, as follows:

[Roll No. 113]

YEAS—392

Abraham
Aderholt
Aguiar
Allen
Amodei
Ashford
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Benishak
Bera
Beyer
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Boyle, Brendan
F.
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)

Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Katko
Keating
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Kuster
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
LoBiondo
Loeb sack
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowenthal
Lowe
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham
(NM)
Luján, Ben Ray
(NM)
Lummis
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney,
Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks

Meng
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Nolan
Norcross
Nugent
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Paulsen
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (NC)
Price, Tom
Quigley
Rangel
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Russell
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda
T.
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schrader

Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Westerman
Westmoreland
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—3

Amash
Adams
Babin
Becerra
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Costa
Davis, Danny
Duckworth
Ellmers (NC)
Frelinghuysen
Granger
Graves (MO)
Grayson

Gabbard
Gutiérrez
Heck (NV)
Herrera Beutler
Higgins
Israel
Joyce
Kaptur
Kelly (IL)
King (NY)
Kirkpatrick
Lipinski
Noem
Pascrell

NOT VOTING—38

NOT VOTING—40

Adams
Babin
Becerra
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Costa
Davis, Danny
Duckworth
Ellmers (NC)
Frelinghuysen
Granger
Graves (MO)
Grayson

Gutiérrez
Heck (NV)
Herrera Beutler
Higgins
Honda
Israel
Joyce
Kaptur
Kelly (IL)
King (NY)
Kirkpatrick
Lipinski
Maloney,
Carolyn

Noem
Pascrell
Pearce
Rohrabacher
Roskam
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sanchez, Loretta
Schiff
Sires
Smith (WA)
Wenstrup
Whitfield

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1854

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The title of the concurrent resolution was amended so as to read: “Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the atrocities perpetrated by ISIL against religious and ethnic minorities in Iraq and Syria include war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide.”

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1900

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

WE MUST CONFRONT EVIL IN THE WORLD

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

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, there are times in history we are ashamed of, times when people were faced with great evil and the world looked away.

Cambodia's Communist regime massacred its people. Many in the world made excuses for them. Stalin purged Russians and starved the nation of Ukraine. He was praised by a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist.

The Jewish people of Europe were systematically murdered by Hitler, but the world was too afraid to see the truth. The scales were only lifted from their eyes when millions were already dead. At the time, people made excuses for their decision to look away. They said the politics were too dicey, or it wouldn't be diplomatic, or sometimes they couldn't believe that such evil exists.

When we look back, those excuses don't make sense. They don't matter. What matters is that people were dying and the world didn't notice. Evil does exist, but ignoring it or refusing to call it by its name does not make it go away.

ISIL is murdering Christians. They are targeting people who share my faith, the faith of many people in this House, people who believe in Jesus Christ. Because of that belief, they are being marked for execution. ISIL is murdering and enslaving religious and ethnic minorities everywhere they gain power, and we know it.

We know what they are doing, and if we don't say it, we should be ashamed. ISIL is committing genocide. They are targeting non-Muslims, Christians, Yazidis, and more, and pushing them to extinction.

But we also can't ignore what else is happening in Syria. The Assad regime and its allies are indiscriminately killing on a breathtaking scale. Torture, rape, chemical weapons, barrel bombs, forced starvation—the Syrian regime is targeting civilians and millions are suffering.

The world cannot look away. The Obama administration cannot dance around the question. Today the House stands firmly to proclaim to the world that genocide is happening, that evil is real, and that it must be stopped. We urge the administration to join us.

We must look evil in the face and confront it, because if we do not wake up, more innocent blood will be shed.

CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL PI DAY

(Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join mathematicians, math lovers, and millions around the world in celebrating International Pi Day. Observed every year on March 14, beginning at 1:59 p.m., Pi Day recognizes the mathematical constant known as pi. It also coincides with the birthday of one of science's greatest minds and former resident of my district, Albert Einstein.

While many will celebrate today by indulging in a tastier type of pie, today offers a much more serious reminder of the importance of technology, engineering, and math, fields that help strengthen our Nation's economy and security. Studies have shown little improvement in math and science test scores in the United States since 1995.

And so as we honor the concept of pi and the legacy of Einstein, I ask my colleagues to join me in renewing our commitment to outstanding STEM education in our schools and support of STEM at the Federal level.

CONGRATULATING WAYZATA HOCKEY TEAM

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, Indiana has its basketball, Texas has its football, but in Minnesota it doesn't get much better than the annual high school hockey tournament.

I would like to congratulate the Wayzata High School boys hockey team for taking home the title with a tough 5-3 victory for the championship over Eden Prairie. The Trojans, under Coach Pat O'Leary, fought back from a 3-1 deficit to claim their first ever State hockey title.

The State hockey tournament is always a tremendous event, with fans from around Minnesota descending on St. Paul to fill up the Xcel Energy Center to cheer on their teams.

The players at Wayzata should be very proud of their accomplishments on and off the ice. I want to recognize their commitment not just to their sport, but to spending time in the classroom and in the community to become outstanding student athletes.

Mr. Speaker, the family, friends, and fans are very proud of the Wayzata High School hockey team. We offer them congratulations.

THE CHILDREN ARE LISTENING

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

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, my daughter is a kindergarten teacher, and the children are listening.

They are listening to our national debate. They are listening to the television. They are coming to class, and they are repeating. They are repeating the bullying that they hear on television, and they take it to the classroom.

The children are listening. It is time for civility in our Presidential discourse.

IRAN SCOFFS AT AGREEMENTS

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Iran once again has blatantly scoffed at the West by breaking its agreements.

Just this last week, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps test-fired several ballistic missiles. The missiles were reportedly designed to hit our ally Israel and were inscribed in Hebrew, "Israel must be wiped out."

Under U.N. Security Council Resolution 2231, Iran is forbidden from undertaking any work on missiles designed to deliver nuclear weapons. But the Iranians will do what suits them. The West—specifically, the United States—probably will do nothing about this test. The Ayatollah conveniently breaks international agreements.

Under the same U.N. agreement, the Ayatollah is prohibited from buying conventional arms for the next 5 years, but the Ayatollah broke his word again. The U.N. agreement has not stopped Iran from negotiating an arms sale with the saber-rattling Russians.

Mr. Speaker, the ink is barely dry on the so-called deal that the Obama administration made with Iran. Iran is a rogue nation determined to destroy the United States and Israel. Meanwhile, the United States sits blissfully by and just wrings its hands.

Iran must be stopped. Sanctions must be enforced, and eventually the citizens of Iran must change their government.

And that is just the way it is.

CONGRATULATING FIRST TWO RECIPIENTS OF CONGRESSIONAL PATRIOT AWARD

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to congratulate Congressmen SAM JOHNSON and JOHN LEWIS for being named the first two recipients of the Bipartisan Policy Center's Congressional Patriot Award.

This prestigious award was established to biennially honor two Members of Congress who have placed the interests and the goals of nation above all other concerns.

As a former U.S. Air Force pilot, SAM JOHNSON truly understands what it means to serve one's country. He flew combat missions in both the Korean

and the Vietnam wars, and he spent nearly 7 years as a prisoner of war in Hanoi after he was shot down over Vietnam. I commend SAM JOHNSON for his tireless work to support America's men and women in uniform as well as for his efforts on behalf of all veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I also have much praise for another wonderful colleague, JOHN LEWIS. JOHN's record of fighting for civil rights and civil liberties dates back to the 1960s, when he was named chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and served as the youngest keynote speaker alongside Dr. Martin Luther King at the March on Washington in 1963.

Congressmen SAM JOHNSON and JOHN LEWIS have both lived lives of distinction, and I expect that tomorrow night's inaugural ceremony at the Library of Congress will be a great testament to their life of service.

PREVENTING CRIMES AGAINST VETERANS ACT

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

Mr. ROONEY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on behalf of our Nation's veterans, who have been targeted by criminals seeking to defraud them.

Last year, veterans in my district brought to my attention that these individuals are advertising themselves to the veterans community, claiming that, for a fee, they can speed up their claims with the VA.

Now, everybody knows that the claims process at the VA is far too slow, but these people are deliberately seeking out veterans, purporting to speed up this process with their VA claims, which they cannot do, then illegally charging them exorbitant fees and then disappearing.

I introduced a bill with my fellow Floridian and neighbor, Democrat TED DEUTCH, titled the Preventing Crimes Against Veterans Act, to penalize these fraudsters who are blatantly engaging in a scheme to defraud our veterans.

Yes, that is true, these people prey on American veterans. So it is our duty to ensure that our heroes are protected under every aspect of the law. I am confident that this bill can pass the House with bipartisan support.

□ 1915

SENSIBLE WATER STORAGE

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I am heartened to see over the weekend in a Sacramento Bee article that California Senator DIANNE FEINSTEIN has also called for pumping excess water that flows through the delta, despite opinions on endangered fish numbers.

We have been talking a long time about taking that excess water and

putting it aside in storage instead of just letting it run out to the ocean. I am a little frustrated we didn't get to that point earlier.

Back in December, we had a press conference and put forth legislation to acknowledge that we are losing water that could be put aside in other storage facilities for anybody to be able to use.

We are looking forward to working with Senator FEINSTEIN on this and bringing forward sensible water storage with water we already have in these high-flow times.

REMEMBERING TIFFANY JOSLYN

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise with great sadness and overwhelming grief to acknowledge the passing of my beloved staff member, Tiffany Joslyn.

As we return to Washington, I did not want one day to pass without a tribute to her, although I will return again with more details and more expressions of how talented she was.

Tiffany died Saturday, March 5, in a very tragic car accident while traveling between Rhode Island and Massachusetts, having gone home to mourn with her family on the passing of a relative.

The greatest tragedy of all is that not only did Tiffany lose her life, but her beloved only brother died and his wife was injured in the same accident.

I come today to acknowledge her light and to tell her parents of the great respect Tiffany has garnered throughout the Washington community and beyond.

She was a brilliant writer. She served as Deputy Chief Counsel of the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations of the House Judiciary Committee.

Republicans and Democrats loved her well. She had the kind of spirit, generosity, and eagerness to get the job done that everyone loved.

Tiffany had a passion to help the most vulnerable and those who were caught up in the criminal justice system unfairly, but also those who deserved restoration and rehabilitation. Together we were on a journey to continue to find a way to reform the criminal justice system.

She made great progress. Two of the bills we worked on have already passed out of the Judiciary Committee, and I am praying that they come to the floor not only in her name, but in the names of all the vulnerable people that would benefit from her great work.

To her family, this tragedy is so enormous that words cannot comfort, but you should know that your daughter and your late son were lights to so many. May good bless them as they rest in peace, for they left a legacy. It will go on and on.

I am ever grateful for the opportunity to work with Tiffany, a young

woman with a big heart and maybe even an old soul. She had a lot to give and a lot of intellect to make a difference in this world.

GENOCIDE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, we are living in a time of great political difficulty. That is not a secret to anyone.

Just moments ago the House of Representatives did something essential. We came together not in a bipartisan fashion, but in a trans-partisan fashion, rising above the petty difficulties that we seemingly cannot ever resolve, and spoke to the heart of something that is essential for all of humanity. We declared together what is happening in the Middle East to Christians, Yazidis, and others to be genocide.

I am extraordinarily proud of this body for speaking clearly, for speaking factually, and for speaking about this grave injustice that is happening to so many ancient faith traditions.

This is a grave injustice, and it is an assault on human dignity. This grave injustice is a threat to civilization itself when one group of persons, namely, ISIS, can systematically target another group of persons because of their faith.

That destroys the very basis for international order, tranquility among people, and for civilization itself. That is why what we did tonight in speaking so clearly and rising above differences in a unanimous fashion is so extraordinary.

I owe an extreme debt of gratitude to my colleague, ANNA ESHOO from California. ANNA has been a stalwart leader in this effort. Her own ethnic background is Chaldean. She has an intimate familiarity with the Middle East and the suffering of this group of people.

ANNA has led Congress on her side of the aisle and my side of the aisle, in partnership with me, to continue to try to confront the scandal of silence, the indifference toward what is happening to these ancient faith traditions that have as much a right to be in their ancestral homeland as anyone else.

In June of 2014, in the Iraqi city of Mosul, there was an eerie silence one morning. For the first time in two millennia, the church bells didn't ring.

Mosul is one of those diverse cities in the Middle East. It had a rich tapestry, a vibrancy of various faith traditions: Christians, Yazidis, Muslims.

There were differences of religious perspectives, sometimes tension, but they found a way to continue to contribute an interdependency toward the well-being of that community.

They were invaded by eighth century barbarians with 21st century weaponry:

ISIS. The Christians who were there were told to leave, convert, or die by the sword.

Many fled with just what was on their back. The remaining Christians in the homes had this painted on their door. This is the Arabic symbol for the letter N.

It stands for Nazarene, which is a derogatory term used by some in the Middle East to describe the Christians. This was painted on their door as a sign that it was time for them to go or they would die, except it wasn't painted in nice gold like this. It was painted blood red.

We have so many tragedies and difficulties facing humanity, we can sometimes become numb to the violence that is happening in so many places in the world because it is overwhelming.

But when you have one group of people who has extreme disregard for that sacred space of humanity, for that sacred space of conscience and individual rights that are expressed in religious freedom, you not only have a threat to a group of people far away, but you have a threat to the underpinnings of civilization itself.

I happened to be in the room when Pope Francis was given a small Christian cross, a crucifix. This cross had belonged to a young Syrian man. He had been captured by the jihadists.

He was told: Convert or die. So he chose. He chose his ancient faith tradition. He chose Christ. He was beheaded. His mother was somehow able to recover his body and this cross and bury him. She fled and came to Austria. Through this means, the small cross came into the possession of the Holy Father.

This is not an isolated story. It has happened over and over and over again, as persons who were denied their life or denied the very conditions for life and they had to flee. This is called genocide.

The International Association of Genocide Scholars, the prestigious academic body, has labeled this genocide. Genocide Watch has called this genocide. The Yazidi international community has labeled this a genocide. Pope Francis has said so. Presidential candidates on both sides of the aisle have said so. Now the House of Representatives has declared it so as well.

I live in Lincoln, Nebraska, and I am privileged to represent the largest Yazidi community in America. It is not a community that I have gotten to know just recently because of all the difficulties that they have had. We have worked with them for many, many years.

Many of these Yazidi families were translators for the United States Army during the height of the Iraq war. Because of that, this body, by law, gave them special citizenship options to live here in America, and many settled in Lincoln, Nebraska.

About a year and a half ago, a number of young men in the Yazidi commu-

nity came to see me. They were on the verge of tears.

They spoke passionately, even angrily—and I don't blame them for being angry—Congressman, do something. Our mothers, our sisters, our families, are trapped in Sinjar and ISIS is coming for them. We don't have the capacity to stop them. Help us. You are the only ones who can. Help us. Please, do something. There is no more time.

The Yazidi community also took its case to Washington. Around the same time a resolution that was led by my good friend, Congressman VARGAS, who will speak momentarily, and passed by us in the House of Representatives, which called for international humanitarian assistance in northern Iraq for the besieged people, laid some of the groundwork, which was a very prudential decision—and I commend President Obama for it—to stopping what was certain to be a slaughter on Mount Sinjar, saving the remnants of the Yazidi people who were still there.

So today we, as a body, are calling upon the international community as well as the fullness of our own government to act and to call this genocide.

This is one of those Yazidi translators. His name is Omar. Again, he gained his citizenship because he was so sacrificially helpful to us during the height of the Iraq war. He has lost 36 family members of the Yazidi community to the violence.

