

the sky. The bad news is the administration does not think it is necessary. That is right. If an enemy missile was launched at the United States, our super-sophisticated computers would pick it up right away and calculate exactly where it was going to hit and when. And then nothing. All we could do is wait for it to hit its target and pray for all of the lives that would be lost.

We have the capability to protect ourselves with a national missile defense. We just choose not to build it.

Madam Speaker, I remember the 1950s. Let us use our technology to protect our kids. I want our kids to grow up happy and carefree, not practicing what to do when nuclear missiles are launched at us.

Let us build a national missile defense. Let us do it for our kids.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION FOR ADJOURNMENT OF HOUSE AND SENATE FOR INDEPENDENCE DAY DISTRICT WORK PERIOD

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 491 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 491

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order, any rule of the House to the contrary notwithstanding, to consider a concurrent resolution providing for adjournment of the House and Senate for the Independence Day district work period.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. EMERSON). The gentleman from Florida (Mr. DIAZ-BALART) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Madam Speaker, for purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER). During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY), distinguished majority leader.

Mr. ARMEY. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time.

Madam Speaker, we are about to take up a resolution for adjournment for the Independence Day work period. It will be a good period of time for all of us to go home, be in touch with our constituents in our districts, something we need to do, something we enjoy doing.

While we are home, Madam Speaker, undoubtedly we are going to encounter so many constituents who are going to again express their commitment to and their concern for the education of their children. This is a major, major concern of the American people. The American people celebrate their good

schools, and they worry about the schools that are not performing on behalf of the children.

The American people take the education of their children very, very seriously. Where they can, when they have the resources, they couple, along with their wish that America have the best schools in the world for their children, their own personal commitment to put their own child in the best school possible. Every parent wants this, rich and poor alike.

Madam Speaker, just a few weeks ago we passed on to the President of the United States a bill that would have provided scholarship opportunities for the parents of poor children so that those children might be moved from a school that was failing them to a school in which the child could succeed. The President vetoed that.

Despite the fact that it was new money additional funding, the President vetoed that because he thought somehow that might be destructive to the public schools, without ever realizing that when the public schools are accountable to the parents, the public schools do better. When the parents have a right and an ability to move their children to a better school, the children are better off and the schools are better off.

Today, Madam Speaker, we will enroll a bill before we go home on this district recess period that makes available again the opportunity for choice to parents, further enhanced by tax-deductible savings accounts for those parents who can afford it so that they might be able to save their own money, in addition to the taxes they pay for schools, save their own money and have the opportunity to move their child to a better school.

Once again, the President says he is going to veto this because he says it is unfair to the poor children.

Well, no, Mr. President, you were unfair to the poor children when you vetoed the earlier bill. Are you going to couple that now to be unfair to the children whose parents work, save, sacrifice and wish only that little bit of edge that could come in tax-free savings accounts for their children's education because, once again, Mr. President, your complaint is it hurts the public schools?

This is no deduction in funds available for the public schools. It is only a modest increase in freedom and resources to living parents who know themselves to be the child's first, most dedicated teacher, to use their own resources to move the child to the best school possible.

It is time, I believe, for all of this government, the House, the Senate, and the White House to respond to the needs of the parents of America. Give each parent, rich or poor, able to save or not, the opportunity to do what each parent wants most deeply in their heart to do: provide the best possible opportunity for their child.

Do not veto that bill, Mr. President. Sign it. Show that you care for the parents who care for their children.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, House Resolution 491 provides for consideration in the House of a concurrent resolution providing for the adjournment of the House and Senate for the Independence Day work period.

All points of order are waived against the resolution and its consideration.

Madam Speaker, obviously this has been a very busy year in the House. We have spent a significant number of hours on the floor debating issues ranging from higher education priorities to transportation needs, from the self-determination of the people of Puerto Rico to financial services modernization.

The House will have passed five appropriations bills by the time we leave for our Fourth of July district work period later today, and we will hopefully pass the other appropriations bills soon after returning from the break.

While adjournment resolutions are usually privileged, a rule is needed in order to waive a point of order that could be raised against the Fourth of July district work period resolution on the grounds that it would violate section 309 of the Budget Act which prohibits the House from adjourning for more than 3 days in July unless the House has completed action on all appropriations bills.

Independence Day is a time to be back in our districts, not only celebrating the birth of this great Nation but meeting with and listening to what our constituents have to say about the issues that are important to them. I personally, as I am sure most Members of this House, have numerous meetings with constituent groups scheduled in the next days.

The Congress has very important spending decisions to make with limited funds, and time spent in our districts listening to the priorities of our constituents will be very worthwhile.

Therefore, Madam Speaker, I feel it appropriate that we in the House return to our districts for the Independence Day work period to reflect together with our constituents on the principles that founded this Nation and also to consult with them and think out loud with them on the issues that confront us in the weeks ahead.

I would urge adoption of this resolution, 491.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

(Ms. SLAUGHTER asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Florida for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, H. Res. 491 waives all points of order against the consideration of the resolution providing for

the adjournment of the House and Senate for the Independence Day district work period.

