patients the right to sue their HMO when their health suffers because they are denied the care that they need. Federal judges around the country are increasingly frustrated by the current law which prohibits patients from holding their HMOs accountable.

Take the case, for example, in Denver, where Judge John C. Porfillo of the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit noted that current law gives the courts no choice in such cases. Judge Porfillo told the New York Times he was deeply moved by the tragic circumstances of a woman who died of leukemia after her HMO denied her care.

The right to sue, Mr. Speaker, is the enforcement mechanism for all the patient protections that we are advocating as Democrats. President Clinton summed it up best when he said a right without a remedy is not a right. The Democrats' Patients' Bill of Rights would hold HMOs accountable and give patients the right to sue when they are denied the care that they need. The Republican leadership should abandon its charade and stop pushing its sham proposal and get behind the Patients' Bill of Rights.

COMMUNICATION FROM CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS) laid before the House the following communication from the chairman of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, which was read and, without objection, referred to the Committee on Appropriations:

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE,
Washington, DC, July 2, 1998.

Hon. NEWT GINGRICH,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR NEWT: Enclosed please find copies of resolutions approved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure on June 25, 1998, in accordance with 40 U.S.C. Sec. 606.

With warm regards, I remain

Sincerely,

BUD SHUSTER,
Chairman.

There was no objection.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4194, DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1999

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 501 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 501

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 1(b) of rule XXIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4194) making appropriations for the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry independent agencies, boards, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1999, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. Points of order against consideration of the bill for failure to comply with section 306 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. The amendment printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution shall be considered as adopted in the House and in the Committee of the Whole. Points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, for failure to comply with clause 2 or 6 of rule XXI are waived except as follows: page 88, line 16, through page 91, line 3. Where points of order are waived against part of a paragraph, points of order against a provision in another part of such paragraph may be made only against such provision and not against the entire paragraph. The amendment printed in the Congressional Record and numbered 12 pursuant to clause 6 of rule XXIII may be offered only by Representative Leach of Iowa or his designee, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for 40 minutes equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against that amendment are waived. During consideration of the bill for further amendment, the Chairman of the Committee of the Whole may accord priority in recognition on the basis of whether the Member offering an amendment has caused it to be printed in the portion of the Congressional Record designated for that purpose in clause 6 of rule XXIII. Amendments so printed shall be considered as read. The chairman of the Committee of the Whole may: (1) postpone until a time during further consideration in the Committee of the Whole a request for a recorded vote on any amendment; and (2) reduce to five minutes the minimum time for electronic voting on any postponed question that follows another electronic vote without intervening business, provided that the minimum time for electronic voting on the first in any series of questions shall be 15 minutes. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill, as amended, to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LINDER) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HALL), 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, House Resolution 501 is an open rule providing for consideration of H.R. 4194, the VA, HUD and Independent Agencies Appropriations bill for fiscal year 1999. The rule also includes a customary waiver of section 306 of the Budget Act relating to the prohibition on including matters within the jurisdiction of the Committee on the Budget in a measure not reported by it.

H. Res. 501 provides for one hour of general debate divided equally between the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations. The rule provides that the amendment printed in the Committee on Rules report accompanying the resolution shall be considered as adopted.

This amendment, offered by the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) will require studies on issues related to flame resistant standards and fire-related deaths.

The rule waives points of order against provisions in the bill for failure to comply with clause 2 and clause 6 of rule XXI, except as specified in the rule.

The rule also makes in order the amendment printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD numbered 12 which may be offered only by the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH) or a designee, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for 40 minutes equally divided and controlled by a proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. The rule waives all points of order against the amendment.

The rule also accords priority in recognition to Members who have preprinted their amendments in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD and allows the chairman to postpone recorded votes and reduce to 5 minutes the voting time on any postponed question, provided voting time on any first in a series of questions is not less than 15 minutes.

These provisions will facilitate consideration of amendments and guarantee the timely completion of the appropriation bills.

House Resolution 501 also provides for one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 501 is an open rule providing Members with every opportunity to amend this appropriations bill. As I stated earlier, the Committee on Rules has made in order an amendment to be offered by the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH) consisting of the text of H.R. 2, the United States Housing Act, which passed the House by an overwhelming 293 to 132 vote last year. This bill will reform failing public housing authorities, impose professional management standards on projects receiving Federal money, and impose a rational housing policy reforms.

While this legislation passed the House last year, we have allowed it to be offered on this bill because it is necessary to advance this important housing reform legislation before the end of the legislative session.

H.R. 4194 appropriates a total of $70.89 billion for fiscal 1999. I want to

mention a number of important provisions in this bill.

First, as I mentioned, the House will have the opportunity to consider a comprehensive housing reform amendment. However, in addition to these critical reforms, the appropriations bill amply funds housing programs for the Nation's elderly and the disabled, homeless assistance grants, Native American housing, the HOME program, and increases funding for severely distressed housing.

Regarding appropriations for our veterans, this country has a commitment to our men and women in uniform and we, as Americans, owe these dedicated men and women a debt of gratitude. Under this bill, medical care for our Nation's veterans is funded at $17.1 billion, an increase of $39 million over the President's request, and veterans medical research is funded at $310 million, $10 million over the President's request. Overall, the Department of Veterans Affairs discretionary programs are funded at $19 billion, $168 million above the President's request.

Finally, H.R. 4194 also continues this Congress' efforts to protect America's environmental resources. This bill provides needed funds for Safe Drinking Water State Revolving Funds, Clean Water State Revolving Funds, State Air Grants, and a number of programs that will ensure clean water for our citizens. We do not often get credit for our efforts on environmental protection, but this bill is yet another example of the strong environmental protection efforts we have made.

