only unfair, but that does not promote job growth here in the United States. That is something we want to work with you on in a bipartisan way. Unfortunately, we have to continue to wait for another day before the majority is serious about working together, in a bipartisan way, to make our tax system fairer for all working men and women in the United States. Let me be clear, once again, that the American people will not wait any longer.

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

Mrs. NOEM. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

We have heard repeatedly from my colleague on the other side of the aisle about why we should not be spending time on this topic today, about why we shouldn't have dedicated an hour's worth of debate to making sure that we talk about H.R. 3724, Ensuring Integrity in the IRS Workforce Act.

I think he has forgotten about what kind of information the people of this country turn over to the IRS. They turn over their Social Security numbers, their financial information; a lot of the security that they have for their families, their homes, and their businesses they completely trust the IRS to take care of, to protect, and to make sure that they use in the correct manner so that they might abide by the law and pay their taxes like honest, hardworking Americans do. To say that we shouldn't spend time in making sure that criminals and people who are fired for misconduct don't have access to that information, to me, is silly. That is exactly what our job is. The IRS needs integrity, and we are here to bring it today.

Mr. Speaker, the White House has issued a veto threat against this bill. They said that the IRS would be forced to fire people, because of this bill, if it were signed into law. I read the White House's Statement of Administration Policy on my bill, and the statement reads that it is unnecessary because current IRS processes already ensure that the agency does not rehire former employees who have significant conduct issues.

I guess the White House didn't read the report, for the inspector general expressed concerns that the IRS continues to hire individuals who have significant prior conduct and performance issues even after the agency supposedly made upgrades to its hiring practices.

I remind you, Mr. Speaker, that the inspector general's review of former employees who were fired for serious misconduct and who were then rehired included employees with histories of fraud, a falsification of documents, workplace disruption, absence, and an unauthorized accessing of taxpayer information. The inspector general identified approximately 140 individuals who are currently, today, with the IRS who had been previously fired for cause. We are talking about an agency that employs 80,000 people. Surely, it can find 140 people who haven't committed fraud or falsified documents.

Mr. Speaker, the inspector general recommended that the IRS reassess its hiring practices to determine in what part of the process it should fully vet candidates in terms of their prior performance. In fact, the IRS was given an opportunity to fully respond to the inspector general's report. In its response, the agency insisted its processes were sufficient. Yet, Mr. Speaker, the agency still only begins to vet the candidates for employment only after the entire hiring process is completed and after a formal offer of employment has been extended. So, regardless of any changes the IRS has made to its hiring practices, the inspector general said he remains very concerned because IRS documents indicate it is hiring individuals who have significant prior conduct and performance issues.

Mr. Speaker, because the IRS hasn't taken action is why we are here today. This bill is simple. It just says that the IRS cannot rehire employees who have been fired for misconduct. It is something the IRS should have taken action on; and because they didn't, that is why we are here today. It is our job to protect the taxpayers and to make sure their information is safe with the agency that they, by law, need to turn over to the IRS.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

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

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

Pursuant to House Resolution 688, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mrs. NOEM. 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 question will be postponed.

## BAN ON IRS BONUSES UNTIL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY DEVELOPS COMPREHENSIVE CUSTOMER SERVICE STRATEGY

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous materials on H.R. 4890.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BISHOP of Michigan). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 688 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 4890.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 0957

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 4890) to impose a ban on the payment of bonuses to employees of the Internal Revenue Service until the Secretary of the Treasury develops and implements a comprehensive customer service strategy, with Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MEEHAN) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am before the House today—really, before the Nation—on behalf of all of those frustrated taxpayers who have spent a great part of the last month, if not months before, in preparing their taxes in what is an increasingly complex Code. While we have a mission to simplify that Code, the fact of the matter is they have to deal with the challenges that they face today.

One of the agencies that they interact with or hope to interact with when they have questions is something called the Internal Revenue Service. I want to focus on that third word—''service''—because the idea here is we don't have some oversight agency, and we don't have some agency whose obligation and purpose in life is to make it harder on the average hardworking taxpayers, who are supporting the government with the money that they earn; it is to be a service—to use their resources to help the hardworking Americans who must pay taxes—and to simplify the process, particularly when they have questions of a very, very complex Code and its requirements that are being put on each and every one of them. When we talk about service, what we need to see is a pattern; and what we see is a pattern by which, unfortunately, the service of the IRS is deteriorating rapidly.

Let me give you the facts, and I am talking about what they call the answer time.

