The events of yesterday dramatically point out the difference that a few seconds can make in whether Members will get to the Chamber successfully to represent their constituents on the important bills and amendments we vote on daily. As the Republican leadership insists on a 17-minute time frame for votes in order to expedite the business of the House, punctuality will remain very important.

I strongly oppose the gentleman's amendment, and I urge my colleagues to let their common sense overcome this crude attempt to engage in the politics of sound-bites and political expediency.

CONGRESSIONAL REFORM

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 28, 1995

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert my Washington Report for Wednesday, June 28, 1995 into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD:

REFORMING CONGRESS

Last week the House passed its version of the 1996 funding bill for Congress. Overall funding for the House would be cut 8% from the 1995 level. Congress must take the lead in fiscal discipline. This bill is a step in the right direction.

The bill also includes several worthwhile reforms of the operations of Congress. It cuts funding for committee staff, cuts Members' mail allowances, and eliminates a congressional committee. It also cuts back congressional support agencies. The Office of Technology Assessment, the Government Printing Office, and the General Accounting Office all would be downsized.

These are all worthwhile reforms, and they reflect Members' continuing efforts to streamline Congress and improve its operations. In my view, three broader changes could make the reform process better.

ALLOWING MORE AMENDMENTS

The floor amendment process needs to be more open. The House leadership prohibited several reform amendments to the congressional funding bill from being considered on the floor. Members wanted to offer amendments, for example, to eliminate additional committees and ban gifts from lobbyists. Of the 33 amendments that Members wanted to offer on the floor, only 11 were allowed. Most of the denied amendments called for additional reforms or deeper spending cuts.

Last session Members in the minority objected, with some justification, that many of their amendments were not allowed to be offered, and they promised that if they were ever in the majority the amendment process would be much more open. Yet the new leadership has made only modest progress toward more openness. The amendment process tends to be open on minor bills and restrained on controversial matters. Certainly on some difficult bills and amendment process cannot be totally open. But on such bills the leadership has to identify the major policy issues and allow a thorough and thoughtful consideration of them. We still have a long way to go to reach the goal of allowing Members to vote on the major reform issues of the day.

GREATER BIPARTISANSHIP

Another concern is the increasingly partisan nature of congressional reform. A partisan task force has been set up by the House leadership to make recommendations on additional reforms, particularly further changes in committee jurisdictions.

Committee reform is an appropriate topic for review, but I am disappointed that the leadership has chosen not to make it a bipartisan task force. Last Congress we set up the Joint Committee on the Organization of Congress in a bipartisan way, with an equal number of Members from both parties. Historically that has been the best way to achieve long-lasting institutional reform.

REGULARIZING REFORM

I also believe that we need to regularize the congressional reform process, taking up a major reform package each Congress.

One of my main conclusions from my work last Congress on the Joint Committee on the Organization of Congress is that the institution is better served if congressional reform is treated more as an ongoing, continual process rather than something taken up in an omnibus way every few decades.

Congress has set up three major bipartisan, House-Senate reform efforts in recent times—the 1945, 1965, and 1993 Joint Committees on the Organization of Congress. All three committees were given extremely broad mandates—to look at virtually all aspects of Congress in order to improve efficiency and effectiveness. The Joint Committee in the last Congress took up everything from committee jurisdiction changes and the congressional budget process to ethics reform, House-Senate relations, and congressional compliance with the laws we pass for everyone else. We conducted scores of hearings, heard from hundreds of witnesses, looked over thousands of pages of testimony, considered hundreds of reform ideas, and issued reports totalling several thousand pages.

In my view, it would be far preferable to have the House take up a major congressional reform resolution each Congress. That would make the task much more manageable, since Members would be able to focus attention on the key issues of the day rather than the entire range of procedural and organizational matters carried over from previous Congresses. It would allow us to continually update the institutions of Congress in a rapidly changing world. Letting systematic institutional reform slide for several years only allows problems to fester and heightens partisan tensions.

I recently introduced a resolution requiring the Rules Committee to take up the issue of a congressional reform resolution each Congress. If the Committee decides against sending such a reform resolution to the House floor for consideration, they would have to explain—as part of a required end-of-Congress report—why they thought congressional reform was not needed.

Interest in congressional reform tends to ebb and flow according to the changing interests of the voters and the main House players in reform, the shifting national agenda, and the varying amounts of media coverage given to the operation of Congress. I believe we need to regularize the process so that whoever is in charge of reform in the future will be looking seriously at scheduling and debating a congressional reform resolution each Congress.

This is not a new idea. The Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970 stated the need for a congressional panel to ''make a continuing study of the organization and operation of the Congress''. Moreover, the 1974 bipartisan House Select Committee on Committees stated that ''a key aspect of any viable reorganization is provision for continuing evaluation of its effectiveness, and for periodic adjustments in the institution as new situations arise''. It is time to finally follow through on these recommendations and regularize the congressional reform process.