The Committee on Appropriations has balanced a wide array of interests and has ensured that all funding is spent efficiently and where it is needed most.

I commend the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS), chairman, and the ranking minority member, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STOKES) for the bipartisan manner in which they constructed this appropriations bill.

H.R. 4194 was favorably reported out of the Committee on Appropriations, as was the open rule by the Committee on Rules.

I urge my colleagues to support the rule so that we may proceed with general debate and consideration of the merits of this important bill.

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

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LINDER) for yielding me the time.

This rule will allow for consideration of H.R. 4194, which is a bill that makes appropriations in fiscal year 1999 for the Departments of Veterans Affairs, Housing and Urban Development, Environmental Protection Agency and other independent agencies.

As my colleague from Georgia described, this rule provides one hour of general debate, equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations.

The rule also makes in order an amendment containing the text of H.R. 2, as passed by the House, May 14, 1997, which makes reforms in Federal public housing programs. Under the rule, no amendments may be offered to H.R. 2. It is inappropriate to consider H.R. 2 in this fashion, and it threatens the progress of the underlying appropriation bill. Therefore, I will oppose this rule.

The VA, HUD appropriations bill is a very important measure. It provides $94.4 billion to fund critical programs such as veterans care and cash benefits, housing assistance for working families, disaster victims, emergency relief, and environmental protection.

This bill is too important to serve merely as the vehicle for moving a public housing bill. Because the administration has threatened a veto of H.R. 2, the appropriations bill containing H.R. 2 would face a veto threat, and it will get bogged down in a hopelessly complex House-Senate conference.

Normal legislative procedure requires that the House and Senate appoint conferees to reconcile the differences between the House and Senate bills. Yet House conferees have never been selected. During the Committee on Rules hearing on the appropriations bill, both the chairman of the subcommittee, the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS), and the ranking member, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STOKES) indicated they did not want H.R. 2 to be added to their bill. Unfortunately, their wishes were ignored.

Both the gentleman from New York (Mr. LAFALCE), ranking member of the Committee on Banking and Financial Services, and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY), ranking member of the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity, strongly object to this action.

The rule contains other inconsistencies. While the 364 pages of legislation contained in H.R. 2 will be protected from points of order against legislating on an appropriation bill, other legislative provisions were not protected. A provision to reduce the flammability of children's sleepwear was left unprotected. Also left to be stripped out of the bill was a provision to increase the Federal housing administration single family loan limit. A large bipartisan coalition in the House supports this increase. It is difficult to understand such inconsistency in the rule.

The underlying appropriations bill that we are taking up does a fair job of balancing competing interests, given the constraints of the 302(b) allocation. Still, I do not agree with all the choices that the subcommittee made, such as eliminating AmeriCorps. This program has made valuable contributions to needy Americans, including raising student literacy rates.

Mr. Speaker, this is a bad rule. It circumvents the normal process of the House. It will increase the risk that important veterans, housing and environmental programs will be delayed. It will interfere with the progress that has already been made between the House and Senate on public housing reform.

For these reasons, I would ask my colleagues to vote against this rule.

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

□ 1045

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN).

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I rise in opposition to this rule.

As a member of the subcommittee which produced the underlying VA–HUD appropriations bill, I do so with no small amount of frustration. The gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS) and all members of our subcommittee labored long and hard to produce this bill and, as we produced it, this bill is worthy of support. But this rule is not.

This rule fails to protect an important amendment that I offered, along with the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. NEUMANN), that was approved by the full Committee on Appropriations. Specifically, our amendment would raise the FHA loan limit to increase opportunities for home ownership as well as increase important science and research programs at the National Science Foundation and for veterans' medical research by $80 million.

By passing this rule, Members need to understand that we take away the opportunity for at least 25,000 Americans every year to purchase their first home. Members also need to understand this rule will reduce funding for the National Science Foundation by $70 million and veterans' medical research by $10 million.

What I find even more egregious is at the same time this rule circumvents the work of the Committee on Appropriations, it fully protects the rights of the authorizing committee, namely the Committee on Banking and Financial Services, to add the entire text, some 365 pages, of their housing authorization bill to this appropriations bill. Something is terribly wrong with this picture.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I very much appreciate my colleague yielding to me, and I must say that I do so only to say that I very much appreciate the remarks of my colleague and I want the House to note my grave reservations about this rule.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Reclaiming my time, Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments.

In summary, Mr. Speaker, the work of the Committee on Appropriations is badly undermined by the rule and,

most important, it shortchanges important national priorities of home ownership and investment in science and research. This rule deserves to be defeated.

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY), the ranking minority member on the Committee on Appropriations.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I wish to congratulate the previous speaker, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN), who has done a lot of very hard good work on this and a number of other appropriation bills. I appreciate his excellent statement here this morning.

Let me simply say that this rule should be defeated for a number of reasons. First of all because it adds, against the opposition of the committee that is supposed to handle the bill, it adds a 300-page nongermane housing authorization bill, which is highly controversial, to legislation which had been fairly well worked out with respect to other issues.

Secondly, it does not protect from being stricken on a point of order a very important provision that was added by the committee which would strengthen people's ability to buy homes in this country. Because of the strange nature of this rule, there will be cuts in the amounts that homeowners can borrow from FHA to finance a home purchase from $109,000 to $86,000. That will have the effect of knocking 30,000 families out of the ability to buy a home with FHA help this year. And we simply should not be doing that.