When an individual gets on the telephone because he is frustrated and he calls the IRS and says, ''I have a question,'' this year, the IRS estimates it will receive 48.4 million calls with people asking for assistance. Do you know how many they will answer? Sixteen million. That means that 32 million

taxpayers will call the service, and their calls will go unanswered.

□ 1000

What kind of private entity could survive in this day and age if that was the kind of service that they were providing? What we are seeing is that this is going in a backwards fashion.

If you are able to get through and finally talk to somebody, the wait times a few years ago were 18.7 minutes. Well, how many people who are working at home, have other jobs, are doing things have 18.7 minutes just to wait for a phone call to be answered on an issue that they already have anxiety about? Well, those were the good old days, Mr. Chairman, 18.7 minutes, because today it is 34.4 minutes. If you are one of the lucky 30 percent who even gets their call answered, you wait 34.4 minutes.

It even gets better because what the IRS has implemented is a program now called a courtesy disconnect. Well, if that isn't the most oxymoronic thing that I have heard—a courtesy disconnect. In other words, we are going to tell you ahead of time, when you call, we are going to disconnect your call right away because we are going to tell you you are not going to be able to get through in time, so don't waste your time trying to contact the IRS. Now, that just exacerbates the level of frustration.

So what do we do about it? What is a solution? Let me tell you, Mr. Chairman, this isn't something that the Republicans on this side of the aisle have sat and said: Oh, let's go get the IRS.

Mr. Chairman, the GAO, which has overlooked this agency for, now, 3 straight years has been calling on the IRS to do something very simple. What they say is create a strategy and a plan to do a better job of answering those calls, of being responsive to those very taxpayers that your service requires you to do so. Just create a plan. It is that simple.

The GAO issued recommendations to the IRS that they first outline a strategy that defines appropriate levels of telephone and correspondence service and wait time lists and get specific steps to manage service based on an assessment of timeframes, demand capabilities, and resources. Just tell us how you can do it better.

Number two was direct the appropriate officials to systematically and empirically compare its telephone service to the best in business to identify gaps between actual and desired performance; in other words, see how it is being done in other places and aspire to do it as well. Well, as I said again, go back to the private sector. I imagine the people aren't making 60 percent of the people that call, they don't even answer it.

Lastly, just improve taxpayer service by requiring the Secretary of the Treasury to develop a comprehensive customer service strategy. That is what the GAO asked them to do. This recommendation has been repeated year after year. Unfortunately, the response of the IRS to the GAO was that their existing efforts were sufficient. They have yet to devise this plan.

Mr. Chairman, you tell me, when 60 percent of the calls are unanswered and those that are calling have wait times of over 35 minutes, tell me where that is sufficient. And therein lies the heart of the problem, the complete unwillingness to do a simple issue and to be responsive.

Now, there are other reasons, perhaps, that the IRS is diverting the very resources that have been put in by this Congress to support taxpayer services. In fact, the commitment to those taxpayer services has gone down dramatically each and every year:

In 2013, they put $190 million into ensuring that there were appropriate taxpayer services; and then, in 2014, they decreased it to $183 million to ensure that there were appropriate taxpayer services; and then, in 2015, they put $45 million into it.

So at a time when the GAO is telling them to do better, they are speaking with their own specific acts to say: We think it is sufficient. And not only do we think it is sufficient, we are actually pulling resources away from relations to the very taxpayers that we have an obligation to service.

Mr. Chairman, the bill is really quite simple, and it is in response to that continuing unresponsiveness of those who manage the IRS. It is simply saying to do what you have been requested to do.

Now, despite three GAO reports and continuing oversight by Congress, the refusal to be responsive to that, we looked and said a very simple thing. It says do not pay bonuses to the employees until you have fulfilled the very simple requirement of coming up with this plan.

Now, somebody might say to me: Well, that is outrageous. Put new obligations on the IRS. They have not done it in 3 years.

But guess who has? The Department of Labor does it. The Department of Agriculture does it. The Department of Education does it. The Office of Management and Budget does it. Each and every one of them, I would suggest to you, Mr. Chairman, probably have a lot less interaction with everyday Americans, but they have taken the time to put together that plan.

So there is a template. We are not asking a whole lot. It has been specific, laid out in the GAO report, simply to do that.

So we are asking very simply in the bill, do your job; and until you have done that job, which other agencies are very capable of doing, no bonuses get paid.