Madam Speaker, why do we need to waive points of order on this adjournment resolution? Because the Congressional Budget Act, section 309, states, "It shall not be in order in the House of Representatives to consider any resolution providing for an adjournment period of more than 3 calendar days during the month of July until the House of Representatives has approved annual appropriations bills providing new budget authority under the jurisdiction of all subcommittees on the Committee on Appropriations for the fiscal year beginning on October 1 of such year."

Unhappily, the House has not met this legal requirement. Even after today's actions, we will have passed fewer than half of the 13 appropriations bills. This failure to meet our legal budget appropriations timetable is one more in a series of missed deadlines. Congress is required by the Budget Act to complete action on the budget resolution by April 15, but the House did not pass its version of the budget resolution until June 5. And the leadership has refused to appoint conferees on the resolution; so who knows when or if a final budget resolution will be adopted?

The Budget Act also requires the Committee on Appropriations to report all annual appropriations bills by June 10. No appropriations bills were reported by June 10 and, to date, only 6 have been reported.

By June 15, Congress is required by law to complete action on reconciliation legislation. However, since we have no budget resolution, we do not even know whether we will have a reconciliation bill this year or not. So, Madam Speaker, the House has not met its basic responsibility to consider the appropriations bills that fund the Federal Government.

Is this because we have been diligently considering other urgent business? No. Unfortunately, this session the House has passed very little legislation that has a chance of being signed into law. Instead we are voting on bumper sticker bills and the constitutional amendment of the week.

The American public is asking us to address issues that affect their lives. But the leadership refuses to move any legislation that might benefit the public if it has the slightest chance of upsetting its friends.

□ 1030

We should be working on bills to protect patients' rights, like H.R. 306, which would ban genetic discrimination in health insurance. We know Americans are profoundly concerned about the future of their medical care. Last week a Pew Research Center study showed that 69 percent of Americans believe the debate over HMO regulation is very important to the Nation, and 60 percent said it is very important to them personally. But instead of acting on pending health care bills, sev-

eral supported by more than 200 bipartisan cosponsors, Congress continues to blatantly ignore this mandate from the American people.

Similarly we should be addressing child care and after-school care legislation, like the America After School Act. This program would expand after-school programs so that young people would have a safe place to go, with stimulating activities and tutoring when the school day ends. This after-school care would decrease juvenile crime while increasing student achievement, self-esteem and positive behavior.

Another pressing matter is genuine campaign finance reform. Instead of a structured debate that allows Members to make rational choices, leadership has imposed a procedure designed to debate reform to death. Their unfair rules call for the consideration of one constitutional amendment, 11 substitute bills, 258 non-germane amendments, and an unlimited number of germane amendments. But so far we have only considered one constitutional amendment, one substitute bill, and three amendments. That leaves us with 10 bills, hundreds of nongermane amendments, and an unknown number of germane amendments to deal with and we are going on recess for nearly 3 weeks.

Federal campaigns are becoming little more than a money chase to pay for increasingly expensive elections. In the most recent election cycle, spending on Federal elections shattered all records, reaching an estimated \$1.6 billion. An all-time high of \$500 million was spent on just one type of advertising, broadcast television, and yet voter turnout is at an all-time low. Fewer than half of all eligible Americans exercise their right to vote. The American people are discouraged by a system in which money seems more important than issues and the interests of large contributors seem more important than the concerns of working families. If Congress were serious about fixing our broken political system, we would pass campaign finance reform before going out of session for nearly 3 weeks.

Madam Speaker, I could go on about the unfinished agenda of the House, but the bottom line is we have failed to meet our legal responsibilities under the Budget Act, and we have failed to address the issues our constituents have told us are important.

Madam Speaker, in light of the importance of our unfinished work, I must oppose this rule providing for a nearly 3-week hiatus in the legislative work of this Congress.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I am a firm believer that history is a very important teacher. With regard to what was stated by my distinguished colleague and friend on the Committee on Rules that we

have not fulfilled the requirements of the Budget Act in that all the appropriations bills have not been passed, I myself stated that earlier, but I think it is important to look at history, even recent history, when our friends on the other side of the aisle controlled the majority in this House and had the presidency, also, by a member of their party, which obviously it is much easier when you do not have to negotiate every single appropriations bill between the White House and the Congress in divided government. Even then in the 103rd Congress, all the appropriations bills were not passed before July 1. If we go back just a few years before that, to the 101st Congress, for example, only one appropriations bill had been passed before the July recess in the first session and we will have passed five today. If we go back just a few years before that, to the 97th Congress, no appropriations bills had been passed by this House before the July recess. I think it is important to point that out.

I think that it is also important to point out and to put in context what we have done, that it is the 105th Congress, with a majority on this side of the aisle, that has balanced the Federal budget for the first time in 30 years, and that is, I think, an accomplishment that is something that we can all in this House feel proud of.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I have no requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Madam Speaker, accordingly, I would simply reiterate that this is an important resolution, that it is appropriate that we be able to think out loud and consult with our constituents in the next days.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

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

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5 of rule I, further proceedings on this resolution will be postponed until later today.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

ON JACK NICHOLSON'S VISIT TO CUBA

(Mr. DIAZ-BALART asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Madam Speaker, I read in the press this morning that a well-known actor by the name of Jack