There are lobby groups around town who might think that is a good thing to do. I do not think homeowners will agree with them. I do not think that realtors, who have to work to put people in homes, will agree with them. I do not think home builders will agree with them either.

I would also say that at the same time that the committee provided this huge nongermane attachment to the bill, it prevented us from offering a bill which would correct the fact that this bill cuts $276 million below last year in terms of actual delivered health care to veterans in this country. They prevented us from offering an amendment that would have allowed us to increase funding for veterans' health care by an additional $1.7 billion. As far as I am concerned, those are all the reasons that we need to oppose this rule.

I would simply say that I do not understand why on appropriation bill after appropriation bill the Committee on Rules seems to intervene to make those bills more partisan and more controversial than they were when they emerged from the committee. It just seems to me that is not a way to build a constructive relationship which is going to be needed to conduct the rest of this session. It is not a way to defend the public interest of people in this country. And I would urge a vote against the rule.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York (Mr. LAZIO).

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time and for bringing this rule to the floor, which I think is a fair rule and speaks to one of the most important issues that this Congress and last Congress, quite frankly, have taken up, and that is reform of our failed public housing system.

This is a bill that we have had fully vetted before. We have been working on this for 3 years. There are no surprises in this bill. We have had this bill marked up in committee. We have had this predecessor bill passed with a vote of about 315 to 107 in the last Congress. In this Congress it passed by a vote of 293 to 132, with over one-third of the Democratic conference voting in support of this bill.

This is a bill that our Members understand, have voted for and believe deeply in. This is a message of empowerment. This is a message of accountability. What we are saying with public housing reform is that it is time to stop wasting money, throwing money at the public housing authorities that have failed year after year.

Mr. Speaker, in one housing authority in New Orleans, which HUD scores itself, they score it from 1 being the lowest to 100 being the highest, do my colleagues know what that housing authority scores year after year? Not 70 or 80, but 25 and 27. Imagine if our children came home year after year with a scorecard of 27. We would do something about it pretty quickly. But in this Congress we have failed to act, to get the job done to stop wasting money and stop forcing people to live in government-subsidized slums.

We want to help people out. We want to give people vouchers. We want to help people get the mobility to move to get better education. We want to give them the choice to have improvement for their families. We want to give people the ability to take a rental voucher and use it to buy a home.

In many areas families have a rental voucher that is worth $800 or $900 or $1,000. And because of the work that we have done on balancing the budget and bringing costs down and bringing interest rates down, home ownership now is within the reach of many folks, by not people who rent; not people who are in public housing. We want to change that. We want to empower them. We want to give them the ability to actually own their own home by using these rental vouchers that do not build up equity, that do not give them hope, that do not give them opportunity, and transform that to a choice-based system that allows poor folks living in public housing to own their own home, to build up equity, to have a sense of hope, and to give their kids a sense of opportunity.

This bill is important for so many different reasons. It is important because we want to devolve control of decision-making from Washington, D.C. to local communities. Now, why is that important? Is that just rhetoric? It is not just rhetoric. It is important because we want to build leadership in local communities, because we know that we cannot possibly know what goes on in every community throughout the country. We cannot possibly know what the housing demands are in every possible area of the country.

What we do say with this statement of public housing reform is that we are going to provide more incentives for local leadership and more resident management. We are going to let residents manage their own building. What a novel idea. Let people run their own building so they have control over their own lives, so they can make choices for themselves, so they can have more peace of mind.

And, increasingly, in cities throughout the country, including the city closest to me in New York City, we are finding leading law enforcement officials that are saying a key strategy and a key building block for safe streets and better law enforcement and better crime control are housing programs; to decentralize decision-making authority, which allows people to live in better conditions. Empower people, give people an investment, a sense of being a part of the community, a sense of place, not just being warehoused in an area, which is, frankly, what has happened in too many places because of the Federal housing programs that we have had for decades.

We are warehousing people where we have super concentrations of poverty. And the result of that is exceptionally high crime rates that children have to live with, no services in the area because no businesses can afford to stay around there, no working class in the area, so there is no role models, and so what we have is hopelessness and despair.

In this chamber, in this building we feel maybe sanitized from that. But if we were to go out to America and go to some of the poorest areas in the country, we would be ashamed of the fact that we have not made the changes that need to be made; ashamed of the fact that we know the solutions are out there. We know what to do. We know we need to get the mixed income. We know we need to give more responsibility to individuals and to communities.

We know what we have to do, but every month and every year that we put off making a decision because of some procedural hodgepodge complaint, we are forcing more kids, more adults, and more families to live in despair, in hopelessness, lacking opportunity.

Now, we can go back to our districts and thump our fists and say, oh, yeah, we stood up for this, we stood up for that procedural principle, but I tell my colleagues right now, our choice now is to get the job done. Get the job done. We know what needs to be done. The House has passed this bill twice. Now,

let us move this vehicle and send it to the Senate and get it properly done and get it signed by the White House. This is not about procedure, this is about people. This is about caring for folks, for making the changes.

Now, I have heard some people say that they do not want this to happen because they do not want to deny an accomplishment to this Congress. And I cannot believe a single person who takes the oath of office in this chamber would actually vote in accordance with that. I know there are 71 Democrats, one-third of the Democratic conference, who stood up and stood tall and took this vote for empowerment and for change and for hope and for opportunity; for helping people to have control over their lives, to build equity, to use vouchers for home ownership, to do all these great things; to stop pouring money down a rat hole, to say that we can use that money to help empower people, to give them a better life, to make sure they can clear out what has formerly been an area where crack dealers hang out, and to plant those fields so that the kids can play outside with playgrounds because we have given tenants the responsibility to control their own back yard, to manage their own development, to use their voucher for home ownership.