It doesn't say no bonuses get paid at all. In fact, this is not antiworker. In fact, hardworking people at the IRS—and there are many—they can get rewarded for appropriate work that they do. But don't pay those bonuses until you, management, answer to them why you won't do the service agreement or service plan. You tell your employees why you won't do it. Don't go blaming it on somebody else. That is the very simple request that we have, which is to make the plan before you write the bonuses.

Mr. Chairman, that is not asking for much. It is certainly not asking for much on behalf of the frustrated taxpayers of the United States who are seeing a demonstrated inability to communicate with the very agency that is responsible for helping them solve the questions that they have with respect to the complexities of the Tax Code.

Mr. Chairman, I look forward to continuing to debate this issue.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

What we are facing today is the worst kind of demagoguery, and really it descends to propaganda.

Look, the reason the phones aren't being answered is because the Republican majority has failed to answer to its responsibilities. The appropriations have been going down. The last 5 years, the budget cut for IRS has been close to $1 billion.

So you try to hide from your failure and you point your finger everyplace except where it belongs—yourselves. You want to say no bonuses to the 80,000 people because this House majority has failed to meet its basic responsibility, and that is to fund so that there can be adequate resources to answer the phones. You are the ones who have shut it off.

So the problem is not a lack of strategy; it is a lack of resources. The House Republicans are trying to pass the buck because they are not providing the bucks necessary for adequate taxpayer services.

We had this chart yesterday, and here it is again. This shows, in the yellow, the amount of resources. In the blue, it shows the average time to answer the phone. As the resources have gone down, the time it takes has gone up. That is a simple fact. The only time that changed was when this institution provided some adequate resources, and so the time to answer the phones went down.

Now you are back at it again, diminishing the resources, and you are essentially blaming the 80,000 people who don't get the adequate resources to do their jobs.

Now you say let's have a plan. There is already a system, but you don't provide the resources to carry it out. You are saying come up with a plan that will be looked at and approved by the inspector general that doesn't have that responsibility. So that is why the White House stands in opposition, and I read:

''Legislation constraining the IRS's ability to retain and recruit highly qualified employees is not needed and could be counterproductive to the Service's mission.''

So I am going to point out other things you haven't done. Mr. CROWLEY laid them out very, very well.

This place, under your leadership, has been bankrupt in terms of addressing the critical needs of the budget, the problems in Flint, the problems faced by Puerto Rico, the problems faced by thousands of people because of Zika. So you come here and you say, well, the IRS isn't doing its job. You are not doing your job. Don't go after an agency for not being able to answer the telephone when you essentially are cutting the lines of resources. It is outrageous. It is outrageous, and I think the people will know.

I say this to my constituents. When you call up and it takes hours, call up your local Member of Congress, especially if he or she a member of the majority here. Call them up. If they don't answer the phone, try email. And if there is no response, call one of us who are working to provide the adequate resources for the IRS to answer the phones, and we will try to find a way for you to communicate with your Member, if that person has failed to meet his responsibilities. The blame is on your doorstep. Don't try to shift it.

I reserve the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. POE of Texas). Members of the House are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair and not to each other in the second person.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Chair, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL) control the remainder of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New Jersey will be recognized.

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. MCCARTHY).

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding and his work.

Mr. Chairman, every year the American people pay their taxes; and every year to do that, they have to deal with an agency that is inept and increasingly unethical.

You can't make this stuff up. The IRS failed to answer 8 million calls during tax season last year. Yet, over a short 5-year period, they handed out nearly $6 million in bonuses to themselves.

□ 1015

Just to make this clear, that means the IRS can't take the taxpayers' phone calls, but they sure as heck can take the taxpayers' money for their bonuses.

Or how about this? The inspector general found that nearly 1,600 IRS employees willfully avoided paying their own taxes over a 10-year period; yet, we trust these same people to collect taxes from their fellow citizens.

How is it that the agency charged with collecting taxes employs people who don't pay their own taxes and that agency does nothing about it?

Now, it doesn't stop there. The IRS has a slush fund of money it collects from fees that it uses however it wants. No accountability. No transparency.

Meanwhile, about 500 IRS employees have been fired for misconduct, such as snooping on private taxpayers' information; yet, they have been hired back again.

The IRS selectively targeted for sanctions taxpayers who donated to Romney, intimidated nonprofit citizen groups, and sent out millions in potentially fraudulent tax refunds all in the past few years alone. You wonder why American people don't trust their government.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I urge Members to look at these bills on the floor. We are not trying to make some partisan statement here. We just want our government to work for the people and work well. But, to do that, we can't leave the IRS the way it has been.

