

health. Unfortunately, H.R. 1122 does not contain an exception to the measure's ban that will adequately protect the lives and health of the small group of women in tragic circumstances who need an abortion performed at a late stage of pregnancy to avert death or serious injury.

I have asked the Congress repeatedly, for almost 2 years, to send me legislation that includes a limited exception for the small number of compelling cases where use of this procedure is necessary to avoid serious health consequences. When Governor of Arkansas, I signed a bill into law that barred third-trimester abortions, with an appropriate exception for life or health. I would do so again, but only if the bill contains an exception for the rare cases where a woman faces death or serious injury. I believe that Congress should work in a bipartisan manner to fashion such legislation.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *October 10, 1997.*

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The objections of the President will be spread at large upon the Journal, and the message and bill will be printed as a House document.

□ 1815

Mr. CANADY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the message of the President and the bill be referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DICKEY). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

Mr. SCOTT. Reserving the right to object, Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Florida [Mr. CANADY] to explain his request.

Mr. CANADY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me. This unanimous-consent request would send the veto message of the President and the bill to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. SCOTT. Further reserving the right to object, Mr. Speaker, considering that this bill was vetoed because it lacked a health exception, does the subcommittee chairman intend to process similar legislation which exempts from the bill's coverage cases where it is necessary to protect the health of the mother, which provision, of course, is necessary in order for the bill to meet constitutional muster so that we can actually have a bill?

Mr. CANADY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will continue to yield, the legislation which the President has again vetoed seeks to ban the procedure known as partial-birth abortion. The procedure is performed several thousand times each year, primarily in the fifth and sixth months of pregnancy, on healthy babies of healthy mothers. To the victims of partial-birth abortion, this is no rhetorical campaign statement, as some have said. Instead, it is a means, partial-birth abortion is a means to a brutal death.

According to the American Medical Association, which supports H.R. 1122, partial-birth abortion is not an accepted medical practice. Hundreds of obstetricians and gynecologists and fetal maternal specialists, along with former Surgeon General C. Everett Koop have come forward to unequivocally state that partial-birth abortion is never medically necessary to protect the mother's health or her future fertility.

In fact, the procedure can significantly threaten a mother's health or ability to carry future children to term. In conclusion, the health exception sought by the President would be both unnecessary and dangerous. We want to enact a meaningful ban on partial-birth abortions that will protect innocent babies from a brutal death. That is exactly what the bill does. No changes in the bill are necessary.

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. Speaker, further reserving the right to object, since it is clear that the constitutionally required health exception will probably not be included and so that we can determine the effect of the motion to refer and because it would seem useless to have this bill just gathering dust in the Committee on the Judiciary until we engage in another futile political exercise during next year's campaign, I would ask the gentleman when we could expect a bill to be considered by the House?

Mr. CANADY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, again, if the gentleman will continue to yield, I reject certain premises contained in the gentleman's question. I believe that this bill is constitutional. It does not fall within the scope of *Roe v. Wade*. *Roe v. Wade* dealt with the status of the unborn child. I disagree with the court's decision in *Roe v. Wade*, but I do not believe that that decision covers the case of a partially born child. This is different in that regard.

I think it is clearly distinguishable from what the court dealt with in *Roe v. Wade*. On the question of timing, it would be the intention of the committee to bring this back to the floor for a vote on overriding the veto sometime next year before the conclusion of this Congress. We do not have a date established for action.

Mr. SCOTT. Further reserving the right to object, Mr. Speaker, I would just say that we disagree on the constitutionality of a bill without the health exception and several State bills very similar to this have been already thrown out just this year.

Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The veto message and the bill will be referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 2595

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to remove my name as a cosponsor of H.R. 2595.

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

There was no objection.

COAST GUARD AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 1997

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Pursuant to House Resolution 265 and rule XXIII, 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. 2204.

□ 1822

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. 2204) to authorize appropriations for fiscal years 1998 and 1999 for the Coast Guard, and for other purposes, with Mr. DICKEY in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered as having been read the first time.

Under the rule, the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. GILCREST] and the gentleman from Tennessee [Mr. CLEMENT], each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. GILCREST].

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

Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2204. Before I discuss this bill, I would like to thank the distinguished chairman of the full committee, the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. SHUSTER], our ranking minority member, the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. OBERSTAR], and the ranking minority member of the Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation, the gentleman from Tennessee [Mr. CLEMENT], and their staff for their help and cooperation on this legislation. H.R. 2204 was developed in a bipartisan manner and deserves the support of all the Members.

The primary purpose of H.R. 2204 is to authorize funds for the United States Coast Guard for fiscal years 1998, 1999. Title I of this bill authorizes \$3.9 billion for Coast Guard activities in fiscal year 1998 and \$4 billion in fiscal year 1999. The fiscal year 1998 authorization contains an increase over the level requested by the President for the Coast Guard of approximately \$97 million. These funds primarily support additional Coast Guard efforts to interdict illegal drugs before they reach the United States.

The fiscal year 1999 authorization contains additional funds for drug interdiction and for other Coast Guard