This level of choice and empowerment is exactly what the most innovative people, both Republicans and Democrats that are out there in urban areas and poor areas and suburban areas, are doing right now. They need this bill. Do not raise another procedural obstacle just to say that we can be denied this opportunity to try to change lives for the better.

Mr. WISE. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. LAZIO of New York. I yield to the gentleman from West Virginia.

Mr. WISE. Just a question of the gentleman, Mr. Speaker. I am one of the one-third of the Democrats that voted for the bill, but it seems to me it is the Republican leadership that is responsible for appointing conferees and moving it to conference. Why has that not happened?

Mr. LAZIO of New York. I would say to the gentleman that this is considered the best possible, most effective vehicle to get it done. The substance the gentleman voted for has not changed one iota. It is the very same bill that the gentleman voted for earlier.

Mr. WISE. If the gentleman will continue to yield, why has it not it gone to conference? The Republican leadership had the ability to appoint the conferees and move it to conference. I voted on that a few months ago.

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Reclaiming my time, Mr. Speaker, as the gentleman knows, it takes two houses, both the other body and this body, to get the job done. And it is the opinion of both bodies that this is the best vehicle to move it along, on the leadership on both sides. So I would ask that my colleagues not put up artificial procedural obstacles in the way of getting the job done, of doing the right thing.

I would also mention, for those people who have said, oh, this is a lot of work that is on an appropriations bill, but in the last appropriations bill that was done there were a lot of folks who stood for the so-called mark-to-market section (8) authorizing language, with over 100 pages of authorizing language on an appropriation vehicle. I see the gentleman from Massachusetts, who supported that, using that appropriations vehicle to authorize. Now, I was not, quite frankly, in support of that, but that was the precedent that was set in the last Congress.

My message now is, let us get the job done. Let us not leave people behind. We know what to do. Let us not play games. Let us get the job done for America.

□ 1100

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the very distinguished gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STOKES).

Mr. STOKES. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this rule. It makes a mockery of the legislative procedures that have governed the debate on appropriations bills for decades.

It used to be the case that the Committee on Appropriations went to the Committee on Rules primarily to get their bills protected from points of order due to lack of authorizing legislation. In this rule, however, we have provisions left unprotected for which waivers were sought by the Committee on Appropriations.

Incredibly, reams of authorizing legislation that have no business in an appropriations measure are being included, over the objections of the Committee on Appropriations. I suppose, looking at the track record of the Committee on Banking and Financial Services during the past two Congresses, it is not surprising that they should adopt this approach.

Virtually every significant housing legislation provision passed during the past 3½ years have been contained in an appropriations bill. They have not been able to do their job. This year, they seem to be admitting defeat earlier than usual. It is one thing to include major legislative provisions in appropriations conference reports near the end of a session when time is running short. To do so at this stage of the process is a major admission of failure.

I agree that there is a real need for enactment of housing authorizations. However, I and a number of other Members of the House and Senate and, perhaps most significantly, the President have a serious disagreement with certain provisions of the House-passed bill that the rules seek to attach to this appropriations bill.

The only way these issues can be resolved and a housing bill signed into law is through negotiation and compromise. I am told by my counterparts on the authorizing committee that such negotiations had been proceeding in a serious and constructive way, at least until this maneuver. Passing essentially the same bill through the House a second time does nothing to advance the process. About all it does is poison the well of good will.

Perhaps the backers of this negotiation think they can use the appropriations process to cram an unacceptable bill down the throats of the President and congressional opponents. In the end, I doubt that they will succeed in doing so. But I fear that they may drag down our appropriations bill in the attempt.

A second major problem is that the rule selectively picks just a couple of provisions in the committee-reported bill to leave unprotected against points of order. One of these is the provision raising the limits on FHA-insured mortgages. I believe that what the Committee on Appropriations did was a constructive step towards expanding home ownership. Some may disagree.

But if the rule had simply provided protection against points of order, anyone who disagreed with that provision would have a chance to offer an amendment to strike it and the House would have a debate and a vote. I suspect our position would prevail, since the majority of the membership of the House has written to the Committee on Appropriations asking that an FHA loan limit provision be included in the bill.

But, in any event, the House should have had a chance to work its will on this issue. This rule denies the House that opportunity by allowing any individual Member to remove the provision from the bill simply by raising a point of order.

In summary, the bill reported by our committee is a reasonable bill, though not without its own flaws. On balance, the appropriations bill is worthy of support. Unfortunately, the rule is basically a mechanism for turning our bill into something less reasonable and less worthy of support.

I urge a no vote on the rule.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KNOLLENBERG).

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the rule for the VA-HUD appropriations bill for fiscal year 1999. Regardless of what we might hear, it is an open and fair rule. This rule does nothing to stop an open debate on a very important issue, and that is the Kyoto Protocol. Let me repeat that. The rule does nothing to stop an open debate on a very important issue, the Kyoto Protocol. I am pleased that the we can have an open debate on this issue as the rule provides.

There are those who want to circumvent the U.S. Constitution by implementing a treaty before it is ratified by the Senate. The VA-HUD appropriations bill limits funding to implement

the Kyoto treaty until the Senate ratification, period.