We had bills yesterday on the floor by Congressmen JASON SMITH and DAVID ROUZER that put an end to the slush funds and to make sure the people working at the IRS actually paid their taxes, and today we are going to pass more bills by KRISTI NOEM and PAT MEEHAN to stop the IRS from hiring people who can't be trusted and to fix the agency's absolutely terrible customer service.

These are good bills. They are smart bills. Frankly, they are bills that make you wonder how any reasonable person could ever vote against them.

But I forgot how irrational some people could be. Just a few days ago the Obama administration said they were against all four of these bills. Really?

They are against accountability? They are against IRS agency employees paying their taxes? They want the IRS to fail to answer the vast majority of customer service calls? They want to rehire bad employees?

I couldn't understand it. Frankly, the administration's statement didn't clear things up either. The Office of Management and Budget actually said this: ''These bills would impose unnecessary constraints on the Internal Revenue Service's . . . operations . . .''.

Now, let me get one thing out of the way. The administration is worried about imposing constraints on the IRS, but it has no problem imposing constraints and regulations on small businesses, energy producers, manufacturers, to the point that it is driving them out of business.

That shows you how backwards this administration's priorities are. The IRS targets conservative groups, fails at basic tasks, and employs people who don't pay their own taxes.

But the people who are trying to earn an honest living and power their homes and produce products right here in America? The administration thinks they are the problem. They think they need to be regulated.

That is wrong. That is not what our country stands for, and it is not what this majority is going to stand for either.

But there is another principle here. The House is not trying to write some laws and impose some rules on the IRS just because.

We are trying to restrain government because unaccountable and unelected bureaucrats have shown that they can't be trusted with the power they have been given.

When you say ''IRS,'' I can assure you that the last words people think of are honest, fair, transparent, or even trustworthy.

That is not how our government should be, especially the arm of government entrusted with collecting our taxes.

Because when people can't trust that their government is treating them fairly, they lose faith in politics. They become cynical, and it increases the divisions within our country.

Now, good government shouldn't be a one-party issue. I love the debates about how small or how large government should be or how high or how low taxes should be.

But we can and we should agree that government should do its job well without abusing the trust of the American people. That should never be a one-party argument.

That is what these bills are about. That is what this debate is about. The American people are watching, Mr. Chairman, and they want us to make our choice, good government or bad.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I have to respond to the previous speaker, whose simplistic analysis has been exposed during this Presidential election.

We have selective memories. That is our problem, because how can you come before the American people, Mr. Chairman, and explain how X amount of IRS workers have not paid their taxes?

We all want everybody to pay their taxes because when insufficient revenue is in the coffers, we can't pay our bills.

But if the truth be known and we didn't have selective memory, when you point out how many people in the IRS of the 80,000 employees—1,500—haven't paid their taxes or are in default of their taxes, the gentleman fails to mention that one of the biggest culprits in not paying their taxes is the very House of Representatives. My Lord. Five percent of the Members default on their taxes.

Now, what about us and our responsibilities? We are the guardians. We are the guardians. We are the protectors of the taxpayers. Beware, taxpayers. Beware.

I have a great deal of respect—and I hope I have proven it in the past—for the gentleman who has introduced this legislation, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MEEHAN). I just think we are off on the wrong foot on this one.

In your support for the bill, H.R. 4890, you claim to be concerned about IRS customer service. This bill would prohibit any bonuses being paid to IRS

employees until the agency comes up with a customer service strategy approved by the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration.

Customer service is critical. But how can you come here and complain about customer service when you have cut the IRS budget $1 billion in the last 5 years? That is 13,000 fewer full-time employees.

At the same time—listen to this, Mr. Chairman—there have been 9 million more tax returns being filed. Think about that just for a second: 9 million more tax returns, 13,000 fewer employees, $1 billion less in appropriations. I mean, that is not rocket science. It is simply arithmetic.

Your budgets have consistently starved the IRS of the resources it needs to do its job, and, true to form, this bill expressly forbids any additional appropriations to carry out this mandate.

Here is the reality. The IRS customer service didn't decline because of lazy employees. It declined because of significant budget cuts. This year, thanks to an extra $290 million in funding, it has rebounded to about mediocre, still a disservice to many Americans who need help.

So I agree with the ranking member when he says to look in the mirror and you will see who is responsible.

Instead of helping the struggling people of Puerto Rico or Flint, Michigan, or passing a budget—tax day passed a few days ago—this Congress is fiddling with weakening the IRS. You can't deny that all these attempts to harm the IRS are really harming taxpayers.