He recently went back to the liberated areas of Sinjar and saw the bombed remains of the ancient Christian church here. He took it upon himself—a Yazidi man that does not share the Christian tradition—to put a makeshift cross over the site where the Christians previously lived.

Why is this genocide designation important? It is just to Omar and his family. It is just to the Christians who died or had to flee. It is just to the other people who are under severe persecution. By the way, I should note that the people who have been killed the most by ISIL are innocent Muslims.

The genocide declaration, though, declares that there is a systematic attempt to exterminate this ancient faith tradition of the Christians, Yazidis, and others.

What it means is we are helping set the preconditions, if you will, for when there is, hopefully, a real security settlement in northern Iraq and in Syria and in other places and that the Christians, Yazidis, and others are fully integrated back into their ancient homeland and given fullness of rights as citizens, given fullness of protection and process, full integration into their own governance structures.

□ 1930

By raising this banner tonight, I think we have done something good. It is a word, but it is a powerful word.

In 2004, Colin Powell, then-Secretary of State, came to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and he declared there what was happening in Darfur to

be a genocide. In doing so, it helped put an end to that grim reality.

So today the House has spoken, and I am proud that we have done so in a bipartisan manner, with unanimity. What I hope this does is, again, elevate international consciousness, calling upon the responsible communities of the world to seek out constructive, creative ways to help stop the violence, to help stop the persecution, to push for the right type of security arrangements that will restore what was once the rich tapestry of diversity of perspectives and beliefs in the Middle East.

Without that, I have little hope. But with this, and the return of persons like Omar and others who respect differences, who have true friendships, who are willing to sacrifice for their deep beliefs, these are the nobility of values that the ancient traditions can bring back to their shattered homeland; and that is why it is so important that we acted today.

Mr. Speaker, let me turn to, again, my good friend from California (Ms. ESHOO), who has worked tirelessly on this resolution and wants to share her thoughts as well tonight.

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, the gentleman from Nebraska, the very distinguished Mr. FORTENBERRY. I thank him for his words and for his magnificent remarks here on the floor this evening. We obviously share the same sentiments.

I think if anyone is tuned in this evening for what we call a Special Order, the Congress is not really held in great regard today, but there is on a day-to-day basis for so many of us a discovery of deep friendship that is created, that comes about because we work so closely together on something that binds us, where we have not only common ground, but the deep, deep values of our country that are embedded in us and everyone here, people across the country, and that we get to work on it together.

Congressman FORTENBERRY is my brother, and I thank him. I thank him from the bottom of my heart for the values that he has expressed, the work that he has put into this, and what it means to the people that we are speaking for.

This resolution expresses the sense of the Congress that the atrocities that are being perpetrated by ISIS, they constitute war crimes, and they are genocide against religious and ethnic minorities in Iraq and Syria and throughout the region.

Now, over the past decade we have really witnessed an acceleration. It started when there was the invasion of Iraq, but it has heightened as the years have gone on. And now the assault on Christians and other religious minorities, particularly by ISIS, has moved to a level of barbarism that we read about in the history books, and is taking place, imagine, in the 21st century.

It has included the torture and the murder of thousands, the displacement

of millions, including Assyrians, Chaldeans, Syrians, Armenians, Turkmen, Sabea-Mandean, Kaka'e, Amalekites, and the Yazidis that Mr. FORTENBERRY has spoken to and represents so magnificently. These are families that are being torn apart, fathers and sons being executed, mothers and daughters being enslaved and raped.

The USA Today columnist, Kirsten Powers, painted a very vivid picture when she wrote in December of last year:

In October, Islamic State militants in Syria demanded that two Christian women and six men convert to Islam. When they refused, the women were publicly raped, and then beheaded along with the men. On the same day, militants cut off the fingertips of a 12-year old boy in an attempt to force his Christian father to convert. When his father refused, they were brutalized and they were both crucified.

Today, there are fewer than 500 Christians remaining in Iraq, down from as many as 1.5 million in 2003.

Now, the United Nations has written, come up with a definition some time ago of what genocide actually is:

Any of the following acts committed with an intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: killing members of the group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction, in whole or in part; imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; and forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

This is genocide, and this is what is actually taking place today. Despite the persecution of these hundreds of thousands of religious minorities, the United States has not spoken out; but tonight the United States House of Representatives has. And this is a seminal moment for the House to have taken this on and to express unanimously that this is genocide.

There are many things that we have worked on together, as members of, and other members as well, of the House Religious Minority Caucus; humanitarian aid, protection, faster refugee processing for these vulnerable communities, and an official statement by the Congress. Tonight that happened. We have labeled these atrocities for what they are, genocide.

I think that Congressman FORTENBERRY has stated in a most eloquent way why this is important.

First of all, this is one of the great values of our country, one of the great, great values of our country, where we recognize religions of people of all religious backgrounds.

Our Constitution, in just a few words, in just a few words, I believe, has prevented bloodshed, whereas in other places, it takes place.

It is as deeply meaningful to me as a first-generation American, the only Member of the entire Congress that is of Assyrian and Armenian descent. This is a repeat of history of my family. It is why I am a first-generation

American, because my grandparents fled, both sides of my family, the Armenian side and the Assyrian side, for this very reason, because they were being hunted down and persecuted because they were Christians.

We know that a century ago the world witnessed—but the House and the Congress is still silent on this, and we have to address that, too—when the Ottoman Empire rounded up and murdered Armenians, Greeks, and other minorities in Constantinople. By 1923, there were some 1.5 million women, children, and men who were lost. It was a systematic campaign that we now know as and call the Armenian Genocide.

So for those in my family who told the stories, my grandparents, my parents, this is, for me, a bittersweet evening. But I think that they are all proud, those who have been called to God, and those who are still with us, that the United States House of Representatives is calling this out for what it is.

It matters when the United States speaks. Our voices collectively, this evening, are going to echo around the world; and the stability, as Congressman FORTENBERRY spoke to, of these minority communities, have really been the glue that have held these ancient communities together for so long.

I, too, share the hope and pray for the day that there will be peace in the region and that they will be recognized and honored in their communities, on the lands, these ancient lands, with their ancient faiths. I think that is the collective hope of all of us. The stability and, I think, the cultural identity of the Middle East depends on this.

The United States has always championed human rights, basic human rights, and civil and religious liberties, both at home and abroad. Whenever we go abroad, those are the issues that we raise with whomever we are meeting with. I think that these are our most cherished values and, I think, America's greatest export.

During his trip to South America in July of 2015, Pope Francis called for an end to this genocide of Christians in the Middle East, saying, "In this third world war which we are now experiencing, a form of genocide is taking place, and it must end."

I think his voice spoke, obviously, for the voiceless.

Bishop Demetrios of Mokissos, the Chancellor of the Greek Orthodox Church of Chicago, recently wrote in the Wall Street Journal the following:

"It may seem like we in the United States have little ability to change conditions in the Middle East and elsewhere. But that outlook has too often led to inaction and great regret after crimes against humanity have been allowed to unfold without intervention. The United States and other members of the U.N. made a solemn vow in 2005 with the passage of the Responsibility to Protect, a response to crimes against humanity. With genocide oc-

curing before our very eyes, we must properly identify the crimes and honor our international commitment under the Responsibility to Protect."

So, Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, with the words of Pope Francis, Bishop Demetrios, countless advocates across our country and around the world, and the 203 bipartisan cosponsors of this resolution, and the voice of the entire House, unanimous vote this evening of this resolution, I am very proud.

I am very proud and I am lastingly grateful to be a part of this body that has spoken as one on this issue of enormous import and morality because we, tonight, have let it be known to the world that this is, in fact, the horror of genocide that is taking place in the Middle East.

Again, it is a moment of great pride to me, certainly to my family and to people, not only my own people, but to those across the United States, the religious leaders of all faiths that have spoken out.

This tonight, the evening of March 14, 2016, will live on and historians will record that we indeed did the right thing.

So I thank you all.

□ 1945

Historians will record that we indeed did the right thing. So I thank you all.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. I thank the gentlewoman for your impactful, important, heartfelt, and beautiful words of sympathy and compassion, but also for your action.

What you said, particularly regarding not only respecting the ancient faith traditions, but honoring them in their native lands, ought to be what we are all striving for. So I thank you for your beautiful statements.

Now I would like to turn to my friend and colleague, Congressman TRENT FRANKS, a Congressman from Arizona who, again, has been a stalwart leader on all types of assaults to human dignity as they manifest themselves in so many difficult ways across the spectrum of life. So I am grateful for your friendship and for your leadership as well.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman. I thank Congressman FORTENBERRY especially for his leadership and courage on this issue. I thank Congresswoman ESHOO not only for her personal courage, but just for the perspective that she brings to this House given her ancestors and the family history that she has with some of the challenges that are so parallel to what we are talking about tonight.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the United States of America has been the greatest national force for good the world has ever known. Our Nation has made sacrifices to the extreme to extinguish some of the worst evils that have plagued humanity across the decades. I am honored to stand here with my colleagues who have led this fight to call the Islamic States' insidious campaign

of terror against Christians, Yazidis, and other religious communities what it is: genocide.

For months, noble organizations like the Knights of Columbus and countless valiant individuals have worked tirelessly to document evidence of genocide against ancient faith communities in Iraq and Syria. Hundreds of pages containing accounts of massacres, unimaginable brutality, and uncovered mass graves have been delivered to world leaders, including the Obama administration, in an effort to condemn ISIS violence as the genocide that it most certainly is.

Recognition of genocide with the passage of H. Con. Res. 75 is due in large part to the conviction and commitment of these organizations and individuals—and for that humanity owes them great and profound gratitude. Yet today, despite all of the overwhelming evidence, this administration remains stunningly silent.

Mr. Speaker, I am reminded of the words of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a German Lutheran pastor and anti-Nazi dissident, who said: “Silence in the face of evil is evil itself: God will not hold us guiltless. Not to speak is to speak. Not to act is to act.”

Mr. Speaker, we are now witness to some of the most glaring and brutal attacks against the universal human right of religious freedom in history. ISIS has been the very face of evil. We have seen hundreds of thousands of civilians flee the land of their spiritual heritage. We have seen mass executions and beheadings. We have seen the destruction of ancient places of worship and sacred sites. We have seen women and children assaulted and sold as commodities in a modern-day slave market—sometimes little girls for as little as 50 cents.

We have seen the Islamic State desecrate, violate, humiliate, and strip innocent men, women, and children of their God-given human dignity. And why? Because there is no place for Christians, Yazidis, and other religious communities in the Islamic State’s self-proclaimed caliphate. The message of this metastasizing cancer is clear: those who do not conform to their abhorrent ideology will be destroyed.

Mr. Speaker, this administration has been fully aware that Christians, Yazidis, and other religious communities have been subjected to the most extreme kind of brutality and barbaric attacks. The Islamic State has publicly declared their intent to annihilate those who do not submit to their caliphate, stating, “it will continue to wage war against the apostates until they repent from apostasy. It will continue to wage war against the pagans until they accept Islam.” Mr. Speaker, justice demands that this be condemned as genocide.

Today, the cries of the innocent should compel us to act. Refusal to acknowledge and specifically name Christians, Yazidis, and other religious communities in a designation of genocide

would be one of the more disgraceful chapters in the Obama administration’s shameful and abhorrent response to the insidious evil of the Islamic State.

The conspicuous silence of this administration and its failure to act decisively not only has the gravest implications for thousands of innocent fellow human beings, but it also sends a message to the world that the United States of America, which has long served as an impetus for freedom and justice, has either lost the moral conviction to defend the lives of the innocent or the political will to crush the evil that desecrates them.

Not to speak is to speak, Mr. Speaker. Not to act is to act, Mr. Speaker. And the world is watching what we will—or, shamefully, will not—say or do.

Mr. Speaker, I would adjure the President of the United States and Secretary Kerry not to callously continue to stand by in silence and let this evil relentlessly proceed.

With that, I thank the gentleman.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. I thank my friend, Congressman FRANKS of Arizona, for his powerful statement. Not to speak is to speak. Of all people in the body, I think that is a marked tribute to the Congressman who has worked tirelessly and spoken out on behalf of the protection of innocent persons.

Now I want to turn to my good friend, Congressman JUAN VARGAS from California, who as well has helped in an extraordinary way to further not only this cause, but, again, trying to elevate the nobility of the ideal that we should all be united in mind, heart, and spirit if we are going to be persons who respect the rules of law, the standards for international order, or, more basically, our need for one another.

I am so grateful for your willingness to speak out on a whole host of issues, and thank you for coming tonight, Congressman VARGAS.

Mr. VARGAS. Thank you, very much, Congressman FORTENBERRY, and also ANNA ESHOO for your courage to come forward and for your words today and for your powerful words that you gave a moment ago to call genocide what it is: genocide, what we are seeing with Christians in particular, Yazidis, and others. So, again, thank you very much for allowing me to speak today.

I would also like to congratulate both of you on the passage of H. Con. Res. 75, which expresses the sense of Congress that the atrocities perpetrated by ISIS against religious and ethnic minorities are indeed, as I said, genocide, crimes against humanity. I sincerely hope that the Obama administration will see the bipartisan show of support for this timely resolution as an impetus to clearly and forthrightly declare these acts genocide, because that is what they are. So I am hoping that they take action.

Around the world, political and religious leaders have spoken out to con-

demn ISIS’ acts of raping, kidnapping, torturing, and killing of Christians, Yazidis, Shias, Turkmens, and other religious minorities.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel, the European Parliament, the Kurdistan Regional Government, and His Holiness, Pope Francis have called these actions by their proper name: genocide—genocide.

I would like to echo the words of Pope Francis, who eloquently stated: “Our brothers are being persecuted, chased away, they are forced to leave their homes without being able to take anything with them. I assure these families that I am close to them and in constant prayer. I know how much you are suffering; I know that you are being stripped of everything.”

It has almost been 2 years since the fall of Mosul, when ISIS warned religious minorities living under its jurisdiction to either convert to Islam, pay a cumbersome religious tax, or be executed. I won’t go through all the atrocious acts that they have committed. I think that they were spoken of already here in a very dramatic way. Again, they did what they said they were going to do; and that is ISIS said that, if you didn’t leave, if you didn’t convert, you would be executed. That is, in fact, what they have done in the most horrific way.

We have to act. It is time for us to act. I believe that this mass exodus represents the largest forced displacement in the Middle East since the Armenian genocide in Turkey 100 years ago.

A genocide, known as the crime of crimes, has both legal and moral implications under both Federal and international law. This means that if a genocide is declared, it will demand American leadership and resources to prevent and punish the ongoing assault of Christians, Yazidis, and other religious minorities that are targeted for extinction.

While I applaud the various actions and commitments the Obama administration has made to alleviate the suffering of thousands of victims of ISIS, I strongly and firmly believe we can, we should, and we must do more.

History is full of examples of leaders who opposed these mass atrocities in abstraction but similarly opposed any action in the moment. I call on President Obama and Secretary Kerry to take the first step in firmly calling this egregious situation a genocide. It is past time to speak the truth to power and not to mince any words, and we shouldn’t mince any words.

Lastly, I would say this. This has been a bipartisan effort. I did have the opportunity to travel to Erbil with Congress Members DARRELL ISSA and JOHN MICA. We were able to talk to victims there of this horrific genocide, and we were able to talk to the Kurds who were, in fact, helping dramatically, many of them losing their own lives because they wanted to protect Christians and Yazidis.

