

As such, I urge you to join with me in supporting the important job-creating Great Lakes cargo equity provision in the maritime security bill.

The CHAIRMAN. If there are no further amendments, the question is on the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended, was agreed to.

The CHAIRMAN. Under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. GUTKNECHT) having assumed the chair, Mr. DICKEY, Chairman pro tempore of the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1350) to amend the Merchant Marine Act, 1936 to revitalize the United States-flag merchant marine, and for other purposes, pursuant to House Resolution 287, he reported the bill back to the House with an amendment adopted by the Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GUTKNECHT). Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

Is a separate vote demanded on any amendment to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute adopted by the Committee of the Whole? If not, the question is on the amendment.

The amendment was agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill?

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

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members be granted 5 legislative days to insert their remarks into the RECORD and to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

WAIVING POINTS OF ORDER AGAINST CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2076, DEPARTMENTS OF COMMERCE, JUSTICE, AND STATE, THE JUDICIARY, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1996

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 289 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 289

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 2076) making appropriations for the De-

partment of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1996, and for other purposes. All points of order against the conference report and against its consideration are waived. The conference report shall be considered as ready.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida [Mr. GOSS] is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, for purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts [Mr. MOAKLEY], pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, this rule allows the House to consider and hopefully pass H.R. 2076, the fiscal year 1996 Commerce, Justice, and State Appropriations Conference Report. As most Americans know, we are charged each year with enacting 13 appropriations bills to fund the major functions of Government.

This year we have had a difficult time in meeting that goal, given the extraordinarily complex challenge of reducing the size and scope of Government as we attempt to balance our Federal budget. To date, 7 of the 13 spending bills have become law, and we are working hard to have the others on the President's desk as quickly as possible. We are seeking to work with the White House—but we will not abandon our commitment to balancing the budget in 7 years. This conference report makes a tangible contribution to the deficit reduction effort, providing for a real cut of \$700 million from last year's spending levels. I wish to commend Chairman ROGERS and his entire subcommittee for their excellent work in making the tough choices needed to bring about such substantial savings, and believe me, I know these were tough choices.

Mr. Speaker, this rule is a standard one providing for the consideration of appropriations conference reports. There is nothing unusual about the rule. It is the way we do business. The rule waives all points of order against the conference report and against its consideration, allowing us to proceed with getting this bill passed and, hopefully, one step closer to being signed into law. Under House rules, this conference report will be debatable for 1 hour and the minority will have its traditional right to recommit with or without instructions.

Mr. Speaker, we had considerable discussion about the merits of this bill during our Rules Committee hearing yesterday as sometimes happens, and I know there is concern among our friends in the minority about the crime provisions of this legislation. I should point out that the Contract With America outlined a series of important tough-on-crime provisions that the congressional majority promised to deliver. Although those provisions—including truth-in-sentencing and prison

litigation reform—passed the House this spring, they have not yet moved through the other body, I am sorry to say. Because we know how important these anticrime measures are to the American people, we are cutting through the legislative logjam that has held them up. I am speaking of provisions to help States keep criminals behind bars and to stop frivolous prison lawsuits. Over and over again, our constituents express frustration that criminals are released early from prison because of overcrowding and lenient State parole policies. Our constituents are concerned about their safety, as they should be, and they want to know that those who commit crimes will do their time. In addition, people are extremely frustrated with reports of endless lawsuits generated by prisoners that clog the system and syphon off precious criminal justice resources. This bill incorporates much of the Judiciary Committee's language to address these two problems in the hopes that we can finally expedite getting these anticrime measures enacted into law before Christmas, I hope.

There is also some disagreement about the way this bill addresses the COPS Program—a pet program of this White House that has placed some 26,000 cops on the beat across the country, but which, in a few short years, will drop the entire burden for funding those policemen on the States and localities. In my view, that's a false promise of a very short-term gain. It is attractive bait, I admit, but it is a short-term gain that in the long run is going to end up costing our communities dearly.

Mr. speaker, I remember the days of the CETA programs. I know what happened because I was in another one of those.

Instead, this bill takes the block-grant approach to allocating those anticrime resources, leaving it up to local officials to determine what the best use will be for those funds. Additional good news in this measure comes in the form of substantial funding for violence against women programs and a significant Federal financial commitment to help States like Florida cope with the tremendous burden of incarcerating criminal aliens. I would point out even though I am from Florida, it is not just Florida that has the problem; it is a national problem. A careful review of the major provisions of this conference report indicates that our House colleagues have done yeoman's work, they have done it well, in their negotiations, bringing the House a fiscally responsible bill that reflects the priorities of our constituents. I urge my colleagues to support the rule and the conference report.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Florida for yielding me the customary half hour.