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

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Chairman, let me take a moment just to be responsive to a couple of things.

In point of fact, I don't think that I could have had a better setup for the real issues here than the very arguments that have been made by my colleagues because, in fact, when you look behind what is actually going on, you see the scheme that is taking place here, which has put the IRS and the service that it gives to taxpayers right in the middle of the conflict.

What they have done is created a circumstance in which, if you purposely starve the very thing that will relate to the taxpayers, you can get the taxpayers worked up to come back to scream for more money for the Service: Let's blame this on Congress.

But let's talk about what is actually going on here, Mr. Chairman. There may have been budget cuts, as there have been budget cuts all across the government.

One of the budget cuts related to the $50 million that the IRS has used for conferences. And so, just like every other agency in government, just like the 14 percent cut we have taken in our own offices, there have been cuts at a time in which our government doesn't have money.

But that is not the issue. Because what has happened here has been the diverting of funding. What nobody is saying is that this same agency has been hit with $1.7 billion of diverted expenditure to service the Affordable Care Act, the healthcare law that was pushed on us and pushed on all America; $1.7 billion has been diverted, will be dedicated this year, but never accounted for when that program was created.

They put this responsibility, another unfunded mandate put on the agency by this law. What they have done is divert the attention. Take the resources away and then use it as a way to compel to see if we can force Congress to get pulled into this debate.

Our thing is very, very simple. Again, it is not a funding issue. It is a service issue. We are not getting into that with this particular bill. It is a very simple thing that says: Create a plan for how you do it.

I am glad that the gentleman from New Jersey, who I respect enormously, has been able, Mr. Chair, to touch on the very point that was also made, this idea that somehow we have been unresponsive and starved this agency. Mr. Chairman, $290 million just sent purposely for this issue, $290 million.

So in addition to saying to give us a plan, we are saying: Here is $290 million of focused funding to say this is behind the plan. Tell us how you are going to use it.

This whole thing is a smokescreen on the part of the other side to create the tension when, in fact, we are asking for a very simple thing that we have already funded.

Mr. Chairman, I have no other speakers at this time.

I reserve the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. KELLY of Mississippi). The Committee will rise informally.

The Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING) assumed the chair.

## MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed bills of the following titles in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 1252. An act to authorize a comprehensive strategic approach for United States foreign assistance to developing countries to reduce global poverty and hunger, achieve food and nutrition security, promote inclusive, sustainable, agricultural-led economic growth, improve nutritional outcomes, especially for women and children, build resilience among vulnerable populations, and for other purpose.

S. 2012. An act to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Committee will resume its sitting.

## BAN ON IRS BONUSES UNTIL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY DEVELOPS COMPREHENSIVE CUSTOMER SERVICE STRATEGY

The Committee resumed its sitting.

□ 1030

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, just in response to my friend from the Keystone State, the implementation of the Affordable Care Act is not an IRS slush fund. There are mandates within the Affordable Care Act which necessitate, obviously, the involvement of the IRS agency. So any attempts to make it or create a slush fund in people's minds is totally, totally inaccurate.

That is not the issue. The issue is we have cut $5 billion. This year we restored $290 million. Again, do the math. We have 13,000 less employees. So that means a lot of those 13,000 less employees came to the end, perhaps, of their career, but were never replaced. It had nothing to do with the budget. It was beyond the budget, even, or within the budget.

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

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Chairman, I have no other speakers at this time, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Seven former IRS Commissioners wrote, and we need to take a look at it because obviously they weren't all Democrats and they weren't all Republicans, but seven former IRS Commissioners have said: ''Over the last 50 years, none of us has ever witnessed anything like what has happened to the IRS appropriations over the last 5 years and impact these appropriations reductions are having on our tax system.''

The percentage of callers able to reach a live person at the IRS in the 2015 filing season was just 43 percent. The average wait time was 28 minutes. At one point during the filing season, the Taxpayer Protection Program line, which answers calls for victims of identity theft—a growing issue day by day—was not answering 90 percent of the calls.

That is not acceptable to your side. It is certainly not acceptable to our side, but your solution is, by no means, the solution. If you were truly concerned about improving customer service at the IRS, you would fully fund the agency. And we would support that. Penalizing the IRS is misguided and, in the long run, the consequence hurts the taxpayer.

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

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. KELLY of Mississippi). Members are again reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

In closing, I want to once again actually appreciate the comments that were made by the other side in the entirety of this debate because they really speak to, in essence, what they are trying to do.