We have to do more. Unfortunately, we probably won't get much information. Maybe if I went over and punched my good friend JEFF—out of love, of course, brother—maybe we could get some attention to this matter. But we have to shout out, and we have to get the attention of the administration. We have to do something. We have to do something because this is genocide, and we just can't sit idly by.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. I want to thank my good friend, Congressman VARGAS, for your impactful words. If it does take your coming over here to punch me, come on, let's go, because that is worth it.

I want to also reiterate something I mentioned earlier. It was your resolution that called for an international humanitarian intervention that I feel created the environment, the condition, which was empowering to the Obama administration to intervene on behalf of the Yazidis trapped on Mount Sinjar. That is an overlooked fact and consideration around here. But I am glad to say it, and I want to thank you for calling as well, urging the administration to act in this regard. You have the moral authority to do so.

I know Secretary Kerry has sympathies in this regard, but just like the Yazidis when they were trapped on the mountain, to wait in the face of clear facts is to potentially not only lose time, but to lose lives and lose the option for, again, setting the preconditions for reintegration of these ancient faith traditions back into their ancestral homelands. So I thank you for your good words.

Now I want to turn to my good friend Congressman SEAN DUFFY from Wisconsin, an outspoken man of the House who has not been afraid to confront, as well, the various problems facing humanity and the assaults on human dignity as they have manifested themselves and fractured our society and so many others in so many ways. So I thank you, Congressman DUFFY.

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's yielding, and I am grateful for all of your work, Congressman FORTENBERRY, Congressman VARGAS, and Congresswoman ESHOO.

Sometimes people look at this House and think that all we do is fight and disagree. I am not going to talk about you two punching each other to get a little more press, but it is a remarkable night when we all come together and stand together on such an important issue as this, where we all lend our voices to an incredibly important cause.

We spent a lot of time tonight talking about the atrocities, and I am going to join in because we can't say enough all that has happened.

Two million Christians called Iraq home prior to 2013. Fewer than 300,000 reside there today. Many were victims of killing or kidnappings, others forced to leave their homes by radicals, al Qaeda or ISIS.

In Syria, Christians accounted for 10 percent of the population, but today

their numbers have declined to less than 1 million. Last summer, ISIS kidnapped nearly 300 Christians in a Syrian village and then later ransomed them back to their families for an average of \$100,000 per person.

When ISIS invaded Mosul, Iraq, in 2013, as Mr. FORTENBERRY mentioned, they tagged Christian homes with an N for Nazarene, and then they gave the occupants a choice: you can convert, you can flee, or you would face death. In July of 2014, ISIS announced that the city, no doubt, was Christian-free—no surprise.

In 2014, August, a woman from Bartella, Iraq, recounted the night that ISIS came into her village and then into her home and accused her of putting gold coins in her 11-month-old baby's diaper. So they took her baby, threw her baby on the couch, beat her baby, and threw her up against the wall. Eventually, they let her leave, but they kept her husband and made him convert.

In February of 2015, ISIS slaughtered 21 Coptic Christians on a Libyan beach, pointing them towards Rome, and proclaimed this message: "Signed with blood to the nation of the cross."

In March of 2016, this month, four nuns, members of the Missionaries of Charity, founded by the late Mother Teresa of Calcutta, were executed by gunmen in Yemen.

□ 2000

Their crime? They were caring for the elderly and the disabled. Pope Francis called them today's martyrs.

Just yesterday gunmen stormed three hotels on the Ivory Coast. Among the 18 people who were killed was a 5-year-old boy—a 5-year-old boy—who was shot in the head. But eyewitnesses report that the friend who was with him was spared his life because he was able to recite a Muslim prayer.

Mr. Speaker, these are hardly isolated incidents. As we have talked about tonight, this is genocide. The Knights of Columbus submitted a 280-page report chronicling the persecution of Christians by the Islamic State to the State Department this week.

The leader of ISIS recently released a video that made very clear their intent to destroy Christians throughout whatever means possible. He said:

The co-existence of Christians and Jews is impossible, according to the Koran.

I don't think we have to scratch our heads and ask ourselves what is happening in Iraq and Syria. Pope Francis recently condemned the wholesale slaughter of Christians by ISIS, saying that entire Christian families and villages are being completely exterminated.

I look at this House tonight and I am proud that we have so many men and women who are willing to stand up and lend their voice to this great cause.

We have a reputation in America as being a beacon of light, men and women who stand up for freedom, better known as freedom fighters, freedom of life, freedom of religion.

When there are atrocities in the world, we stand up and lend a voice to those who are being persecuted, those who are downtrodden.

I am disappointed that the President has been unwilling to join this House and call the atrocities in Syria and Iraq a genocide. The first step to making sure this ends is that we speak the truth about what is actually happening.

Hopefully, if the President is watching tonight, he will see that we have both Republicans and Democrats who agree on this very important issue. Hopefully, he will join us and take that first step to shedding light on what is happening in Iraq and Syria.

Mr. FORTENBERRY, I commend you for your good efforts on this very important issue. I am proud to stand with you and the rest of this Chamber to make sure those who might not know that people care about them as they are going through pain and anguish—we hear about the sex slaves, young little girls who are held captive, little Christian and Yazidi girls—that they know that people hear them, people care about them, and people are doing here in America all we can to help them out of this crisis. Thank you for your work.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Thank you for your powerful words, Congressman DUFFY. The report that you mentioned is right here. Again, it is a 280-page report submitted to the State Department just recently.

The cover shows that moment where these Coptic Christians from Egypt, who are guilty only of the crime of going to Libya to try to work and earn enough money to sustain their families, were captured by ISIS and then beheaded.

This report lays out the facts. It is not the opinion of the House of Representatives. It is not my opinion or yours. The fact is that this is a genocide.

I am grateful not only to the Knights of Columbus and the organization called In Defense of Christians for producing this, but it basically is a thorough documentation of what has happened that adds further credibility to what we already know and so many people around the world have called genocide.

Thank you very much.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACK), my good friend.

Thank you for being here tonight.

Mrs. BLACK. I thank you, Mr. FORTENBERRY, for bringing us together to talk about a most serious topic, one that goes to our heart and makes us so sad for what is happening to these remarkable people who stand up for their faith.

Mr. Speaker, just today the Associated Press reported that President Obama would likely miss the March 17 deadline established by Congress for his administration to determine whether or not ISIS has committed genocide.

This is unfathomable. How long does it take for this President to call a spade a spade and declare what Americans already know to be true?

This isn't hard. ISIS is evil. They have engaged in systematic persecution and mass killing of Christians and other religious and ethnic minorities throughout the Middle East.

The United States has a moral responsibility to lead in the fight against ISIS, but we can't defeat a threat that we refuse to acknowledge exists.

I am proud to participate in tonight's Special Order and to support Congressman FORTENBERRY's resolution because we need to go on RECORD and declare the belief of crisis that ISIS has without a doubt committed genocide and must be dealt with accordingly.

Mr. Speaker, we in the United States cannot turn a blind eye when our brothers and sisters around the world are murdered, tortured, and kidnapped for their faith.

It is long past time to dispense with this hyper-political correctness and to call these heinous acts by their true name. These are crimes against humanity. Stopping the violence starts with acknowledging this truth.

I thank Congressman FORTENBERRY for his leadership on this much-needed resolution.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Thank you, Congresswoman BLACK, for your leadership not only on this issue, but so many others.

We often are in very important economic debates, debates about finances and debates about roads. Not often enough, perhaps, do we go to the core of the reason for which exists a country and its laws, namely, to protect human dignity. I want to thank you for your leadership in this regard. Thank you so much.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS), my good friend, for his good words.

Let me again thank you for your leadership. Your consistency and the continuity in which you apply your principles is very noble and uplifting to me.

Mr. ROTHFUS. I want to thank my friend, Congressman FORTENBERRY, for the steadfast witness that you have given to this cause and other causes of human dignity and to call us together again after this historic House vote today where the House stands in solidarity with the suffering victims of the Middle East.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to condemn in no uncertain terms the slaughter of Middle Eastern Christians and other religious minorities in Iraq, Syria, and the region held by ISIS.

These are crimes against humanity and acts of genocide. Everyone should denounce this senseless brutality. The United States and the United Nations should officially recognize the mass murder of Christians and other religious minorities in the Middle East as acts of genocide.

We do not hear about this massacre often enough from the media. While

many Americans may never have met someone from the Middle East, we are all part of the same human family. Christians in America may be set apart from our brothers and sisters in the Middle East geographically, but we worship the same God and are connected in our humanity.

We owe these suffering men, women, and children the greatest reverence and gratitude for their fortitude as they endure killings, displacement from their homes, forced migration, sexual exploitation, destruction of their property, and endure bodily and mental harm.

We must not remain silent as we live in the comfort of a Nation where our liberties are protected by the law and our culture, to a much greater degree, permits us to peacefully live out our faith.

I recall the words from 2001 of Pope John Paul II, Bishop of Rome, and His Holiness Karekin II, the Supreme Patriarch of all Armenians, as they commemorated the sacrifices of the Armenian Christians who were also brutalized by genocide for their faith:

Endowed with great faith, they chose to bear witness to the truth and accept death when necessary in order to share eternal life.

The most valuable treasure that one generation could bequeath to the next was fidelity to the gospel so that the young would become as resolute to their ancestors in bearing witness to the truth.

The extermination of a million and a half Armenian Christians in what is generally referred to as the first genocide of the 20th century and the subsequent annihilation of thousands under the former totalitarian regime are tragedies that still live in the memory of the present-day generation.

Fifteen years later their words still ring true as entire communities of Christians and other religious minorities are ravaged by genocide and religious persecution in the Middle East.

This persecution at the hands of ISIS is so horrific that, as Pope Francis and Patriarch Kirill said last month in a joint statement:

Whole families, villages, and cities of our brothers and sisters in Christ are being completely exterminated.

It is intolerable to remain silent and turn a blind eye. Silence and the failure to accurately identify not some, but all, of the victims of this genocide condemns these innocent people to a future of continued brutality, destruction, isolation, and genocide.

All religious minorities in the Middle East deserve religious freedom and the ability to live peacefully within their communities, as they have done for centuries. We will continue to stand in solidarity with them and to denounce the war crimes and genocide being committed against the law.

I want to end with two words, Mr. Speaker, two words: moral clarity. This is the time, Mr. Speaker, for moral clarity. Today this House spoke. The whole world now watches. We need the administration to speak.

I thank my friend.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Thank you, Congressman ROTHFUS, for your power-

ful words, and thank you for reminding us that this is about the essence of what it means to be human, to stand in solidarity with people far, far away who we may never know, but whose fate and our fate should be intertwined because of our mutual concern not only for one another from the heart, but also for the structures that give rise to essential principles, such as religious liberty. Thank you for your good words.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. COMSTOCK), my good friend.

Thank you for your tireless efforts as well on this resolution. Behind the scenes you have worked very aggressively in this regard.

While it has been stated clearly that ANNA ESHOO and I led this, nonetheless, your work in compelling Members to be involved in this question and raising consciousness has been invaluable. Thank you so much.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank him for his very important work on this vital issue of religious freedom.

I know how closely you worked with my predecessor, Congressman Frank Wolf, who continues this fight for religious freedom now in his retirement from Congress, but his very active work that continues on this important issue.

I rise to recognize the ongoing struggle for human and religious rights in the Middle East and call on the administration to make a genocide designation for the war crimes committed by ISIS against the Christians and other religious and ethnic groups.

We had the resolution that we passed tonight, and I thank all of my colleagues for that unanimous vote that really should speak to the entire country, but also to the entire world, to everybody who is asking: When is there going to be help? When are people going to hear our cries of anguish?

This resolution had over 200 cosponsors, which I was proud to join the gentleman and so many of my colleagues here tonight and express the sense of Congress that those who commit or support atrocities against Christians, Yazidis, Kurds, and other religious minorities in the region and those who target them specifically for ethnic or religious reasons are committing war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

ISIS has beheaded young children, raped young girls, and systematically slaughtered people just because of the religion they practice.

This is 2016. I remember as a young girl in Catholic school when we would study the martyrs and you would think about those ancient times and how the first Christians had to suffer and be martyred like that.

And then we see four nuns, Sisters of Charity, just trying to help the aged, the infirm, and they are slaughtered in the name of their faith.

We need to have more people hearing about this and focusing on this. At this

time when we have so many side shows that we see the press covering every single day, this is something that they need to be dedicating their time and their resources to and to be using this mass media that we have in so many different mediums to get this word out and understand these atrocities that are going on.

I commend Time magazine for featuring a young Yazidi woman. I believe it was last December. She was named Nadia. Her firsthand account was chilling, a 21-year-old girl. She testified what these monsters had done to her and her family.

When she tried to escape and was recaptured, she recounted her story by saying: “That night, he beat me up”—this was the person who was keeping her in slavery—“forced me to undress and put me in a room with six militants. They continued to commit crimes to my body until I became unconscious.”

□ 2015

She spoke of her niece, who had also been kidnapped, who had witnessed a woman who was cutting her own wrists, trying to kill herself. They heard stories of women who jumped from bridges. In one house in Mosul, where Nadia was kept, an upstairs room was smeared with evidence of suffering. “‘There was blood, and there were fingerprints of hands with the blood on the walls,’ she says. Two women had killed themselves there” so they wouldn’t have to suffer anymore.

“Nadia never considered ending her own life, but she said she wished the militants would do it for her. ‘I did not want to kill myself’”—of course, her faith wouldn’t allow it—“but I wanted them to kill me” so she wouldn’t end up suffering.

Now she is out there telling the world about this, and we need to listen. The European Parliament, the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the Iraqi and Kurdish Governments all have labeled these actions as genocide. Now we in the House are on record also.

These terrorist organizations are not only persecuting Christians, but Jews, Yazidis, and so many others, as so many of my colleagues have discussed tonight, they also have killed thousands upon thousands of Muslims who refuse to pledge allegiance to their tormentors’ extremist views.

Last week, the organization of the Knights of Columbus in Defense of Christians released a detailed, 278-page report, as Mr. FORTENBERRY, my colleague, has outlined.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the executive summary from the report that details the actions that constitute genocide. I certainly would recommend, like the gentleman did, that people look at this detailed report, and I would ask that the press cover this.

A REPORT SUBMITTED TO SECRETARY OF STATE JOHN KERRY BY THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS AND IN DEFENSE OF CHRISTIANS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ISIS is committing genocide—the “crime of crimes”—against Christians and other religious groups in Syria, Iraq and Libya. It is time for the United States to join the rest of the world by naming it and by taking action against it as required by law.

ISIS’ activities are well known. Killings, rapes, torture, kidnappings, bombings and the destruction of religious property and monuments are, in some instances, a matter of public record. The European Parliament, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, and the Iraqi and Kurdish governments have labeled ISIS’ actions genocide. Political leaders, including German Chancellor Angela Merkel, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights—have done likewise.

Indeed, Secretary of State John Kerry in August 2014 stated: “ISIS’s campaign of terror against the innocent, including Yazidi (sic) and Christian minorities, and its grotesque and targeted acts of violence bear all the warning signs and hallmarks of genocide.” Pope Francis and Cyril, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, have decried the genocide in these countries against Christians and other religious groups. Most movingly, archbishops and patriarchs of ancient Christian communities in Syria and Iraq have spoken out clearly against this crime and cried over the blood of their people and ISIS’ efforts to rid their homelands forever of the Christian faithful.

None of these declarations of genocide excluded Christians, who, with the other religious minorities in the region, have endured targeted attacks at the hands of this radical group and its affiliates because of their religious beliefs.