We need this funding limitation. The Kyoto Protocol would have a devastating impact on this economy of ours. It would kill millions of jobs. And I think everybody realizes that it will kill jobs. Even the administration realizes that. That will result in higher prices and significantly a lower standard of living for Americans.

As a result, there is strong opposition to this agreement in Congress. And the President simply does not have the votes to win ratification in the Senate. Faced with this dilemma, the Clinton administration is attempting to circumvent the will of Congress by implementing the Kyoto treaty bit by bit, piece by piece, through a series of regulatory actions.

Now, it is important to note, what does the Kyoto funding limitation do? It prohibits only certain categories of regulatory activities that have the purpose of implementing the Kyoto Protocol without Senate ratification. It applies only to the development, proposal, and finalization of rules, regulations, orders, and decrees that implement the unratified Protocol or that are designed for such implementation.

What does the Kyoto funding limitation not do? Contrary to some claims, it is important to note that this language does not affect existing programs and ongoing activities to carry out the United States' voluntary commitments under the 1992 Climate Change Convention. It does not hinder legitimate climate science research activities or studies or existing funding for research and development. In fact, all other EPA actions and programs funded by this bill for environmental and other purposes, including climate change, are not affected by this limitation.

So I would urge my colleagues on both sides, please oppose any attempts to strike the Kyoto funding limitation and support the rule for consideration of VA-HUD.

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. LAFALCE).

(Mr. LAFALCE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

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

Mr. Speaker, I wish to commend the chairman and distinguished ranking member of the Subcommittee on VA, HUD and Independent Agencies, the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STOKES), for the excellent job that they have done in reporting out a very good appropriations bill, an appropriations bill that if it were the bill that was reported out of subcommittee, we probably all would be able to support in both a bipartisan and perhaps even a unanimous fashion today. Unfortunately, that is not the bill that has come to the floor of the House of Representatives.

The Committee on Rules has not only blurred the distinction between the appropriations and the authorizing process, they have obliterated it. The fact of the matter is the authorizing committees in both the House and the Senate have acted. The House authorizing committee acted in May of 1997. The Senate authorizing committee acted on a public housing bill in June of 1997, the full Senate and the full House that is; and conferees still have not been appointed.

The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGRICH) and Senate Majority Leader LOTT have not appointed conferees to bills that were passed in the spring of 1997. And now the Committee on Rules, in an obliteration of the authorizing process, is attempting to foist upon us in the appropriations process a very controversial bill, a bill that is controversial not only within this House, a bill that is controversial within the Senate, a bill on which Republicans in the Senate and Republicans in the House have serious disagreement over.

I ask this body to preserve the integrity of the authorizing process. Both bodies, the House and the Senate, have acted. Let the leaders appoint conferees and let the conferees from the authorizing committee resolve our differences and then let us pass an appropriations bill that does what an appropriations bill is supposed to do, appropriate.

I rise today to join the distinguished ranking member of the Rules Committee, Representative MOAKLEY, in opposition to the rule for consideration of H.R. 4194, the fiscal year 1999 Appropriations bill for the Veterans Administration, the Department of Housing and Urban Development and Independent Agencies. While I believe H.R. 4194 is a good bill and could garner strong bipartisan support, I am opposed to the rule's treatment of Chairman LEACH's amendment to include H.R. 2, the draconian reform to our Federal housing programs, in this funding bill.

The Rule before us violates the principles of this House. The House is divided into committees. As I see it, the work of those committees is divided into two categories: Appropriating and authorizing. Authorizers, such as myself, are charged with considering programmatic policy questions, while appropriators are charged with making difficult funding decisions within the constraints of the budget resolution. These are two very distinct roles. In recognition of that fact, the Rules of the House permit Members to strike authorizing provisions included in—or offered as an amendment to—appropriations bills by raising points of order against such provisions.

Nonetheless, it appears that the Rule before us applies that longstanding policy only when it is convenient to the majority party. For instance, the Rule waives points of order against Chairman LEACH's amendment to incorporate H.R. 2, the draconian public and assisted housing reform bill into the HUD–VA bill. Despite the fact that the House and Senate Democrats, along with the Administration, have been negotiating to resolve the contentious policy issues raised in H.R. 2 and its Senate counterpart, S. 462, the Rule facilitates efforts to circumvent negotiations even at the risk of frustrating progress on this important funding bill. Today, we should be focusing our attention on the important bill at hand, H.R. 4194, leaving contentious public housing issues to be debated and resolved separately.

While consideration of H.R. 2 is protected, the rule fails to waive points of order against provisions included in the bill raising the loan limits for the Federal Housing Administration's single family loan program. The FHA amendment, another authorizing provision, was unanimously approved by the Appropriations Committee and pays for an increase of $80 million for veterans research and the National Science Foundation. It is a priority of the Administration and reflects a good compromise between the Administration's request and private sector interests. Nevertheless, the Rule fails to waive points of order against that authorizing provision.

The Rule's treatment of H.R. 2 and the amendment to the FHA loan limit defies logic. Under H.R. 2, 709,000 fewer low-income households would be provided Federal housing assistance in 10 years. Striking the increase in FHA loan limits would put at risk the dream of homeownership for many potential homeowners. As I see it, the real result we will have in proceeding in this manner is to ensure that the rich get richer and the poor get poorer.

Again, I urge my colleagues to join me in firm opposition to this rule on H.R. 4194.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE).

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

I do rise in support of this rule, particularly that portion of it which provides for the consideration of the amendment by the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. LAZIO) to replace the 1937, 1937, United States Housing Act with a House-passed, already-passed version of H.R. 2.

