American Automobile Labeling Act before the committee. Congress passed the American Automobile Labeling Act to give American consumers information about where the parts that go into the vehicles that they purchased were actually made. Many have criticized how the labeling act actually calculates domestic contents.

After looking into the issue, I came to the conclusion that those complaints about the accuracy of the labeling act were a valid complaint, and that is why I offered, with the full support of my dear friend the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. DINGELL), an amendment in the committee markup to address those concerns by making the labeling act a more accurate reflection of domestic content, and I am pleased that the committee endorsed our approach.

Mr. Speaker, we last authorized NHTSA's part of ISTEA back in 1991. This is a straightforward and bipartisan reauthorization bill that deserves the support of the entire Congress, and I would urge its adoption.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. DINGELL).

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2691, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Reauthorization Act 1998. The bill authorizes $87.4 million over the next three years so that NHTSA can continue promoting highway safety and reducing death and injuries from vehicular accidents.

At the outset I would like to thank and commend the chairman of both the committee and the subcommittee for the rare and welcome bipartisan way in which they have handled consideration of this legislation. Issues of concern raised by the Members on this side of the aisle have been addressed and the bill was reported by the committee by voice vote.

Concern was raised during the hearings that the bill's restrictions on lobbying were too tough and would prohibit NHTSA from providing important advice to State and local governments. As a result, provisions in this bill relating to lobbying have been modified so that NHTSA is now subject to the same restrictions at the State and local levels as it is at the Federal level.

The legislation also contains important provisions that allow foreign manufacturers to account more fully for U.S. content of parts used to produce automobiles sold in the United States. Under the bill, suppliers can report U.S. content to the nearest 5 percent rather than getting no credit if the part has less than 70 percent U.S. content. This provision was carefully crafted so as not to interfere with the accounting of U.S. auto parts under the U.S.-Japan auto agreement.

The bill also requires NHTSA to disclose to the public the risks and benefits of the equipment and design features required to be installed on motor vehicles pursuant to NHTSA regulations. It also authorizes NHTSA to promote adoption of U.S. safety standards by auto producers in other countries. It also allows NHTSA to design occupant protection standards to protect unbelted occupants only if such standards do not result in a substantial increase in the risk of injury to the properly restrained occupant.

Mr. Speaker, again I want to thank the managers of the bill for their cooperation and fairness. I want to express my appreciation to the majority for their kindness in this matter. I believe this a good bill, it deserves the support of our colleagues, and I urge my colleagues to vote for the legislation.

Mr. KLINK. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BLILEY. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BLILEY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2691, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BLILEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2691, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. There being no further business for the moment, pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 5 p.m.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 56 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 5 p.m.

□ 1700

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. EMERSON) at 5 p.m.

PRIVATE CALENDAR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is Private Calendar day. The Clerk will call the bill on the Private Calendar.

RUTH HAIRSTON

The Clerk called the bill (H.R. 2729) for the private relief of Ruth Hairston by waiver of a filing deadline for appeal from a ruling relating to her application for a survivor annuity.

There being no objection, the Clerk read the bill as follows:

H.R. 2729

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

SECTION 1. WAIVER OF DEADLINE FOR APPEAL.

For purposes of a petition by Mrs. Ruth Hairston for review of the final order issued October 31, 1995, by the Merit Systems Protection Board with respect to its docket number SF–0831–95–0754–I–1, the 30-day filing deadline in section 7703(b)(1) of title 5, United States Code, is waived.

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2729, a Private Bill For the Relief of Ruth Hairston Relating to Her Application for a Survivor Annuity. I introduced this legislation in an attempt to provide relief for my constituent, Mrs. Ruth Hairston.

This legislation seeks a waiver of the 30-day period to file an appeal to the U.S. Court of Appeals. Mrs. Hairston requested reconsideration from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) on May 26, 1995 of their decision to deny her survivor annuity benefits under the Civil Service Retirement System as the ''former spouse'' of Paul Hairston. The Hairstons were married for more than 45 years when their marriage ended in divorce on March 16, 1987. Mr. Hairston had almost 35 years of civil service when he retired on June 11, 1990. When he retired, he selected a survivor annuity for Mrs. Hairston with a reduced annuity for himself.

Mrs. Hairston started to receive retirement annuity payments in 1988 but these payments were stopped after Mr. Hairston's death on February 22, 1995, because it was concluded that she was not entitled to benefits as a ''former spouse.'' When Mr. Hairston retired, there was no statutory provision which would have allowed Mrs. Hairston to receive a survivor annuity as a divorcee (former spouse). However, the Civil Service Retirement Spouse Act of 1985 changed this, and allowed Mr. Hairston to elect a survivor annuity within two years following the divorce.

Mr. Hairston did not make a formal request for Mrs. Hairston to receive a survivor annuity after the divorce (as a former spouse), neither did he make an annuity adjustment to stop Mrs. Hairston from receiving the larger portion of his retirement annuity which were due to her under community assets. He was informed that he was still being charged for a survivor annuity after his divorce and that he no longer had to allow Mrs. Hairston to have the larger portion of his annuity, yet he did not change this. The fact that Mr. Hairston did not change this annuity arrangement establishes an ''intent'' for Mrs. Hairston to received a survivor benefit after his death. Intent is one of the grounds to excuse the failure of Mr. Hairston to make a formal election (Valee versus Office of Personnel Management).

On October 31, 1995 the Merit Systems Protection Board upheld the OPM decision to deny Mrs. Hairston a survivor annuity. At the time, Mrs. Hairston was severely ill and under doctor's care and could not file a timely appeal to the U.S. Court of Appeals. Mrs. Hairston remains in poor health and faces eviction from her home because of her inability to meet her financial obligations. She desperately needs