On February 4, the Knights of Columbus co-authored a letter to Secretary Kerry requesting a meeting to brief him on evidence that established that the situation confronting Christians and other religious minorities constitutes genocide. While there has never been an official response to that letter, we were contacted by senior State Department officials who requested our assistance in making the case that Christians are victims of genocide at the hands of ISIS. Given the specificity of the information requested, our focus in this report is on the situation confronting Christians in areas that are or have been under ISIS control, primarily in Iraq, Syria and Libya.

ISIS has also targeted Yazidis and other religious minority groups in a manner consistent with genocide. Thus, our contention is not that Christians should be designated as the sole group facing genocide, but rather, that given the overwhelming evidence and the international consensus on this issue, that the United States government should not exclude Christians from such a finding. Doing so would be contrary to fact. The evidence we are presenting to the State Department has three major components:

1. An executive summary
2. A legal brief detailing the case for genocide against Christians
3. Substantial addenda, including original source material, reports, from NGOs documenting the situation, evidence provided to the European Parliament during their consideration of this issue, lists of atrocities, and similar data

A genocide determination requires two specific aspects: intent on the part of those committing genocide and genocidal acts. Both are addressed at length in the attached brief.

Genocide is a crime defined by federal statute and international law. We are asking that Christians be included in finding of genocide and that a recommendation be made for investigation and, in proper cases, for indictment of those responsible. This is required when there is probable cause to believe an offense has been committed by the accused parties. Probable cause is a low standard. When there is probable cause, the duties of the President and the Secretary of State under 22 U.S.C. §8213 and the Genocide Convention Implementation Act of 1987, 18 U.S.C. §§1091-93 require the collection of information “regarding incidents that may constitute . . . genocide,” 22 U.S.C. §8213, and then the President “shall consider what actions can be taken to ensure that [those] who are responsible for . . . genocide . . . are brought to account for such crimes in an appropriately constituted tribunal.” 28 U.S.C. §8213(b).

As in any indictment, a finding of probable cause would allow the State Department to report to Congress that it believes genocide has occurred and to recommend that this be proven conclusively through a court process.

It should also be noted that a finding of genocide does not require the killing of an entire group. The words of the U.N. Convention on Genocide and the U.S. statute based on it are clear that what is required are acts aimed at destroying a group “in whole or in part.” Both the drafting history of the U.N. Convention and its application by courts around the world have rightly shown that destruction “in part” is sufficient to a finding of genocide.

Similarly, there is ample precedent for finding that forced deportation—often in concert with killing, rape and other forms of violence—qualifies as genocide.

As to the issue of intent, it should be noted that individual accounts, the collective evidence and ISIS’ own public statements make clear that it targets Christians and seeks to destroy Christianity in the lands they control and beyond.

ISIS’ magazine is called Dabiq, named after the place where ISIS believes it will win a battle against the army of Rome. It routinely refers to Dabiq as the location where it will destroy the “Crusader army,” an unmistakable Christian reference. The magazine last year published a picture of Pope Francis, captioning him as “the crusader pope.” Dabiq proclaims ISIS’ intention to destroy Christians:

We will conquer your Rome, break your crosses, and enslave your women, by the permission of Allah, the Exalted. This is His promise to us; He is glorified and He does not fail in His promise. If we do not reach that time, then our children and grandchildren will reach it, and they will sell your sons as slaves at the slave market.

Finally, this certainty is the one that should pulse in the heart of every mujihid from the Islamic State and every supporter outside until he fights the Roman crusaders near Dabiq.

It has also stated:

And nothing changes for the Islamic State, as it will continue to pronounce takfir [abandonment of Islam] upon the Jews, the Christians, the pagans, and the apostates from the Rāfidah, the Nusayriyyah, the Sahwah, and the tawāghit [disbelievers]. It will continue to wage war against the apostates until they repent from apostasy. It will continue to wage war against the pagans until they accept Islam. It will continue to wage war against the Jewish state until the Jews hide behind their gharqad trees. And it will continue to wage war against the Christians until the truce decreed sometime before the Malhamah. Thereafter, the slave markets will commence in Rome by Allah’s power and might.

Elsewhere, Dābiq states ISIS' desire to target Christians under any number of ruses. In addition, a video released just last month by ISIS in Libya states that its adherents should "'Fight and kill them from their Great Priest (Tawadros II) to the most pathetic one.'" A second speaker calls for Egyptians to "'terrorize the Jews and burn the slaves of the Cross.'"

ISIS statements related to the beheading of the Coptic Christians brand Christians as "polytheists" for their belief in the Trinity, making Christians the same as "pagans" in their view.

The plain meaning of these statements, especially in context, is clear: The so-called Caliphate has slated Christianity for destruction—now and in an apocalyptic battle to come.

Consistent with its threats have been ISIS' actions. Our fact-finding mission to Iraq earlier this month found stories of rape, kidnapping, forced conversions and murder, in addition to property confiscation and forced expulsion. Almost everything we discovered has not been previously reported.

What is publicly known and what our investigation uncovered is substantial, but it has become clear that this still represents only the tip of the iceberg. We are now being sent new stories and new evidence daily. So what is known about ISIS' genocidal atrocities will only increase, and the known scale of the horrors that have occurred can only expand with time.

The victims we met or learned of were many. Their stories were of traumatic experiences they and others had endured. There were also the stories of those who could no longer tell them—the killed and the missing. Some of those we learned about had been wounded physically or emotionally, or both.

The story of the mother whose child was taken from her arms by ISIS has been reported in the media. We found that her experience was not isolated. Similar reports of family members, adults and children alike, were common.

Those we interviewed showed great strength. And some showed great heroism as well, despite the dangers to themselves. There was Khalia, a woman in her fifties, who was captured and held hostage along with 47 others. During her 15 days in captivity, she rebuffed demands to convert, despite a gun being put to her head and a sword to her neck. She literally fought off ISIS militants as they tried to rape the girls, and again later when they tried to take a 9-year-old as a bride. Because of the abuse, 14 men gave in to ISIS' demands and said they would convert to Islam. Khalia would not. Ultimately, the hostages were left in the desert to walk to Erbil. Others in Kurdistan affirmed without prompting that "she had saved many people."

Like the Yazidis, Christian women face sexual slavery, a main tool the "Caliphate" uses to recruit young men and to exterminate religious groups. A now infamous ISIS slave menu lists the prices by age for "Christian or Yazidi" women on sale in their slave markets.

Murder of Christians is commonplace. Many have been killed in front of their own families. The Syriac Catholic Patriarch of Antioch, many of whose flock lived on the Nineveh plain or in Syria, reports that 500 people were killed by ISIS during its takeover of Mosul and the surrounding region. In Syria, where the organization Aid to the Church in Need has reported on mass graves of Christians, Patriarch Younan estimates the number of Christians "targeted and killed by Islamic terrorist bands" at more than 1,000.

Melkite Catholic Archbishop Jean-Clément Jeanbart of Aleppo estimates the number of

Christians kidnapped and/or killed in his city as in the hundreds, with as many as "thousands" killed throughout Syria.

In Nineveh, many more were taken hostage seemingly at random, or demanded as hostages in exchange for their families to leave. Many of these have not been heard from thereafter.

Shockingly, some see what is happening at the hands of ISIS as not genocidal to Christians. At the root of this argument seems to be the idea that Christians have not been targeted in the same way as others. This is not true. First, Christians have been attacked throughout the region, not simply in the Nineveh area or only during the summer of 2014. Christians have been attacked and killed by ISIS and its affiliates in Syria, Libya, Yemen and surrounding areas. Even before ISIS was constituted, Christians found themselves victims of its predecessors: the Islamic State in Iraq, Al Qaeda and other radical groups.

Some argue that Christians should be excluded from a genocide declaration because ISIS supposedly allows Christians to pay *jizya*—a tax historically made available in Islam to Christians in Muslim lands—while denying this option to groups like the Yazidis, who are considered "pagans" by Islam.

The premise is false, because what ISIS calls *jizya* is not comparable to the historical understanding of that term. Rather, *jizya*—like so many theological concepts that ISIS holds—can mean something contrary to historic Islamic practice, or it can mean nothing at all. As used by ISIS, it is almost always a term for extortion and a prelude or postscript to ISIS violence against Christians.

In Nineveh, demands for so-called *jizya* payments were a prelude to killings, kidnappings, rapes and the dispossession of the Christian population. Not surprisingly, the Christian negotiator Father Emmanuel Adelkello and the other Christians saw this as a "a ploy from which ISIS could keep the Christians there to further take advantage of them and abuse them."

In Raqqa, the offer was made after ISIS had already closed the churches, burned bibles and kidnapped the town's priests.

It is little wonder that Alberto Fernandez—Middle East scholar and, until recently, a coordinator of U.S. government ideological counterterrorism messaging—found ISIS *jizya* to be "more a Satan Caliphate publicity stunt than a careful recreation of *jizya* as practiced by the early Caliphs." He added that this shows that ISIS is not similar "to the sprawling pluralistic caliphates of history."

Furthermore, self-styled ISIS Caliph Abu Omar al-Baghdadi has admitted for nearly a decade that Christians no longer qualify for the historical protection offered by Islamic law. And under his leadership, during the Islamic State's attack on Our Lady of Salvation Church in Baghdad in 2010, "the gunmen made at least four claims [justifications] for the killings, two general and two specific: all of the Christians were infidels; it is permitted to kill them; the killing was in retaliation for the burning of a Koran by an American pastor, and was also in retaliation for the alleged imprisonment of two supposed Muslim women converts in Egypt."

The Knights of Columbus became involved in supporting Christians and other religious minorities in this region because of our longstanding humanitarian activity and support for religious freedom at home and around the world.

Beginning in 2014, our organization began raising money for refugee relief in the Middle East. These funds have helped Christian, as well as Yazidi and Muslim, individuals

and families. We have provided funding for general relief in Aleppo; education for refugees now living in Jordan; and food, clothing, shelter, education and medical care in Kurdistan. One of the clinics we fund in Dohuk has been visited by several Yazidi women who recently escaped ISIS sexual slavery, and it has referred them for psychological or specialist medical treatment. To date the K of C has raised more than \$8 million for this cause.

Long before our involvement on behalf of Christians in the Middle East, the Knights of Columbus stood with persecuted Christians around the world. In the 1920s, we raised awareness and lobbied the American government to help stop the persecution of Catholics in Mexico under the government of Plutarco Calles. In the 1930s the K of C successfully fought against Mussolini's attempted closure of our charitable work in Italy, and throughout the Cold War we stood in solidarity with, lobbied for and supported those who were not permitted to practice their faith in the Communist bloc.

Today, the threat is the global persecution of Christians, which the Pew Forum and The New York Times have described as occurring at an unparalleled level. What is happening in the Middle East is a microcosm of this, and perhaps its clearest example. It is for this reason that we have partnered with In Defense of Christians in producing this report and sponsoring the national television advertising campaign in support of the petition located at www.StopTheChristianGenocide.com.

It is our hope that our efforts in this regard will be helpful in highlighting and bettering the plight faced at the hands of IS by religious minorities—including Christians. And it is our belief that a declaration of genocide is a key component in that process.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, the law states that the President shall consider what actions can be taken to ensure that those who are responsible for genocide are brought to account for such crimes in an appropriate constituted tribunal.

Further, the President is required to develop a clear strategy to stop these organizations based on the most recent iteration of the National Defense Authorization Act that was passed in November.

As I mentioned earlier, since his retirement from Congress, my predecessor, Congressman Wolf, has worked tirelessly on these issues. I am so pleased, and I know he will be so pleased, to see so many of his former colleagues and all of us who were able to pass this unanimously this evening. I thank him for his strong voice and for all of the strong voices who were here tonight so that we can, once again, be standing throughout this country and throughout the world as that beacon of light which so many of my colleagues have talked about.

I thank the gentleman for having this Special Order today. I just close in asking for prayer for all of those who are suffering around the world and for all of those souls who have been tormented, tortured, and killed.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. I thank Congresswoman COMSTOCK for her powerful words and her faithful leadership. The gentlewoman had big shoes to fill after Frank Wolf's retirement, and I am sure

tonight, if he is watching, he would be very proud of her efforts in this regard and in so many others, leading the fight to try to stop the assaults on human dignity.

Mr. Speaker, when I was a much younger man, I entered the Sinai Desert in Egypt. The year was 1979. I was a college student. At the site of the fighting that had taken place between Israel and Egypt in the 1973 war, there was an all-too-familiar scene of a concrete pile of rubble. Scrawled on the side of the concrete pile, both in Arabic and in English, were the words: "Here was the war, and here is the peace."

Mr. Speaker, maybe, just maybe, on this, the remnants of this Christian church where this cross was planted by this Yazidi man who returned to his hometown of Sinjar just recently in January, one day will see those same words that here was the war, but now here is the peace.

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

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on S. 2426.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BRAT). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Nebraska?

There was no objection.

CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS—THE WORK CONTINUES: WHY VOTING MATTERS IN THE AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY) is recognized for 30 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members be given 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to add any extraneous materials relevant to the subject matter of this discussion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening for tonight's Congressional Black Caucus Special Order Hour: The Work Continues—Why Voting Matters in the African American Community.

I am so proud to join my classmate, Congressman HAKEEM JEFFRIES from the Eighth District of New York. He is a member of the House Judiciary Committee. He continues to be a tireless advocate for social justice, working to reform our criminal justice system and to eliminate the overcriminalization of the African American community.

Mr. Speaker, we are here to discuss the current state of voting rights in America, which, unfortunately, are under assault. The freedom to vote is one of America's most fundamentally, constitutionally guaranteed rights. It was 51 years ago this month, Mr. Speaker, that over 600 peaceful, orderly protesters set off to march from Selma, Alabama, to the State capitol in Montgomery to demonstrate the need for voting rights in the State.

Last week, our Congressional Black Caucus chair, Chairman BUTTERFIELD, stated at the first in a series of CBC hearings about the current state of voting rights in America and that the Voting Rights Act of 1965 is probably one of the most significant pieces of legislation that was ever passed in the United States Congress.

Certainly, Mr. Speaker, as we know, in 2013, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down this crucial provision of the Voting Rights Act in the *Shelby County v. Holder* decision. Our work continues because by invalidating section 4 of the Voting Rights Act, the Supreme Court opened the doors for ways to reduce the voting power of minority communities and it put in place new voting restrictions in an effort to make it harder for millions of Americans to vote.

Our democracy has far too many missing voices, particularly those who are already at a disadvantage due to deep-rooted racial and class barriers in our society. By exercising our right, we can do great things. We can hold this country accountable. We can advocate for legislation that supports social and economic progress, equality and fairness for all Americans. We can champion policies that create and sustain jobs and that protect against cuts to social and economic programs that are vital to our most at-risk populations. We can move forward on efforts to address the school-to-prison pipeline and criminal justice reform. We know that the inequalities in access to quality health care still exist between races and that more and more Black children are victims of failing schools.

Mr. Speaker, I am calling on all citizens, including on our community and national leaders, to join the Congressional Black Caucus to work to eliminate voter suppression and to restore what so many people fought for, marched, and died for—yes, the Voting Rights Act. It is up to all of us to protect the most at-risk among us and to expand opportunity for all people. That begins with passing a voting rights act. Our work still continues, Mr. Speaker.

This week, we are celebrating Women's History Month, and I must note the powerful impact that African American women are having at the polls. In the past two Presidential elections, Black women led all demographic groups in voter turnout. That is why voting matters to African American communities. Black women make up the most dynamic segment of the rising American voters. A great civil rights leader said that women are

among the greatest leaders of social reform, and they are fighting, literally fighting, for their political rights.