We have been making progress on reforming Congress. But pursuing reform in a more bipartisan, open, and regular way will make our efforts more productive.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE ULSTER PROJECT

HON. MARTIN FROST

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 28, 1995

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the Ulster project. For the second consecutive year, youths from Northern Ireland have come to Arlington, TX, to see and learn how individuals from different backgrounds can live together in peace.

The Ulster project is comprised of teenagers from Northern Ireland who travel to the United States for 1 month. Teenagers of both Protestant and Catholic faiths participate. Each Irish youth is placed in an Arlington family that shares similar interests. The goal of the program is to demonstrate to the Irish teenagers that people from different faiths and backgrounds can peacefully coexist. The ultimate goal is that they take the experiences that they have learned back home with them to Ireland.

Living in Arlington, TX, this summer are the following teenagers, listed with their hometown: Judith A. Conliffe, Belfast; David Laughlin, Newtonabbey; Andrew McCorriston, Belfast; Louise Morris, Belfast; Cherith McFarland, Newtonabbey; Peter Kelly, Bangor; Ashleigh Cochrane, Newtonabbey; Janine Swail, Belfast; Donna Smyth, Newtonabbey; Gareth Price, Bangor; Fiannuala Hanna, Belfast; Gavin Kyle, Glengormley; Stuart Hall, Belfast; Adrian Kidd, Newtonabbey; Neil McCabe, Belfast; Catherine Davidson, Belfast. Richard Hazley of Bangor and Regina Bradley of Belfast will be accompanying the teenagers as counselors.

Again, I commend this project as a genuine effort to help a country that has for too long been torn apart by war. Progress has been made in Ulster to bring about a peaceful solution. This program and ones like it can only serve as a shining example of what can happen if people work with one another to achieve mutual respect and understanding.

RECOGNITION OF DR. GREG ROTH

HON. CARLOS J. MOORHEAD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 28, 1995

Mr. MOORHEAD. Mr. Speaker, selflessness is a cherished commodity in the era in which we live.

I rise today to recognize Dr. Greg Roth, executive pastor of my home church, Glendale (CA) Presbyterian. Dr. Roth is an individual who exemplifies this selflessness through his love and concern for others. We honor a man who through years of dedicated service to his church and his community, has earned a reputation for leadership, compassion, and generosity.

He, like others, envisions things which are for the betterment of our society. Yet, what

sets him apart is his willingness to sacrifice time to lead in the establishment of programs such as the Glendale Coalition to Coordinate Emergency Food and Shelter, The Lords Kitchen, a feeding program for the homeless, Glendale Cold Weather Shelter, and a host of others. Because of his compassion, Dr. Roth has conducted numerous funerals for the homeless men and women. He is also highly respected member of several different boards, such as the Glendale Homeless Coalition and Positive Directions, a county funded Mental Health Drop-in Center.

Unfortunately, for those of us in the community we will miss Dr. Roth. As he departs for the Centerville Presbyterian Church in Fremont, CA, I would like to wish him, Marsha, and Amanda all the best as they move on. I am sure that they will have a strong and positive impact in Fremont as they have had here in Glendale.

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1996

SPEECH OF

HON. VIC FAZIO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 1995

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1854) making appropriations for the legislative branch for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1996, and for other purposes:

Mr. FAZIO. Mr. Chairman, during consideration of this bill, we are fortunate that the House will have two good amendments to consider regarding what I consider to be one of the most ill-considered cuts in the bill—the elimination of the Office of Technology Assessment [OTA].

At a time when the Speaker talks constantly about the cyber-Congress and bringing this Congress into the space age of modern communication and the effective use of technology, one of the first steps as we take up this year's 13 annual appropriations bills is to eliminate the very agency—OTA—which gives Congress an independent capacity to analyze complex and technical issues.

My personal preference is that we simply restore OTA in its present form. My amendment does include a reduced funding level for OTA of 15 percent, in keeping with the cut applied to the General Accounting Office and other reductions in the bill. Certainly, OTA should not be immune to legislative downsizing.

However, I also think our colleague, AMO HOUGHTON, has offered a thoughtful amendment that would essentially abolish OTA but hold on to its core function and its core staff by moving them to become a new component of Congressional Research Service. I think this approach has much to commend it. In fact, 10 percent of OTA's annual budget goes to pay for its leased space. If we could just move OTA into a Federal office building like House Annex No. 2 or another appropriate Federal facility, we could recoup that cost as well as a number of administrative costs associated with maintaining OTA's facilities.

Although I would prefer to leave OTA alone, the Houghton amendment, making a 32-percent cut in OTA's regular budget, is probably the best long-range solution for retaining OTA's important mission while allowing it to be carried on as cost-effectively as possible in keeping with overall legislative branch reductions. I intend to support his approach.

For my colleagues who may not be as familiar with OTA as some of their seniors, perhaps an introduction is necessary. OTA is a bipartisan organization analyzing science and technology issues in depth for Congress, primarily for House and Senate committees.