H.R. 2 contains many important provisions that would significantly decentralize the public housing system and require greater community involvement from public housing residents.

Under the measure, local housing agencies could give residents a choice of paying either 30 percent of their income in rent or paying a flat rent agreed to by the tenant and the housing officials. This would benefit tenants because the rent would not necessarily increase with their income, as occurs now.

The bill would also require most unemployed residents of public housing or subsidized rental units to perform at least 8 hours of community service.

Additionally, in order to infuse more of the working poor into public housing, the bill would require that no more than 35 percent of new tenants be people who earn 30 percent or less of an area's median income.

I would also urge support for three measures I authored which were included in the final version of H.R. 2.

First, the bill would reward housing authorities, like those in Delaware, that are innovative and efficient.

Secondly, the bill would allow housing authorities to screen out sex offenders who might endanger children living in public housing.

And, finally, it allows high-performing housing authorities like the Dover and Delaware State Housing Authorities to use funds from disposition housing, that is, when housing is torn down, to purchase replacement scattered site dwellings.

As my colleagues may recall, H.R. 2 passed this Chamber overwhelmingly 293–132 on May 14, 1997. So I have every confidence that this bill will not weigh down the VA–HUD appropriations bill.

Furthermore, when Congress has a clear picture of what final reforms will be made to the public housing system, it can make better informed decisions of how much money to appropriate to that program.

For all the Members who share the goal of transforming public housing from a way of life into a better life for low-income children and their families, I urge them to support this amendment.

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY).

Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I wanted to thank both the chairman, the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS), as well as the ranking member, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STOKES), for the very hard work that they have done on attempting to bring to the House floor the bill that I had hoped to support, a bill that would have put $100 million into new vouchers under the section 8 program, a bill that would have put $150 million new money into the homelessness, a bill that would have put $500 million into the public housing modernization program, and a bill that would have put $10 million into the Fair Housing Enforcement Program.

Unfortunately, despite the fact that that attempt was made, there was sort of a sneak attack that took place yesterday morning in the Committee on Rules. It was a sneak attack done by the chairman of the Committee on Housing who attempted to circumvent the process, without any pride of his own authorship, of being able to get a bill out of our committee and onto the House floor in proper manner. But instead, because he cannot work out a compromise with the House and Senate and the administration on a bill that he has put forth that is far too radical for people to be able to accept in terms of the number of poor people that are going to be thrown out on the street, the fact that hundreds and hundreds of thousands, our estimate at HUD is over 700,000, very, very poor people will be put out on the street. And that is what is going on here.

We are doing nothing more than saying to the poorest of the poor that they do not count, they do not matter, that what we care about is making sure that the buildings look good.

Well, listen, folks, this is not about whether or not everybody can walk around and go back home and say, gosh, public housing looks terrific because now we have moderate-income people in public housing. We have got to make sure that we do not abandon the poor, and that is what this bill will do.

Do not turn our back on the poor. It is a terrible thing to do. Please reach into our conscience and recognize, yes, we can go back and get all sorts of kudos for cleaning it up, but if the price of cleaning it up is throwing out the people that live there, we have not accomplished anything. They might look good to their constituents, but in their heart, they know what they have done is wrong. Vote against this bill. It is wrong-headed, and it is wrong-hearted.

□ 1115

I would also like to point out, Mr. Speaker, that in another attack on the legislation that had been, I think, evenhanded and worked out by both the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STOKES), there were provisions to raise the loan limits on the FHA program. Those are critically important so that we do not continue to keep the FHA program totally targeted towards very, very poor people and not allow some people that live in more moderate-income neighborhoods to be able to participate.

That provision, which 230 Members of this House, both Democrat and Republican, supported, has now been stripped out of the bill. A point of order is going to be made against it, and we will lose it. As a result of that we are going to see FHA weakened, we are going to see the ability of our country to be able to put forth meaningful housing programs hurt, and I just think that if we are going to do this, we had a process of negotiation that we were all participating in, we were close to an agreement; if we could have allowed that to continue to go forward, we could have avoided the mess that is going to occur on the House floor for the rest of the day today.

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, the VA HUD appropriations bill contains bipartisan legislation that I introduced with the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ANDREWS) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON), two of this Congress' experts on fire safety. It would direct the Consumer Product Safety Commission to reinstate fire standards which governed children's sleepwear, kept our children, kept our kids, safe for more than 25 years.

A coalition of health and safety groups, including the American Burn Association, the National Fire Protection Association, the Coalition for American Trauma Care, the American College of Surgeons, the American Public Health Association, the Emergency Nurses Association, all of them support the return to the previous fire safety standards because they know how important it is to protect our children from devastating burn injuries.

During the committee consideration of the bill, the chairman of the committee agreed and promised to ensure that this legislation would be protected in this bill, that our kids would be protected. Unfortunately, unfortunately, the Republican leadership in this House broke that agreement made by one of their own committee chairs.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly oppose this rule because it breaks that agreement which has protected an amendment to save children in this country from fire burns and from death. For 25 years children's sleepwear was held to a higher standards of flammability than other kinds of clothing. It made it so that they would self-extinguish after exposure to a small flame. Manufacturers were required to test every part of the garments, the seams, and trim and everything else, in terms of ensuring that high standard for our kids' safety. The National Fire Protection Agency estimates that there would have been 10 times more deaths associated with children's sleepwear without this standard.

And when the Consumer Product Safety Commission eliminated those, a coalition of groups came together. People in the House came together to say let us reinstate those regulations so that our kids are safe.