This past Saturday I had the opportunity to be with the mothers of the movement. We know who they are. They are the mothers of Trayvon Martin, Eric Garner, Dontre Hamilton, Jordan Davis, Sandra Bland, and Hadiya Pendleton; and we have all heard what happened to their children.

As a member of the Congressional Black Caucus, we are calling for action on gun control. We need to do more than just stand up on this floor for a moment of silence. We need to make sure that we are passing gun control legislation, commonsense legislation, that keeps the guns out of the hands of the most dangerous individuals. It is time for us to protect our children.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to give you some examples of what we should include in our call for action.

I go first to my good friend and colleague and classmate who brought it to my attention that we stand up for a moment, and then we sit down. Then we come back to this floor, and it is business as usual. We talk about wanting to keep our families safe, and we talk about the mental health issues. That is all we do, Mr. Speaker. We talk about it.

Congresswoman ROBIN KELLY of Illinois' Second District has legislation, H.R. 224, which would require the Surgeon General of Public Health Services to submit to Congress an annual report on the effects of gun violence on public health. This bill has 140 Democrat cosponsors. I am asking my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to step up and do more than just stand up for 30 seconds.

I am calling on Congress to act on Congressman JAMES CLYBURN of the Sixth District of South Carolina's legislation, H.R. 3051, the Background Check Completion Act, which would guarantee that no gun is sold by a licensed dealer until a background check is completed.

Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to say that I am a cosponsor of both of these bills.

I will go on and tell you about Chairman BUTTERFIELD, the chair of our Congressional Black Caucus. He understands that our work continues, because he has focused his efforts on promoting anti-poverty programs and on expanding economic development and job creation. There are a number of things that have happened in his State.

For example, the Moral Mondays are protests in North Carolina that are led by religious progressives. These protests are in response to several actions by the government of North Carolina, which was elected into office in 2013. These events, which spread throughout the South, helped bring attention to voting rights, criminal justice reform, and workers' rights. I think it is very important for us to note that.

Mr. Speaker, tonight my coanchor and I will talk about a number of

issues that explain why our work continues. We are going to talk about why in African American communities it is important for us to understand, if we don't diversify those who are going to vote, we don't represent the diversity of this great America that we are here to protect and to serve.

□ 2030

It is not just members of the Congressional Black Caucus who value and understand the importance of us coming together, the importance of us celebrating our rich history, all tied to the Voting Rights Act, all tied to the movements that we have had of the past.

Let me give you a great example because I am so proud that I am going to have the privilege to yield time to my good friend, Congressman JOHN LARSON from the First District of Connecticut.

He is here, Mr. Speaker, tonight to join with us as we talk about our rich history. He is going to share with us information about the 51st anniversary of President Johnson's "We Shall Overcome" speech, which was given on March 15, 1965.

I yield to the gentleman from Connecticut.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Ohio and the gentleman from New York for this opportunity to join with them this evening.

I am especially proud to associate myself with the gentlewoman's remarks and all that the Congressional Black Caucus has stood for as I would generally acknowledge that I think most of Americans stand for as well.

I thank them as well for pointing out a historic event that is happening and, in fact, will happen tomorrow evening at the Library of Congress.

Tomorrow is March 15. As the gentlewoman mentioned, it was 51 years ago that President Lyndon Baines Johnson gave his now famous "We Shall Overcome" speech.

It was President Johnson that recognized 8 days after Bloody Sunday what the Nation needed to do. He did this at great political risk, but he did it because of the sacrifice that so many had made.

Tomorrow evening at the Library of Congress we will celebrate two American heroes with the idea that it is far more important to come together as a Nation and understand that these issues that we face and struggle with aren't Democrat or Republican, but at their very core are American.

I want to commend the Bipartisan Policy Center for establishing what will be the first Congressional Patriot Award that will be presented tomorrow evening to JOHN LEWIS from Georgia and SAM JOHNSON from Texas.

This honor will be perpetuated forever. Not only will it be a medal in recognition of their patriotic service to the country, but of their service here in the United States Congress.

One person was nearly beaten to death by the Alabama police, the other

nearly beaten to death by the Vietcong and imprisoned for 8 years, 42 months, in solitary confinement. It was a momentous time in our history in 1965.

Both of these gentlemen serve in the United States Congress. Both of them had to overcome in their lives incredible obstacles. Both of them, after their experience in 1965 and beyond, came back to serve their country, to continue to organize, to continue, in the case of SAM JOHNSON, to be a flight commander.

JOHN LEWIS, as we all know, is the conscience of the House of Representatives. SAM JOHNSON is the most admired Republican on the floor. They are both iconic and American heroes, and tomorrow evening at the Library of Congress they will be recognized.

The Bipartisan Policy Center has been helped by the Library of Congress, the fortress of knowledge, an institution started by the United States Congress, and houses our great history.

Tomorrow on display will be the documents of the civil rights movement and the direct participation of JOHN LEWIS and the documents about the Vietnam war and the captivity and imprisonment of SAM JOHNSON.

Speaking tomorrow evening on behalf of SAM JOHNSON will be JOHN MCCAIN. Who better to speak about being imprisoned in the Hanoi Hilton? Who better to speak about the sacrifice that SAM JOHNSON made, that his family made, for people who put their country first?

We will be honored tomorrow to have a former Member of this body, an ambassador of the United States, and the mayor of Atlanta in Andrew Young being here tomorrow evening.

Who better to talk about all the issues that the gentlewoman from Ohio and the gentleman from New York are bringing to the forefront today than the person who was there by Martin Luther King's side, a colleague of JOHN LEWIS? JOHN LEWIS holds the seat that Andrew Young occupied in this body.

Andrew Young continues to be an advocate for voting rights and is in the forefront of that continued and epic battle that goes on in this country. It will be an outstanding evening.

But the point of it all is to understand that, as Members here in the United States Congress, in the House of Representatives, we must come together and, as President Johnson said 51 years ago tomorrow evening, to overcome, to overcome not only racial prejudices, but to overcome disease, poverty, and ignorance, which is the real plague on this Nation that keeps us confined.

How fitting that this event takes place tomorrow evening and because of the benevolence of an outstanding person like David Rubenstein. Who better to interview JOHN LEWIS and SAM JOHNSON about their experience than David Rubenstein?

I thank my colleagues from the bottom of my heart for allowing me the opportunity here to echo the senti-

ments of their purpose here this evening and to acknowledge this event taking place tomorrow evening at the Library of Congress of distinguished Americans, their history forever perpetuated.

And as Webster says above us in the great quote here:

Let us all, in our time here, in our service to the country, do something worthy of being remembered.

Let us take to heart the example of JOHN LEWIS and SAM JOHNSON and note especially tomorrow that we shall overcome.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman JOHN LARSON.

As I was listening to him reflect on the wonderful program that we are all going to be able to participate in at the Library of Congress—as I listened to his words, 51 years ago the President of these United States could recognize what the Nation needed.

It disappoints me, as I stand here on this House floor and I think about voting rights and I think about the condition of this Nation today and where we are when we talk about casting our votes and who we are going to cast our votes for. I say thank you for Congressman JOHN LEWIS and Congressman SAM JOHNSON.

As I was listening to the gentleman, I thought about so many of the things that Congressman JOHN LEWIS has said to us not only on this floor, not only in private moments, but in our Congressional Black Caucus meetings.

He represents that sense of history of why we come to continue our work, why we come to continue to stand up for the voting rights.

Because he has said to us on numerous occasions, Mr. Speaker, that the vote is the most powerful and most nonviolent tool that we have in a democratic society. We must not allow the power of the vote to be neutralized. We must never go back.

So I thank Congressman LARSON for taking us forward, for taking us on March 15 on a journey that we will remember for a lifetime, because, you see, we stand on the shoulders of those individuals who came before us.

Now our voters stand on our shoulders. Our voters, Mr. Speaker, are wanting us, are thirsty for us, to stand up for them so that their vote counts.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my coanchor to share some thoughts with us on why our work continues, why it is so important in the African American community for us to stand up for not only African Americans, but for our citizens who are discriminated against, those who, when we talk about social and economic programs, we see the disparities in what happens to them in education, in health care, in housing, the juvenile justice system, the criminal justice system.

I could not think of any better coanchor or colleague, someone who is such a great orator, someone who, when he stands up, we listen.

Please, Congressman HAKEEM JEFFRIES, share with us some of your thoughts.

I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentlewoman, Representative BEATTY, from the great State of Ohio for her leadership and for moving us forward throughout the past several weeks as it relates to the Congressional Black Caucus' Special Order, this hour of power.

It is 60 minutes where we have the opportunity to speak to the American people about issues of importance to our country, to our economy, to the integrity of our democracy as we are doing tonight. It is an honor to share with you today.

□ 2045

I also want to acknowledge and thank our colleague, JOHN LARSON from the great State of Connecticut, for his continuing leadership and for taking to the House floor today to highlight both the historic significance of the speech that President Johnson gave from this very Chamber 51 years ago, on March 15, 1965, about voting in America and ensuring that every single person, regardless of their race or their color or their background had an opportunity to exercise their franchise, and to point out to the American people that the Congress will pause tomorrow to honor two true American legends, Representative LEWIS and Representative JOHNSON, who served the American people before they arrived in the people's House and through their service here in the House of Representatives.

It is with great humility that I stand today to address a topic that I think is of particular significance at this moment in time that we face in America in terms of the turmoil that many may be feeling, watching, undergoing: the economic changes that have been experienced over the last few decades.

We know that the middle class, in many ways, has been left behind. Wages have remained stagnant, notwithstanding the increased productivity of the American people over the last 40-plus years. When the economy collapsed, many high-income earners were able to rebound in no small part as a result of the bailout that occurred. There are a lot of Americans who are still hoping, looking out for their opportunity to be brought back into the economic mainstream by the people they have sent to Congress to represent them.

Notwithstanding all of the challenges that we have to confront, whether that is our broken criminal justice system or the economy that has still not completely recovered, we have made substantial progress under the leadership of Barack Obama. But of course there is more that needs to be done, and we could welcome some cooperation from folks on the other side of the aisle because all of our constituents were hit hard in 2008, yet President Obama has largely been left to his own devices.

Notwithstanding all of these issues, central to how our government works

is the fact that it is designed to be a government of the people, by the people, and for the people. Abraham Lincoln, of course, famously uttered those words in his Gettysburg Address.

If we are going to have that type of government, then everybody needs the opportunity to be able to participate in choosing their representatives in government without obstacle or obstruction.

We understand this is a great country, but it is also a country that has had a stain on its history as it relates to denying some the opportunity to participate fully in American democracy. That is the reason, after all, that, in the aftermath of the Civil War that threatened to tear this country apart, we had a Reconstruction amendment related to slavery and then a Reconstruction amendment related to the equal protection under the law and due process for all Americans; and lastly, of course, with the 15th Amendment designed to make sure that, in the Constitution, racial discrimination, as it relates to the exercise of the franchise, would be prohibited.

But, unfortunately, notwithstanding the 15th Amendment being ratified and put into our Constitution, more than 100 years would pass by until this country really confronted the denial of the right to vote in a meaningful way, particularly in the Deep South, and it happened because of the efforts and sacrifice of a great many people: Dr. Martin Luther King, JOHN LEWIS, Andrew Young, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee, the NAACP, and those foot soldiers who were on the Edmund Pettus Bridge on March 7, 1965, and almost lost their lives when they were attacked without provocation by Alabama State troopers as they endeavored to cross that bridge on the way from Selma to Montgomery. That, of course, then prompted President Johnson to deliver that address, where he so famously uttered the words upon his conclusion that "we shall overcome."

The 1965 Voting Rights Act continues to be the most significant piece of civil rights legislation ever passed by this Congress, but unfortunately we know that it is currently under attack. It is under attack because the Supreme Court effectively, in the *Shelby v. Holder* case, eviscerated its impact by striking down section 4, so-called coverage clause, which effectively eliminated the Department of Justice's ability to require States with a history of voting rights discrimination to have to preclear any changes that it makes.

Now, what I have been struggling to figure out during my brief time here in the Congress is why voting rights has become such a controversial thing when, it seems to me, it is so central to the integrity of our democracy. For decades, in the aftermath of the passage of the Voting Rights Act, it was actually pretty bipartisan, this notion that in order for our democracy to

work there should be no artificial obstacles erected to prevent people—African Americans, Latinos, immigrant families, and others—from being able to participate in what basically makes America great, what makes us unique: the ability to elect our representatives and for there to be peaceful transitions of power regardless of ideology, regardless of your region, regardless of what State a President may come from in order to keep the Republic going.

When you look at the history of the Voting Rights Act, as I indicated, it has largely been, until recently, a bipartisan endeavor. In fact, every time the Voting Rights Act was reauthorized—and it has happened four times—not only did it pass with bipartisan majorities in the Congress, but it was signed into law each and every time by a Republican President.

In 1970, Richard Nixon signed into law the reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act. In 1975, Gerald Ford signed into law the reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act. In 1982, President Ronald Reagan signed into law the reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act. Then in 2006, President George W. Bush signed into law the reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act. This significant piece of civil rights legislation was enacted into law and then reenacted on every single occasion with the signature of a Republican President, indicating that voting, participation in the franchise, having the American people in their full, gorgeous mosaic elect their representatives is an American thing. But all of a sudden, it has become controversial.

Now, I don't know if the timing of the election of our current President has anything to do with that. Historians will make that analysis as they move forward. It is above my pay grade. I just find it interesting that this notion of voter fraud, which was always a fiction put forth by the defenders of the race-based Southern hierarchy to deny African Americans the right to vote—and was not an issue when Richard Nixon was elected; it wasn't an issue when Reagan was elected; it wasn't an issue when George Herbert Walker Bush was elected; it wasn't an issue when George W. Bush was elected, notwithstanding the fact that I am still not convinced he won the State of Florida—all of a sudden, in the aftermath of the election of President Barack Obama, apparently there has been an outbreak of this fever that we have got to deal with so-called voter fraud.

No evidence of the fraud, not a scintilla of evidence has been produced by a single proponent of this argument, but when people were elected in 2010, in the immediate aftermath of that election during President Barack Obama's first term, more than 180 different pieces of legislation in 41 States were introduced, all, in the opinion of many objective observers, designed to suppress the right to vote. And at the same time, this challenge was working

its way through the Supreme Court from, of all groups of people, Shelby, Alabama.

Now, the irony of that, JOHN LEWIS almost lost his life, as Representative LARSON indicated, on the Edmund Pettus Bridge down in Selma, Alabama; and yet the Supreme Court, in a 5-4 decision, in a case brought by the folks from Shelby County, apparently thinking that they were victims because of the oppressive nature of the preclearance provision, the Supreme Court, at least for the time being, bought that argument.

So we find ourselves now in a situation here in the Congress where the Court has said to us: Fix it; update the coverage formula. So bipartisan legislation has been introduced, championed by folks like JIM SENSENBRENNER, the author of the 2006 reauthorization and a very distinguished and respected former Republican chairman of the House Committee on the Judiciary, and, of course, JOHN CONYERS, JOHN LEWIS, JOYCE BEATTY, and many others on the Democratic side of the aisle. Yet we can't get a single hearing before the Committee on the Judiciary on something seemingly so fundamental to the integrity of our democracy.

We are not asking you to turn into progressive Democrats. Just act like Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, Ronald Reagan, whom you hold up as someone who is the classic embodiment of conservative politics. Just act like Ronald Reagan did in 1982 or George W. Bush.

Let's fix the Voting Rights Act in advance of the American people having to determine what comes next as it relates to both this Congress and the Presidency—not because it is a good thing for Republicans or because it is a good thing for Democrats; it is a good thing for the country: full and robust participation.