OTA is a bipartisan organization. For example, last year, OTA issued 21 major reports, and 85 percent of them were requested on a bipartisan basis. The reports are begun only after OTA's congressional governing board, which has an equal number of Republicans and Democrats, gives the green light to proceed. The Board also reviews all reports for bias before they are released.

Although OTA is a small agency with only 143 full-time employees and an annual budget for fiscal year 1995 of about $22 million, we get a tremendous bang for our buck because OTA draws on the expertise of over 5,000 outside-the-beltway specialists from industry, academia, and other institutions each year in contributing to its reports and its policy recommendations.

OTA is a lean, cost-effective organization. Since 1993, OTA voluntarily has reduced its middle and senior management by almost 40 percent. OTA relies wherever possible on the use of temporary expert technical staff to avoid adding to its spartan number of full-time employees.

The most important thing to know about OTA is that it saves taxpayer dollars. Again and again, OTA analyses have been the basis for wise policy decisions as Congress formulates legislation. Here are just a few examples:

First, OTA's reports on health care services have saved taxpayers billions by analyzing which medical treatments are cost-effective for inclusion under Medicare and which are not.

Second, OTA's study of the computers at the Social Security Administration last year saved an estimated $368 million.

Third, OTA's cautions about the Synthetic Fuels Corporation saved an estimated $60 billion in spending for energy research.

Fourth, OTA's study of technologies permitted FAA to choose the most cost-effective explosion detection device standards for airline safety.

Fifth, OTA's recommendations concerning the electric power industry contributed greatly to deregulation of the electric power industry as part of the Energy Policy Act of 1992.

In the past few days, we have each received several impressive bipartisan Dear Colleague letters that tell about the special role played by OTA. CURT WELDON and JOHN SPRATT, the chair and ranking member of the Military Research and Development Subcommittee of the National Security Committee respectively, told us how, in response to the bombing in Oklahoma City, they had occasion to draw on OTA's work about countering terrorism. They said their committee has drawn on OTA work on such topics as the former Soviet Union and proliferation, preserving a robust defense technology and industrial base, and evaluating the potential for using a dual-use strategy to meet defense needs. WELDON and SPRATT concluded by saying, ''The type of work they perform is just not available from other congressional agencies.''

JOHN DINGELL and JIM MCDERMOTT told us of OTA's importance in evaluating Medicare, rural health care, pharmaceutical research and development, and tough issues like defensive medicine and medical malpractice, unconventional cancer treatments, forensic DNA testing, and other very technical issues related to health. ''Time and time again,'' they said, ''OTA reports have provided the timely information necessary for Congress to make good policy decisions to spend federal health care dollars well.''

MIKE OXLEY, chair of the Commerce Committee's Subcommittee on Commerce, Trade, and Hazardous Materials, and RICK BOUCHER, a Democratic member of that subcommittee, brought our attention to OTA's work on environment issues before their subcommittee including Superfund, nuclear contamination in the Arctic Ocean, alternatives to incineration for cleaning up selected Superfund sites, and new biological pesticides.

A letter from our colleague GEORGE BROWN, the former chairman of the Science Committee, and others cited a small sample of the leaders from business and industry, science and academic who believe the committee made a mistake in trying to eliminate OTA.

Leaders from business and industry endorsing OTA include Norman Augustine, the president of Lockheed-Martin; David Potter, former vice chairman of General Motors Corp.; Doug Decker of Johnston Controls; Robert Klimish, vice president of the American Automobile Manufacturers Association; John Seely Brown from the Xerox Palo Alto Research Center; Michel T. Halbouty, president of America's largest independent oil company; David Hale, chief economist for Kemper Financial Services; Mitch Kapor, chairman, of ON Technologies Inc. and the inventor of Lotus 1–2–3; John Diebold of the Diebold Institute for Public Policy Studies, Inc.; Brooks Ragen, chairman and CEO of Ragen McKenzie; and Jim Christy from TRW.

Scientists and academics endorsing OTA include Sally Ride, America's first woman astronaut; Guy Stever, Science Advisor to Presidents Ford and Carter; Ed David, Science Advisor to President Nixon; Charles Vest, president of Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Jim Hunt, former chancellor of the University of Tennessee Medical Center; Harold Brown, former president of Caltech and former Secretary of Defense under President Carter; Robert Frosch of the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University; Granger Morgan and Marvin Sirbu from Carnegie-Mellon University; Daniel Bell of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences; George Connick, president of the Education Network at the University of Maine; John Dutton, Dean of Earth Sciences at Pennsylvania State University; Rosemary Stevens of the University of Pennsylvania; Chase Peterson, president emeritus of the University of Utah; Max Lennon, past president of Clemson University; Alvin L. Alm of Science Applications International Inc.

Other supporters include our most eminent scientific organizations: the American Association for the Advance of Science; the National Academy of Sciences; the Federation of American Scientists; the American Physical Society; the American Association of Medical Colleges; and American Psychological Association.

The Dear Colleague letter pointed out that technology offices modeled after OTA have