We had this piece of legislation, we agreed on this piece of legislation, and the Republican leadership in this House says, no, let us leave our kids unprotected and not make sure that this bill cannot be struck down in this effort.

Where are we? Who are we committed to? Are we committed to special interests around this country, or are we committed to kids and to families in this country?

This is a simple piece of legislation. It requires no money. It just says let us have the will to make sure our kids are safe and reinstate those regulations as it has to do with their sleepwear.

Mr. Speaker, I oppose this rule, and my colleagues should vote against it.

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

Mr. Speaker, the gentlewoman from Connecticut points up the flammability language in this bill, and there was a technical error in drafting it, and the money provided for the Consumer Product Safety Commission says $5 billion in the report. It was meant to be $5 million, and I ask unanimous consent that that technical correction be agreed to.

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

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I object.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Objection is heard.

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

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ANDREWS).

(Mr. ANDREWS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Ohio for yielding this time to me.

I oppose this rule, Mr. Speaker, because of its outrageous assault on the consumers of this country. For 24 years it was a law of this country that when a shopper went into a store and thought about buying clothing for an infant, if the clothing was not treated in such a way that it would not burn, if it was not treated for flammability, we knew it, because there was a label on it, and we knew enough not to put a 3-month-old or a 4-month-old down for the night in a crib with clothing that might catch on fire and burn the child to death. For 24 years emergency room nurses and arson experts and firefighters across this country said it worked.

In 1996, for reasons that are beyond any of us that have any common sense, the Consumer Product Safety Committee changed that rule. It was a rule change that was opposed by the fire community, by the medical community, by the children's advocates of this country.

This Congress decided to do something to fix it. The gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO), the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON) and I introduced legislation to put the old law back to where it was. Thanks to the efforts of the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STOKES) and the members of this committee, we are moving forward that law.

We thought today that we would have a chance to talk about it on this floor and vote on it, but for reasons that are mysterious and unbeknownst to me, we are not going to get that chance because later on, Mr. Speaker, here is what is going to happen. We get to the point of this bill where this consumer protection standard is presented. One Member, one, will have the chance to stand up and object to it, and it will be stripped out of the bill with no vote.

Mr. Speaker, if there are Members who disagree with this law, and I understand in good faith that there could be, let them come to this floor, let them take this well, and let them argue their point, and let us put it up for a vote. The fair and reasonable thing to have done would have been to permit an amendment that would have stripped this provision from the bill and put it up for a vote. But the people who oppose this provision do not want their fingerprints on the opposition to this provision because they could not go home, they could not look their constituents in the eye and say, ''I just voted to weaken consumer standards for your children.''

If my colleagues believe that is the right thing to do, then vote on it. My colleagues should have the courage to come to this floor and put their name on it.

Mr. Speaker, this is wrong, and I believe the Republican leadership of this House, failing the defeat of this rule, which I urge, ought to have the courage to bring to the floor this bill on a stand-alone vote so all 435 of us can go on the record and explain to our constituents where we stand.

If my colleagues ever wanted an argument as to why we need campaign finance reform, this is it.

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

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER).

(Mr. ROEMER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROEMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to salute my good friends, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STOKES) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS), who I have the utmost respect for, but I also rise to oppose this rule and to plead with my colleagues for a fairer and more just allocation of the resources in this bill.

Now we came to a historic bipartisan balanced budget agreement last year, and that makes many of our decisions in this Congress even more difficult, because while we have a balanced budget, now it is our obligation to fairly and justly spend the money within the budget. And I argue with my colleagues that spending on a space station, not the space program which I strongly support, the $13 billion, but a space station, is not just, right and fair to the rest of America.

The space station started in 1984. It was going to be completed in 1992 with a crew size of eight for a total cost of $8 billion. Today our international space station is going to be completed maybe in 2006 with a crew size of maybe 6 to 8 people for a total cost of $98 billion; from 8 billion to 98 billion plus.

Now at the same time, and we will get into this debate when I offer an amendment, at the same time we look at this bill, AmeriCorps for our working people to go, with responsibility to go earn their money for school, is zero funded; $428 million is gone. The community development block grants for poor inner-city people, 80 million less than 1998. Veterans facility, major construction, cut by 20 percent.

Do we want to fund the space station that is a hundred billion dollars in cost, or are we going to justly and fairly fund programs for the rest of America?

Defeat the rule, and let us get a fair allocation of this bill.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I reluctantly yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. SMITH), who is going to speak against the rule.

Mrs. LINDA SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I do reluctantly speak against the rule, but I found out late last night that an amendment that I think helps us keep our word was ruled out of order, and, had I had enough time and understood what was happening this morning, I certainly would have talked to our leadership about it. I do not like to speak against rules because I know it is so hard to come up with a bill that is good, and there is a lot of good things in this bill.

But a couple of months ago we started a process that was very disturbing, and we started it on the transportation budget. What we decided to do was use an excuse to cut veterans' health care.

Now this was a bipartisan decision. It started with the President, and he decided we take a big cut into veterans' health care benefits and say, if someone ever started smoking when they were in the military, that they would not be covered. Well, that really was not the issue. They just wanted an excuse to cut veterans' health care.

Well, Mr. Speaker, they did such a poor job when they hung it into the transportation bill, see, because they wanted the $10 billion plus to spend on their transportation projects, that it was done so poorly they had to redraft it and hang it on the IRS reform bill to make sure that they got these veterans' health care cuts in.

Now everybody went home on the Fourth and promised if they could fix it, they would fix it, but it was in a bigger bill, and that bigger bill they just needed to vote for; transportation was so important. So, if they had been able to, they certainly would fix it.