I just want to add, as I close, that it seems to me that this would be a particularly significant time to deal with the Voting Rights Act and to make sure that everybody can participate fully in our democracy at a moment when many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle and the Senate have said: We want the American people to decide who fills the Supreme Court vacancy.

□ 2100

Now, I am a little skeptical about that, but let's assume that that is really your view of the world. If, in fact, you don't want to do your constitutional job right now—once the President sends up a Supreme Court nominee and gives that person an opportunity to be heard before the Senate and the American people—because you claim you want the American people to decide who that nominee is through the vehicle of a Presidential election—then let's make sure that all of America can participate in that process. That means let's remove any obstacles to voting in every community.

We haven't seen a hearing in the House, and we haven't seen a hearing in the Senate. I just don't understand. We have had no hearing on the Supreme Court nomination. We have had no hearing on the Voting Rights Act when the Supreme Court told us to fix it. What exactly is going on? The American people are wondering.

We see a lot of frustration right now out there in America directed at Washington. That is because oftentimes there are so many critical issues that we simply fail to deal with.

So I am just hopeful today that, as we mark this occasion tomorrow of these two American heroes being honored—Representative JOHNSON and Representative LEWIS—we can get back to doing the business of the American people in the spirit of service that they themselves have displayed through their life's work and deal with something so central to our democracy such as the right to vote in an unfettered fashion.

Mrs. BEATTY. Congressman JEFFRIES, you have given us a lot to reflect on tonight. You have given us the roll call of how President after President has reauthorized the Voting Rights Act.

As I was listening to you, it appears that there is an uncommon denominator that we now have in this great America: a Black man as President of these United States.

I want to stand here and say, Mr. Speaker, that I am very suspect when I listen to how eloquently my colleague walked us through the history and shared with us how 51 years ago our colleague, JOHN LEWIS, was putting his life at risk with other great leaders as a very young Black man, that it was because he understood what was at stake.

He was probably ahead of his time. But when you think about that, everyone in this Chamber should want to have that experience.

I can remember a year ago, almost to the date, that I took that journey to Selma, Alabama. I took that journey with Congressman JOHN LEWIS and some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, who stood there and locked and latched hands and talked about how we should overcome.

For a moment, Congressman JEFFRIES, it gave me that hope that I came here for, that hope that one person can make a difference and change the lives of others.

It wasn't 48 hours later that we came back to this institution, to this House floor, and all of that was washed away. It was back to business as usual.

There were no hearings, whether it is a budget hearing for funds to fund things from our infrastructure, things to educate and take care of our infants and children, mental health that we have all come to an agreement on with all the things that have happened during the time you and I have been here, Congressman JEFFRIES, with the number of lives that have been lost.

I think about the Emanuel Nine. We talked about that commonality of putting more money into mental health. Yet, the President puts dollars in the budget and we can't get a hearing.

So why does our work continue? Our work continues because it is so important for us, as African Americans, to make sure we protect those who are most at risk.

Mr. Speaker, we have a huge job to do. We are 46 members strong. While we focus on the lives of African Americans and the African American community, we stand here and fight for all children of all races, all ethnicities, because that is what we do because we care.

But as I stand here today and reflect on Congressman JEFFRIES' outline of history, outline of the number of lives that have been lost, outline of the legal process and what we have gone through, it made me recall, Mr. Speaker, that a week ago I decided to write an editorial to my local newspaper, and it was published. Mr. Speaker, that editorial was titled: "Work to improve voting rights."

[From The Columbus Dispatch, Feb. 29, 2016]

WORK TO IMPROVE VOTING RIGHTS

(By Rep. Joyce Beatty)

As Black History Month closes, I am reminded of Martin Luther King Jr., who famously said, "We are now faced with the fact that tomorrow is today. We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now."

We have come a long way since the era of Jim Crow. Indeed, our nation has laws on the books protecting people from discrimination based on sex, age, race, religion, national origin and ethnicity. Moreover, each February, we collectively reflect on the important contributions and accomplishments African-Americans etched into the cornerstone of America.

Yet, the more things change, the more they stay the same. What do I mean?

Every year, without fail, we celebrate Black History Month and honor the many leaders, heroes and "sheroes" of the black community. However, we rarely discuss the systemic and pervasive barriers still preventing African-Americans from achieving the American Dream.

Our nation is still plagued by the vestiges of segregation and unequal laws and policies. Today, it is more difficult to exercise one's constitutional right to vote, not easier. Inequalities in access to quality health care still exist between races, and more and more black children are victim to failing schools.

As opposed to getting bogged down in the numbers and reciting a long list of statistics and historical grievances, I am calling on all people, including our community and national leaders, to join me in working to eliminate voter suppression I and to restore what so many people fought, marched and died for: the Voting Rights Act.

It is up to all of us to protect the most at-risk among us, to defend the foundation of our democracy and to expand opportunity for all people. It begins with the Voting Rights Act.

In Congress, I am working tirelessly to rebuild the very foundation of the Voting Rights Act undone by the Supreme Court's Shelby County v. Holder decision. As an original cosponsor of the Voting Rights Empowerment Act of 2015 (H.R. 12), I believe we must ensure every American has equal say and the opportunity to vote. This legislation

would do just that by expanding access and putting in place common sense protections for our nation's electorate, no matter the color of one's skin.

It takes a village. So, let's work together in our neighborhood, at work or with family and friends to make this change possible and to help guarantee every American has fair and equal access to the ballot box.

Black History Month should be about the progress that has been made and the journey that awaits us. Remember, the past is our experience, the present is our accountability and the future is our responsibility.

Mrs. BEATTY. It is 2016. I am writing an article that sounds like I was sitting in 1955. That gives me great concern.

So when I think about our topic tonight, our work continues. What matters in the African American community I think we have answered tonight.

Whether it was from Congressman JOHN LARSON, who is not a member of the Congressional Black Caucus, whether it is from Congressman SAM JOHNSON or Congressman JOHN LEWIS, Mr. Speaker, I say to you that we stand here as members of the Congressional Black Caucus because we are the conscience of the Congress.

Mr. Chairman, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman has 13 minutes remaining.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. JEFFRIES, as I listen to you talk about the rich history and what we are dealing with today, I think about you serving on the Judiciary Committee.

I think about how, as Members of Congress and members of the Congressional Black Caucus, we often talk about our broken prison system.

We often talk about what happens to young children who go to college and then find themselves in that pipeline of education to prison.

I would like to ask you how you think the decrease in Black voters will affect that broken system.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Well, it is a great question. I look at it in two ways. First, when you think about mass incarceration as a phenomenon, one that, hopefully, in this Congress we will be able to do something about, in recognition of the fact that America imprisons more people than any other country in the world, increasingly, we have become a country that over-incarcerates and under-educates. As a result, we have lost generations of young people, disproportionately, African Americans and Latinos.

In 1971, President Richard Nixon declared publicly that drug abuse was public enemy number one. At the time, there were less than 350,000 people incarcerated in America. That was the starting point of the war on drugs.

More than 40 years later we have now got 2.3 million people incarcerated in America. A significant number of those folks—approximately 50 percent at the Federal level and similar numbers at the State level—are there for non-violent drug offenses.

Yet, every single one of those people who have been incarcerated in America

has lost the right to vote, some permanently, some temporarily with an opportunity to perhaps recover it. More than a million people are currently incarcerated from the African American community. So our system is broken. Our democracy is in need of adjustment.

If there is not an understanding that the absence of refraining from participating in that democracy through exercising the franchise yields consequences that public policymakers will choose either intentionally or through benign neglect to allow things like mass incarceration to overwhelm a community, then we are going to continue to see things happen that are not in the best interest of America. Certainly, electoral participation matters to the African American community.

The other thing that we have got to look at in the context of the right to vote—and there is some bipartisan support because Senator RAND PAUL on the other side of the Capitol has been very visionary in this regard—is that disenfranchising people who have been incarcerated in America, paid their debt to society, have moved on with their life—but to permanently restrict them, even in some cases when the conviction is for a misdemeanor offense, is un-American.

But some have used this type of disenfranchisement related to the prison industrial complex to overwhelm many communities because of mass incarceration to, again, set up obstacles to full participation in American democracy.

So we have got to put everything on the table in terms of our effort to fix our broken criminal justice system, which I am pleased, to date, at least in the House on the Judiciary Committee, has been bipartisan in nature.

But we have to take an expansive approach to repairing the damage that has been done over more than 40 years of a failed war on drugs, with millions upon millions upon millions of people stamped with a criminal record, I believe in excess of 65 million people during that time period, disproportionately African Americans and Latinos.

It is one of many issues that is on the table that, hopefully, will result in folks understanding that the stakes are high as it relates to who represents you. And the vehicle is just to participate.

That is the great majesty of our democracy as it was conceived by the Founders and those who came after: Government of the people, by the people, and for the people, through electoral participation.

□ 2115

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. JEFFRIES, I paused for a moment as I was listening to you, and you are so absolutely right; the vehicle, the power of casting that vote, the power of making a difference.

Mr. Speaker, I think one of the things that is so significant about the Congressional Black Caucus, that is

our history. It is our fortitude to have the courage to always continue to fight and never give up, because we actually have members of the Congressional Black Caucus who were there during that time.

When you think about Members like Congressman JOHN LEWIS, when you think about Members like JOHN CONYERS, JOHN CONYERS, a Black man, will go down in history as the longest-serving man in this Congress. Just think about it. A man that shared an office for almost 2 decades with Rosa Parks, the modern civil rights leader who decided that she was going to sit down that day because she realized one person could make a difference.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have gone through our whole history of the Voting Rights Act, we have gone through the sections of the Constitution, we have gone through what the Supreme Court has done, and yet we can't get the reauthorization of our Voting Rights Act.

Mr. Speaker, I say this to you tonight. The Congressional Black Caucus will not give up. We are holding field hearings, as I speak, so we can collect the information to come back here and tell you that the vehicle for American people, that vehicle is the ballot box.

Mr. Speaker, as I stand here today, we have resolved. Members of the Congressional Black Caucus don't come just to complain and put issues out there. We are scholars. We like hearing that we are the conscience of the Congress, but we are the scholars. We are Howard, and Morehouse, and Spelman, and Harvard, and Princeton, and Yale. We are the whole spectrum of this America that you and I serve.

So I ask you today, Mr. Speaker, to consider that when we stand up the next time on this House floor, why Members are sitting down. We are sitting down because I think you and Congressman JEFFRIES and all the rest of my colleagues in this Chamber, we have an obligation to do more.

Innocent lives are being taken, and there is something we can do about it. We could start with something that has been bipartisan. Congressman JEFFRIES mentioned it a number of times, and that is something as simple as passing a Voting Rights Act. That would make a difference.

I guess my question is: What are we afraid of?

Are we afraid if we increase the number of those who have been disenfranchised, those who have been discriminated against, that they will actually vote, they will actually have a voice to make a difference in the way they live in this wonderful America?

I am asking you to go to your Republican colleagues and ask them to stand with us that we can leave a great legacy in history, because history will be written. When the first Black President leaves these United States, we will read of all the wonderful things that President Barack Obama did.

But we will also have those who will write part of that history of us failing

to do our job. And I will reflect back on this day when Congressman JEFFRIES and I stood at this Congressional Black Caucus Special Order Hour and we said, the work continues, and why it matters in African American communities that we vote.

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

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, nearly 51 years ago the Voting Rights Act (VRA) was signed into law to prohibit racial discrimination in voting. It was a defining moment in our nation's history that would send a clear message that all voters should have free and fair access to the polls in the United States. The Voting Rights Act became a powerful tool of our democracy that protected voter participation of individuals from all backgrounds. It has given a voice to previously disenfranchised voters, particularly that of minorities who would otherwise be left out of the political process.

Since the passage of the VRA, various groups and individuals have endeavored to reverse those protections. In 2013 the U.S., Supreme Court ultimately struck down a key enforcement component of the VRA as unconstitutional. This decision has enabled a number of states across the country to move forward with discriminatory voter laws, the effects of which have not yet been realized.

Texas is one of 21 states that have implemented new restrictions on voting since the 2010 midterm election. Texas first passed two harsh voter mandates in 2012, which were ultimately blocked under Section 5 of the VRA. Texas re-implemented these laws requiring valid photo identification at the polls following the Supreme Court ruling—the first time a photo ID was required to vote in a federal election in 2014. The consequences in Texas alone have been dire and disproportionately impact minority voters. The U.S. Department of Justice originally estimated that the Texas law could prevent as many as 600,000 voters from casting their votes at the polls.

The African American community has faced many barriers to voting throughout our history. During the height of the Civil Rights Movement, thousands of protesters marched across the Edmund Pettus Bridge from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama in order to protest the racial injustices in voting. The will of the people ultimately prevailed, resulting in the signing of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 just five short months after the final march. It was an important struggle that still serves as a lesson for us today.

Voter disenfranchisement poses an incredible threat to the electoral process. The nationwide efforts to create barriers to voting have highlighted the importance of the protections afforded under the VRA. Voting is the principle means through which Americans can have a voice in the political process. It allows us to elect candidates who share a common vision for bettering our nation and advancing our social and economic progress. These efforts to disenfranchise voters stand contrary to our democratic principles as a nation and it is imperative that we fight to reinstate voter protections for all, which have only served to strengthen our democracy and engage voters in the political process.

DECLARATION OF GENOCIDE COMMITTED BY ISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, it is always an honor to be able to speak on this hallowed floor.

A report was made earlier today entitled, "House Poised to Declare ISIS Committing Genocide Against Christians, Other Minorities." And, in fact, this report says: "The House is poised Monday to approve a resolution that declares the Islamic State is committing genocide against Christians and other religious minorities in the Middle East—putting even more pressure on the Obama administration to do the same ahead of a deadline later this week.

"The resolution passed the House Foreign Affairs Committee with unanimous support and is expected to pass the House with bipartisan backing.

"The resolution comes to a vote Monday evening, just days after the release of a graphic new report by the Knights of Columbus and In Defense of Christians on ISIS atrocities. The report made the case that the terror campaign against Christians and other minorities in Syria, Iraq, and other parts of the Middle East is, in fact, genocide.

"When ISIS systematically targets Christians, Yazidis, and other ethnic and religious minorities for extermination, this is not only a grave injustice—it is a threat to civilization itself," Representative Jeff Fortenberry, Republican, Nebraska, said in a statement. "We must call the violence by its proper name: genocide."

"The resolution will be voted on ahead of the congressionally mandated March 17 deadline for the Secretary of State John Kerry and the White House to make a decision on whether to make such a declaration. The measure is an effort to force the administration's hand on the issue, as the administration has so far declined to take an official position.

"Christians, Yazidis, and other beleaguered minority groups can find new hope in this transpartisan, ecumenical alliance against ISIS' barbaric onslaught," Fortenberry, who is co-chairman of the Religious Minorities of the Middle East Caucus and represents America's largest Yazidi community, said in the statement."

So the measure received the backing of the House Republican leadership, PAUL RYAN, calling on the Obama administration to take action like recent attacks against Christians.

The article goes on, from foxnews.com, indicating: "It is rare for Congress to make a genocide determination.

"In addition to the genocide resolution, the House is expected to vote on a measure to create an international tribunal to try ISIS members accused of atrocities."

Mr. Speaker, it is pleasing to report that H. Con. Res. 75, expressing the sense of Congress that the atrocities perpetrated by ISIL—that is, the Islamic State; and it has used different names, ISIS, ISIL—against religious and ethnic minorities in Iraq and Syria include war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, that passed by 393 yeas and zero nays.

It is deeply troubling that although this House, in a bipartisan way, could vote 393 for this resolution and zero against, that Secretary of State John Kerry and President Barack Obama are having trouble deciding what they should do.

Gee, is it possible they might just notice that in the House of Representatives we came together unanimously and said what ISIS has been doing is genocide?

For heaven's sake, for the sake of the Christians, the Yazidis, the Jews in the area, is it too much to ask that this United States administration take notice that there is a genocide going on?

And though the administration is not doing much of anything about it, is it too much to ask that this administration at least call it what it is; that this House, on both sides of the aisle, unanimously said the same thing?

Is it too much to ask, even if you are not going to fight the genocide, at least call it what it is, then that will embolden others with courage to stand up and fight more fearlessly? Is that too much to ask?

I hope and pray not, Mr. Speaker.

In the meantime, what we find here at home, while we are still having the administration struggle over whether to call genocide genocide, we have a report from ICE, the Immigration and Customs Enforcement, ICE, it is revealed that 124 illegal immigrant criminals released from jail by the Obama administration since 2010 have been subsequently charged with murder.

The Center for Immigration Studies report on the data from ICE to the Senate Judiciary Committee added that the committee is not releasing the names of these masses of murder suspects.

"The criminal aliens released by ICE in these years—who had already been convicted of thousands of crimes—are responsible for a significant crime spree in American communities, including 124 new homicides after the thousands of crimes they have already committed before ICE released them. Inexplicably, ICE is choosing to release some criminal aliens multiple times," said the report written by CIS' respected Director of Policy Studies, Jessica M. Vaughan.

"She added that 75 percent were released due to court orders or because their countries wouldn't take them back.

"What's more, her report said that in 2014, ICE released 30,558 criminal aliens—that is illegal immigrants in the United States who committed

criminal atrocities—“who had been convicted already when they were released of 92,347 crimes.”

Wow. As the world suffers, as this administration cannot determine whether or not to call the genocide of Christians and other minority groups genocide; at the same time, it has been hard at work, out of those thousands, tens of thousands of aliens who have committed over 92,000 criminal acts against Americans here in this country, the administration has been hard at work and deported 3 percent of the tens of thousands of aliens illegally here who have committed over 92,000 crimes, and this administration has deported 3 percent.

□ 2130

So much for protecting Americans against all enemies foreign and domestic.

This article from Paul Bedard says: “Her analysis is the latest shocking review of Obama’s open-border immigration policy. And despite the high number of illegal immigrants charged with murder, the list doesn’t include those released by over 300 so-called ‘sanctuary cities’ and those ICE declined to even take into custody.

“She said that 124 criminal aliens released by ICE between 2010 and 2015 were charged with murder during that period and ‘associated with 250 different communities in the United States, with the most clustered in California, New York, and Texas.’”

I would assert parenthetically, Mr. Speaker, for those that are not California, New York, and Texas, you cannot think for a minute that this is not already in your State. If you haven’t heard about, it is coming.

This says: “In a memo about the subsequent crimes of released illegals to Judiciary Committee Chairman Senator CHUCK GRASSLEY, ICE said, ‘The aliens were charged with a total of 135 homicide-related crimes subsequent’”—for my liberal friends, that means after—“to release from ICE custody. As of July 25, 2015, a total of 39 convictions have resulted from these homicide-related charges. Of the 121 total aliens, 2 had homicide-related convictions prior to release from ICE custody.”

ICE released them knowing that they already had homicide-related convictions, and they were released to kill again upon the American public. Though they violated our laws to get here and they violate our laws to stay here, this administration has seen to their release upon the American public further.

“Vaughan added that ‘ICE reported that there are 156 criminal aliens who were released at least twice by ICE since 2013. Between them, these criminals had 1,776 convictions’”—that kind of sounds patriotic. Since 2013, ICE has released 1,776 criminals with 1,776 convictions before they are released in 2013, including burglary, larceny, you know, those things that hurt America.

This article from cis.org also says: “Only a tiny percentage of the released criminals have been removed—most receive the most generous forms of due process available and are allowed to remain at large, without supervision, while they await drawn-out immigration hearings. They are permitted to take advantage of this inefficient processing even though they are more likely to re-offend than they are to be granted legal status.”

Further down it says: “Some aliens had multiple ZIP Codes associated with them in ICE’s system, so the records include more ZIP Codes than the 121 individual criminal aliens charged”—with murder—“through 2014. Three more were charged in 2015; ICE did not provide their ZIP Codes. ICE reported there are 156 criminal aliens who were released at least twice by ICE since 2013.”

That, of course, was in the other article.

It goes on to say: “ICE has previously disclosed that 75 percent of the homicidal criminal aliens were released due to court orders.”

Most of those would be immigration judges who sit at the discretion of the Attorney General of the United States. So perhaps people can let our Attorney General know that they would like our Attorney General to pick some immigration judges who might actually enforce our law instead of forgo the law so criminal aliens can commit more crimes against Americans.

I know, I understand there is so much going on, it is difficult to deal with all these issues at the same time, and that is why the administration is struggling so whether or not to officially say that the genocide going on in the Middle East of Christians and other minorities is actually genocide. It is just taking so much brain power. Even though in here it was 393-0, the administration right down on Pennsylvania Avenue here just can’t decide if it really might be genocide or not.

“In a separate communication, ICE provided a list of the countries that currently are uncooperative in accepting their deported citizens: Afghanistan, Algeria, Burundi, Cape Verde, China, Cuba, Eritrea, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, India, Iran, Iraq, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, and Zimbabwe.”

Gee, Cuba?

It is a real shame that as this administration negotiated all the things that it was going to give to and do for Cuba that they didn’t apparently bring this issue up: Oh, by the way, the criminal aliens that you have had come into our country are coming back to your country because they are your citizens illegally in our country. They are coming back to you, like it or not.

Apparently, I guess maybe with all the concentration on whether genocide is genocide, they weren’t able to remember to bring that up to Cuba or to China.

In Afghanistan, one of my Muslim friends who is a great leader there in Afghanistan pointed out a few years ago when he was talking about the leverage that the United States has and should use to get Afghanistan to do the right thing by its people and by the United States, I said: Well, why do you think—this was in a visit in Afghanistan. I said: Why do you think we have much leverage? This is a few years ago. He said: Do you know what our annual budget is for the government in Afghanistan? No. I didn’t know. He said: Around 12 billion American dollars. Do you know how much of that the United States provides? He said: We provide about 1½ billion of our 12. You provide most of the rest of it. He said: Yes, you have got plenty of leverage.

But, apparently, this administration, maybe again they are so flustered in trying to decide if ISIS, who has expressly indicated they want to wipe out all Christians and they want to wipe Israel off the map, they are trying to decide if that means that is really a genocide, so they haven’t had time to notice that we have massive leverage over the Afghan Government to get them to do the right thing and take back their criminal aliens that are in this country illegally and send them back and take them; otherwise, the 10, 12 of your budget that we provide may not get provided anymore.

But again, I know this administration doesn’t want to offend people that are killing American citizens. I get that. It is special being that sensitive. Algeria, China, India, Iran, Mr. Speaker, I just can’t help but wonder if, before the President authorized \$100 billion to \$150 billion going to Iran, if maybe it occurred in someone’s mind: Do you know what? I am going to save some American lives by forcing Iran to take back the criminal aliens from Iran that are not lawfully here in the United States.

I wonder if anybody in this administration maybe thought about that. Did they think about it and send the President the message and it just didn’t get to the President? Or it didn’t get to John Kerry, and they didn’t think about it on their own: Gee, do you know what? We know Iran has already said they are going to spend some of that \$100 billion, \$150 billion on weapons systems on more terror groups like Hamas and Hezbollah. Yeah, they have said that we are going to spend more money on all these things. We knew that. Did it occur that that is bad enough that you are giving money that is going to be used to kill Americans, Christians, Jews, Yazidis, it is going to be used to terrorize the world? Maybe you could have helped American citizens out by saying: And, by the way, before we release it, you are going—and never mind that they violated the agreement over and over—but you, Iran, are going to need to accept back the criminal aliens from your country that are killing and terrorizing Americans in our country illegally.

Did nobody think of that? It is incredible, just incredible. Americans are suffering.

Then we get this report from cis.org that 61 million immigrants and their children, young children, now live in the United States. Now, most of those, I think 43 million or so, are here legally. But it is worth noting that the number of immigrants and their children grew six times faster than our Nation's population between 1970 and 2015.

From 1970 to 2015, our United States population has grown by 59 percent. That is a good, healthy growth. In the meantime, the percentage of immigration growth, or the number of immigrants in the United States—first generation, that is. Most all, everybody here, even Native Americans weren't native probably at one time. They have come across somewhere. But first-generation immigrants who actually immigrated in with children, that number has grown by 353 percent over that same period.

In many States, the increase in the number of immigrants and their minor children from 1970 to 2015 has been nothing short of astonishing. In Georgia, the population grew 3,058 percent; whereas, before that, it grew from 55,000 immigrants to 1.75 million immigrants. That is just in Georgia. So the immigrant level grew 20 times faster, 25 times faster, than the overall State population.

So thank God for immigration. Thank God for legal immigration, that is. But when we abandon the rule of law and don't give ourselves time to welcome legal immigrants into this country and educate them—there is a reason that they have to be educated and are supposed to learn our language and supposed to learn some history, because there is a tremendous amount of responsibility that comes with the right to vote. You need to understand how you say what Ben Franklin said was "a republic, Madam, if you can keep it." You cannot keep a republic if you don't educate people that are coming in and who are foreign to the idea of the responsibilities of maintaining a republic. You don't keep it. You can't keep it.

On the wave of that came this editorial from Dan Hannan, a member of the European Parliament, dated today. Apparently, he spent part of last summer volunteering in a hostel for underage migrants in the south of Italy. He talks about the migrants that came in.

He says: "I have seen refugee columns before, and they tend to be made up disproportionately of women and children. Of the boat people landed by the coast guard while I was in Italy, more than 80 percent were young men. Young men who, I noticed, took out smartphones when they disembarked and looked for Wi-Fi so as to tell their relatives" how good it was.

□ 2145

He says: "Official policy in Europe is based on a misdiagnosis. The migrants are treat-

ed as refugees, and there is an implicit assumption that their displacement is somehow our fault. In the weirdly narcissistic tradition of the Left, the West is simultaneously blamed for having intervened in Libya and for not having intervened in Syria. But the lads I was working with in Italy were from countries that we never bombed—except with aid money."

Mr. Speaker, it is time we look seriously at the oath every Member of Congress, the Senate, the President, the Vice President, everybody in elected Federal office takes. We are supposed to defend this Constitution. That means we are to provide for the common defense against all enemies, foreign and domestic. It is high time we took that more seriously.

I yield back the balance of my time.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 1755. An act to amend title 36, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the congressional charter of the Disabled American Veterans.

SENATE ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to enrolled bills of the Senate of the following titles:

S. 1172. An act to improve the process of presidential transition.

S. 1580. An act to allow additional appointing authorities to select individuals from competitive service certificates.

S. 1826. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 99 West 2nd Street in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, as the Lieutenant Colonel James "Maggie" Megellas Post Office.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 47 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, March 15, 2016, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

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

4632. A letter from the Acting Director, Legislative Affairs, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's Major final rule — Conservation Stewardship Program [Docket No.: NRCS-2014-0008] (RIN: 0578-AA63) received March 10, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Agriculture.

4633. A letter from the Director, Office of Legislative Affairs, Legal, Federal Deposit

Insurance Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's joint interim final rules — Expanded Examination Cycle for Certain Small Insured Depository Institutions, and U.S. Branches and Agencies of Foreign Banks (RIN: 3064-AE42) received March 9, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4634. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Reactor Regulation, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final evaluation of vendor submittal — Summary of BWRVIP-18 Review in Support of GAO-001 received March 9, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4635. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Department of Defense, transmitting a notice of the Air Force's Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Indonesia, Transmittal No. 15-81, pursuant to 2 U.S.C. 2776(b)(1); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(b) (as amended by Public Law 106-113, Sec. 1000(a)(7)); (113 Stat. 536); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4636. A letter from the Director, Presidential Appointments, Department of State, transmitting notifications of nine federal vacancies, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4637. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Affairs and Collaborative Action, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Rights-of-Way on Indian Land [156A2100DD/AAKC001030/A0A501010.999900 253G] (RIN: 1076-AF20) received March 10, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4638. A letter from the Secretary, Judicial Conference of the United States, transmitting the Report of the Proceedings of the Judicial Conference of the United States for the September 17, 2015, session and September 9, 2015, special session, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. 331; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4639. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Office of the General Counsel (02REG), National Cemetery Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule — Applicants for VA Memorialization Benefits (RIN: 2900-AO95) received March 10, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

4640. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Office of the General Counsel (02REG), Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule — Vet Centers (RIN: 2900-AP21) received March 10, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

4641. A letter from the Chief Impact Analyst, Office of Regulation Policy, Office of the General Counsel (02REG), Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule — Veterans Transportation Service (RIN: 2900-AO92) received March 10, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

4642. A letter from the Federal Register Liaison Officer, Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau, Department of the Treasury,

transmitting the Department's final rule — Expansion of the Willamette Valley Viticultural Area [Docket No.: TTB-2015-0008; T.D. TTB-134; Ref: Notice No.: 152] (RIN: 1513-AC21) received March 10, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4643. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final regulations — Regulations under IRC Section 7430 Relating to Awards of Administrative Costs and Attorneys' Fees [TD 9756] (RIN: 1545-AX46) received March 9, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4644. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Modification of Rev. Rul. 2005-3 (Rev. Rul. 2016-8) received March 9, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4645. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's temporary regulations — Consistent Basis Reporting Between Estate and Person Acquiring Property From Decedent [TD 9757] (RIN: 1545-BM98) received March 9, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4646. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Determination of Housing Cost Amounts Eligible for Exclusion or Deduction for 2016 [Notice 2016-21] received March 9, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4647. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final and temporary regulations — Utility Allowances Submetering [TD 9755] (RIN: 1545-BI91) received March 9, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

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. GOODLATTE: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 2745. A bill to amend the Clayton Act and the Federal Trade Commission Act to provide that the Federal Trade Commission shall exercise authority with respect to mergers only under the Clayton Act and only in the same procedural manner as the Attorney General exercises such authority (Rept. 114-449). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 2273. A bill to amend the Colorado River Storage Project Act to authorize the use of the active capacity of the Fontenelle Reservoir; with amendments (Rept. 114-450). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. UPTON: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 4427. A bill to amend section 203 of the Federal Power Act; with an amendment (Rept. 114-451). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. UPTON: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 2984. A bill to amend the

Federal Power Act to provide that any inaction by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission that allows a rate change to go into effect shall be treated as an order by the Commission for purposes of rehearing and court review (Rept. 114-452). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. STIVERS: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 640. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4596) to ensure that small business providers of broadband Internet access service can devote resources to broadband deployment rather than compliance with cumbersome regulatory requirements, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3797) to establish the bases by which the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency shall issue, implement, and enforce certain emission limitations and allocations for existing electric utility steam generating units that convert coal refuse into energy (Rept. 114-453). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. CONNOLLY (for himself and Mr. FITZPATRICK):

H.R. 4729. A bill to provide for the more accurate computation of retirement benefits for certain firefighters employed by the Federal Government; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS (for herself, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. BRAT, Mr. BUCK, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. MESSER, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. OLSON, Mr. PALMER, Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia, Mr. RIBBLE, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. WALKER, Mr. WESTERMAN, and Mr. FARENTHOLD):

H.R. 4730. A bill to provide for a congressional reauthorizing schedule for unauthorized Federal programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committees on Rules, Appropriations, and the Budget, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. LABRADOR (for himself, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. GOWDY, Mr. SMITH of Texas, and Mr. COLLINS of Georgia):

H.R. 4731. A bill to provide for an annual adjustment of the number of admissible refugees, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. RIBBLE (for himself, Mr. KIND, Mr. DUFFY, Mr. GROTHMAN, Ms. MOORE, Mr. POCAN, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. ROSS, and Mr. AMODEI):

H.R. 4732. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to establish rules for payment for graduate medical education (GME) costs for hospitals that establish a new medical residency training program after hosting resident rotators for short durations; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 4733. A bill to permit the United States Capitol Police to accept certain prop-

erty from other Federal agencies and to dispose of certain property in its possession; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 4734. A bill to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to permit candidates for election for Federal office to designate an individual who will be authorized to disburse funds of the authorized campaign committees of the candidate in the event of the death of the candidate; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 4735. A bill to establish a working capital fund for the Architect of the Capitol, to permit the Architect of the Capitol to use certain funds to operate a shuttle service for Members and employees of Congress to travel to and from the House Office Buildings, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure, and Appropriations, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. MACARTHUR:

H.R. 4736. A bill to remove from the John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System certain properties in New Jersey; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. MULVANEY:

H.R. 4737. A bill to protect State and Tribal sovereignty from unwarranted infringement by an independent agency of the Federal government by requiring the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection to justify certain proposals to preempt State and Tribal law, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. RUPPERSBERGER (for himself and Mr. YOUNG of Alaska):

H.R. 4738. A bill to require the Secretary of Commerce, acting through the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, to establish a constituent-driven program to provide a digital information platform capable of efficiently integrating coastal data with decision-support tools, training, and best practices and to support collection of priority coastal geospatial data to inform and improve local, State, regional, and Federal capacities to manage the coastal region, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. TAKAI (for himself, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, and Ms. GABBARD):

H. Con. Res. 124. Concurrent resolution recognizing the 75th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor and the lasting significance of National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CUMMINGS (for himself, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. NORTON, Mr. CLAY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mrs. BEATTY, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. DELANEY, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. FATTAH, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. COHEN, Mrs. CASTOR of Florida, Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, and Ms. SLAUGHTER):

H. Res. 638. A resolution recognizing the life and legacy of Henrietta Lacks in honor

of Women's History Month; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin:

H. Res. 639. A resolution authorizing the Speaker to appear as amicus curiae on behalf of the House of Representatives in the matter of United States, et al. v. Texas, et al., No. 15-674; to the Committee on Rules.

By Mr. FOSTER (for himself, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. RANGEL, and Mrs. LAWRENCE):

H. Res. 641. A resolution expressing support for designation of March 14, 2016, as "National Pi Day"; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Mr. SESSIONS (for himself, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. DONOVAN, Mr. DENT, Mr. SIMPSON, and Mr. BUCK):

H. Res. 642. A resolution recognizing magic as a rare and valuable art form and national treasure; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. CONNOLLY:

H.R. 4729.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS:

H.R. 4730.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 7, Clause 1: "All Bills for raising Revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives; but the Senate may propose or concur with amendments as on other Bills."

Article I, Section 9, Clause 7: "No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law; and a regular Statement and Account of the Receipts and Expenditures of all public Money shall be published from time to time."

By Mr. LABRADOR:

H.R. 4731.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 4 of Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution—The Congress shall have Power to establish a uniform Rule of Naturalization, and uniform Laws on the subject of Bankruptcies throughout the United States.

By Mr. RIBBLE:

H.R. 4732.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I of the Constitution grants Congress the authority to regulate interstate commerce.

By Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 4733.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I.

By Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 4734.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 4, of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 4735.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I.

By Mr. MACARTHUR:

H.R. 4736.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Clause 8, Section 1

By Mr. MULVANEY:

H.R. 4737.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1. "The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States."

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3. "To regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes."

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18. "To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof."

By Mr. RUPPERSBERGER:

H.R. 4738.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following: Commerce Clause

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

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

H.R. 27: Mr. ROSKAM.

H.R. 183: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas.

H.R. 184: Mr. PITTINGER.

H.R. 228: Ms. JUDY CHU of California.

H.R. 244: Mr. JOYCE and Mr. BOUSTANY.

H.R. 288: Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.

H.R. 292: Mr. ASHFORD and Mr. REICHERT.

H.R. 347: Mr. POSEY.

H.R. 430: Mrs. LAWRENCE.

H.R. 540: Mr. NADLER and Mr. GRAYSON.

H.R. 563: Mr. LOBIONDO.

H.R. 581: Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 605: Mr. CRAMER and Mr. HINOJOSA.

H.R. 619: Mr. FATTAH.

H.R. 624: Mr. WELCH and Mr. HIGGINS.

H.R. 664: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 793: Mr. BOUSTANY.

H.R. 799: Mr. LOWENTHAL.

H.R. 800: Mr. HINOJOSA.

H.R. 816: Mr. BARR.

H.R. 822: Mr. POMPEO and Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.

H.R. 842: Mr. QUIGLEY.

H.R. 846: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 923: Mr. JORDAN and Mr. LATTA.

H.R. 953: Ms. PINGREE.

H.R. 986: Mr. SHUSTER.

H.R. 1112: Mr. WELCH and Mr. STEWART.

H.R. 1117: Mr. ASHFORD.

H.R. 1196: Mr. CRAMER.

H.R. 1197: Mr. ZINKE.

H.R. 1198: Ms. ESHOO.

H.R. 1220: Mr. CROWLEY and Mrs. WALORSKI.

H.R. 1221: Mr. ASHFORD.

H.R. 1336: Mrs. BLACK and Mr. KILMER.

H.R. 1356: Mr. PETERSON, Mr. BEN RAY LUJAN of New Mexico, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, and Mrs. KIRKPATRICK.

H.R. 1422: Mr. CAPUANO.

H.R. 1427: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia and Mr. NADLER.

H.R. 1453: Mr. SMITH of Washington.

H.R. 1516: Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.

H.R. 1545: Mr. NEWHOUSE.

H.R. 1550: Mr. DUFFY and Mr. THOMPSON of California.

H.R. 1586: Mr. KILMER.

H.R. 1625: Mr. BERA.

H.R. 1628: Mr. GRIJALVA.

H.R. 1643: Mr. MARINO.

H.R. 1650: Mr. CRAMER.

H.R. 1655: Ms. STEFANIK and Mr. DONOVAN.

H.R. 1706: Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 1728: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 1814: Mr. RUPPERSBERGER and Ms. BROWN of Florida.

H.R. 1854: Mr. LUETKEMEYER.

H.R. 1859: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.

H.R. 1887: Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. LANGEVIN.

H.R. 1894: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas.

H.R. 1948: Mr. DESAULNIER and Mr. BEN RAY LUJAN of New Mexico.

H.R. 2009: Mr. GOSAR.

H.R. 2096: Mr. MARINO.

H.R. 2170: Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. TAKAI, and Mr. NEAL.

H.R. 2216: Mr. FOSTER.

H.R. 2257: Mr. JONES.

H.R. 2404: Mr. RICHMOND and Mr. BUCHANAN.

H.R. 2407: Ms. STEFANIK.

H.R. 2450: Mr. KEATING and Ms. MOORE.

H.R. 2460: Mr. ROGERS of Alabama and Mrs.

LOWEY.

H.R. 2461: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 2500: Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. TED LIEU of California, and Ms. STEFANIK.

H.R. 2589: Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. CRAMER, and Mr. LANCE.

H.R. 2622: Mrs. KIRKPATRICK.

H.R. 2698: Mrs. MILLER of Michigan and Mr. STEWART.

H.R. 2716: Mr. LAMBORN.

H.R. 2739: Mr. MILLER of Florida and Mr. DEFazio.

H.R. 2799: Mr. ASHFORD, Mrs. CAPPs, Mr. CRAMER, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, and Mrs. BLACK.

H.R. 2876: Mr. JONES.

H.R. 2896: Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. TURNER, and Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana.

H.R. 2901: Mr. ASHFORD.

H.R. 2903: Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, and Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 2972: Mr. HINOJOSA, and Mr. FOSTER.

H.R. 2980: Mr. KIND, Ms. ESHOO, and Mr. COLLINS of New York.

H.R. 2998: Mr. BLUM.

H.R. 3011: Mr. MCKINLEY.

H.R. 3048: Mr. GUINTA, Mr. TIPTON, Ms. GRANGER, and Mr. ROSS.

H.R. 3051: Ms. ADAMS and Mr. CARNEY.

H.R. 3096: Mr. MOULTON, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. RUSH, Ms. NORTON, and Ms. TITUS.

H.R. 3119: Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. STIVERS, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. POCAN, Mr. DOLD, Mr. KIND, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, and Mr. DENT.

H.R. 3164: Ms. WILSON of Florida.

H.R. 3209: Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 3222: Mr. BURGESS, Mr. LAMBORN, and Mr. FLEMING.

H.R. 3225: Mr. MARINO and Mr. VELA.

H.R. 3229: Ms. BONAMICI.

H.R. 3235: Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Ms. NORTON, Mr. ASHFORD, Ms. MATSUI, and Mrs. DAVIS of California.

H.R. 3323: Mr. NUNES.

H.R. 3326: Mr. PERRY and Ms. SLAUGHTER.

H.R. 3526: Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN.

H.R. 3535: Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 3559: Mr. GRIJALVA.

H.R. 3673: Mr. WESTERMAN.

H.R. 3684: Ms. STEFANIK.

H.R. 3706: Mr. TROTT.

H.R. 3712: Mr. SERRANO.

H.R. 3713: Mr. HONDA.

H.R. 3779: Mr. LUETKEMEYER.
 H.R. 3799: Mr. SHUSTER.
 H.R. 3880: Mr. TIPTON.
 H.R. 3886: Mr. RANGEL.
 H.R. 3892: Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. HUNTER, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, and Ms. JENKINS of Kansas.
 H.R. 3913: Mr. RUPPERSBERGER.
 H.R. 3926: Mr. LYNCH.
 H.R. 3948: Mr. NOLAN.
 H.R. 4055: Mr. GRAYSON.
 H.R. 4062: Ms. MCSALLY.
 H.R. 4075: Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.
 H.R. 4087: Mr. FORBES.
 H.R. 4118: Mr. HASTINGS.
 H.R. 4165: Mr. LIPINSKI.
 H.R. 4172: Ms. NORTON.
 H.R. 4336: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. AMODEI, and Mr. TURNER.
 H.R. 4342: Mr. REED.
 H.R. 4365: Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. POCAN, and Mr. SENSENBRENNER.
 H.R. 4371: Mr. ROSKAM and Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.
 H.R. 4396: Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. DESAULNIER, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. WELCH, Mr. KILMER, and Ms. PINGREE.
 H.R. 4422: Mr. CONYERS.
 H.R. 4462: Mr. HUFFMAN.
 H.R. 4474: Mr. BYRNE.
 H.R. 4479: Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. MOORE, Mr. POCAN, and Mr. GRIJALVA.
 H.R. 4488: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. KILMER, and Ms. ADAMS.
 H.R. 4497: Mr. COSTA.
 H.R. 4499: Mr. KNIGHT and Mr. ABRAHAM.
 H.R. 4513: Mr. COLLINS of New York.
 H.R. 4514: Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. QUIGLEY, and Miss RICE of New York.
 H.R. 4529: Ms. ADAMS, Ms. NORTON, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. HASTINGS, and Mr. GRIJALVA.
 H.R. 4540: Mr. SCHWEIKERT.
 H.R. 4543: Mrs. BEATTY and Ms. JUDY CHU of California.
 H.R. 4567: Mr. KILMER.
 H.R. 4570: Mr. FATTAH, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. MOORE, Mr. CONYERS, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. CROWLEY, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, and Ms. CLARKE of New York.
 H.R. 4585: Mr. COHEN, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. KILMER, and Mr. LEWIS.
 H.R. 4592: Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. HIMES, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. KILDEE, Ms. KUSTER, Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. PALLONE,

Mr. WALZ, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. KIND, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. MCNERNEY, Ms. MENG, Ms. LEE, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. NORTON, Mr. GUTHRIE, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. WHITFIELD, and Mr. GRIJALVA.
 H.R. 4595: Ms. SLAUGHTER.
 H.R. 4599: Mr. FOSTER.
 H.R. 4611: Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. NORTON, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. CLAY, Mr. TAKANO, and Mr. YARMUTH.
 H.R. 4612: Mr. ROUZER, Mr. HENSARLING, and Mr. BABIN.
 H.R. 4615: Ms. BROWNLEY of California.
 H.R. 4623: Mr. COHEN.
 H.R. 4625: Miss RICE of New York, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, and Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.
 H.R. 4626: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. DENHAM, and Mr. HIGGINS.
 H.R. 4633: Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, and Mr. RICHMOND.
 H.R. 4640: Mr. COFFMAN and Mrs. KIRKPATRICK.
 H.R. 4642: Ms. HAHN.
 H.R. 4653: Mr. DESAULNIER, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mrs. DINGELL, Ms. ESHOO, Ms. SLAUGHTER, and Mr. HUFFMAN.
 H.R. 4665: Ms. NORTON and Mr. SIMPSON.
 H.R. 4681: Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. MOORE, Ms. LEE, Mr. CLAY, Ms. NORTON, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. VELA.
 H.R. 4683: Mr. GIBSON and Mr. ISRAEL.
 H.R. 4694: Mr. GUTIERREZ.
 H.R. 4705: Mr. ROONEY of Florida.
 H.R. 4715: Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. GRIFFITH, Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California, and Mr. LOUDERMILK.
 H.R. 4722: Mr. BUCHANAN and Mr. RENACCI.
 H. Con. Res. 19: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
 H. Con. Res. 40: Ms. VELAZQUEZ, Mr. CLAY, Mr. LEWIS, Ms. NORTON, Ms. KAPTUR, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. MOORE, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. GALLEGRO, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. JACKSON LEE, and Mr. TED LIEU of California.
 H. Con. Res. 75: Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. ZELDIN, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. NORCROSS, Mr. KNIGHT, Mr. ROUZER, and Mrs. NOEM.
 H. Con. Res. 88: Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California.
 H. Con. Res. 96: Mr. RICHMOND.
 H. Res. 540: Mr. TONKO.
 H. Res. 586: Mrs. COMSTOCK.
 H. Res. 591: Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. GUENTA, Mr. THORNBERRY, and Mr. HUFFMAN.

H. Res. 600: Ms. GABBARD and Mr. RICHMOND.
 H. Res. 605: Mr. TAKANO and Mr. CHAFFETZ.
 H. Res. 610: Mr. JONES.
 H. Res. 617: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona and Mr. COOK.
 H. Res. 625: Mr. VARGAS.
 H. Res. 630: Miss RICE of New York.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

OFFERED BY MR. SHUSTER

H.R. 4721 does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

The amendment to be offered by Representative PALLONE, or a designee, to H.R. 3797, the SENSE Act, does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 3 of rule XII, petitions and papers were laid on the Clerk's desk and referred as follows:

50. The SPEAKER presented a petition of the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders, NJ, relative to Resolution: 2016-183, supporting the President of the United States of America's current position and executive actions in regard to the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals and Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents orders; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

51. Also, a petition of Mr. Gregory D. Watson of Austin, TX, relative to urging Congress to enact legislation which would require that an autopsy be conducted, and the results thereof be made public, whenever a still-serving President, Vice President, Member of Congress, Chief Justice or Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, or any Judge of any Federal Court dies; jointly to the Committees on House Administration, Oversight and Government Reform, and the Judiciary.