Now today we are after another vote, the IRS reform vote. Not only did they not fix it, as many people said they would do as they traveled around the Nation, but they confirmed it in, again, a rider, something put on in a conference that they are not real proud about doing out front, and, yes, this was bipartisan; conferences are bipartisan. Both the Democrats and Republicans went behind closed doors and negotiated and decided that they were going to again confirm a cut in veterans' health care.

Now some say, well, it is just fair. If someone started smoking in the military, they should not get health care later in life. Now that is a different issue, if that were the only issue, but it is not the only issue. The real issue is it went to the bottom line of the veterans budget, and they cut money out.

Now the veterans of the Vietnam war is growing, and Democrats and Republicans alike, and the President, can deny that people that fought in the Vietnam war are aging. Second World War. We can pretend their health care goes away, but it does not, and we made a commitment in this country to those men and women that fought for our country.

Now today we stand here again, and this bill could have fixed it, and this bill does not fix it. So vote against the rule.

□ 1130

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL).

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, it is a travesty when this Congress puts the interests of an industry over the interests of our citizens. I am ashamed that this is what is happening today.

This rule not only subjects fire retardant standards for children's sleepwear to a point of order, but includes a special interest provision by the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) which would delay flammability standards for upholstered furniture.

Mr. Speaker, this provision is not a good faith compromise. This is a provision which was drafted by the special interests, with no input from the Consumer Product Safety Commission or the National Association of State Fire Marshals. Yet, the staff of the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. Wicker) felt they could tell other staffs that the fire marshals had accepted this compromise.

Untrue. This is a serious problem here, just another example of misrepresenting this issue. We cannot put the upholstered furniture industry's interest above the public interest.

I strongly urge my colleagues to oppose this rule and demand that the Consumer Product Safety Commission be allowed to continue their work on flammability standards and children's sleepwear. Say ''no'' to the $16 billion upholstery furniture industry. Say ''yes'' to saving lives and preventing fires.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER).

Mr. WICKER. Mr. Speaker, I had not intended to speak on this rule, although I do support it, but my name was called, and I want to explain what the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL) was talking about.

Mr. Speaker, there is a provision in this bill not to stop a rule on flammability, but to let scientists decide what the exact effect is, not only on consumers, but also on the people who work around these flame retardants. There can be very harmful effects to the workers and also to the consumers, and we need to let the scientists look at this. This provision provides for outside peer review.

I never authorized my staff to say that the fire marshals supported this provision. What is true is that I have worked as member of the Committee on Appropriations with members of the Committee on Commerce, and they are now satisfied. So if someone said the fire marshals have signed off on it, that is inaccurate. What is true is that the Committee on Commerce does now support the provision.

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. KILPATRICK).

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

Ms. KILPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I want to first commend the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS), as well as our ranking member, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STOKES), for the work they have done in a bipartisan effort on a very good VA-HUD bill that I had intended to vote for.

It is unfortunate that the Committee on Rules now saw fit to put H.R. 2, our housing bill, into the HUD bill. I am a member of Committee on Banking and Financial Services, where H.R. 2 came out of. It is very controversial. The Senate passed it last year, as well as us, in the early part of the year. They have not been able to come to a conclusion, although they have been negotiating. It is a tough bill that should be debated on its own.

The process that the Committee on Rules used to put H.R. 2, the housing bill, into VA-HUD is unfortunate. It is unfortunate because it circumvents the process. There has been a lot of work and effort put into the bill. It is a very important bill and has many things that need to be worked out.

I urge my colleagues to oppose the rule. Let us support the chairman and our ranking member in their efforts. VA-HUD should go on its own merits. H.R. 2 should be debated. Let us oppose this rule.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. NETHERCUTT).

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

Mr. Speaker, I had a chance to listen for a few minutes to the comments of the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER) about the space station, and came over to the floor just to address that for a minute.

I was in Huntsville, Alabama, a couple of weeks ago and had a chance to go to Marshall Space Center and look at literally the construction of the space station, the American portion of the space station, that is ongoing there as we speak. It has been a terrific project, and it has great application, I would submit, to medical research.

There is high morale among the space station personnel who are employed by Boeing, the prime contractor, and others, but, more importantly, I see some great benefits in the future that will be derived from the use of this international space station for purposes of medical research.

While I have the highest respect for the judgment of the gentleman from Indiana, I disagree with the gentleman on this one. This Space Station is going to lead the way in medical research, which is going to help cure diseases for those of us on Earth because of the kind of research that deals with microgravity. Microgravity offers a unique opportunity to study medical research and study diseases and cure diseases in our country.

I got a good briefing. I encourage my colleague, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER), to go to Huntsville, if he has not already had a chance to listen to the great presentations that are being made there and the great progress being made there, not just in medical research, but in technology.

So I wanted the remarks of the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER) not to go unnoticed, because I see some great value in the space station.

Mr. ROEMER. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. NETHERCUTT. I yield to the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. ROEMER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Washington State for yielding.

While we often agree on some issues, we certainly disagree on this one. We had a press conference yesterday with two very, very eminent and qualified scientists, Dr. Park from Maryland and a Dr. Brown from Johns Hopkins, and both said, and we will talk more about this in the debate on the space station itself, both said that the space station, with its delays and its costs, are cannibalizing other very, very worthwhile science projects.

Mr. NETHERCUTT. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, that is 2 out of the about 10,000 that support this station.

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY).

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, it is sad to see how this Congress has hardened its heart toward America's veterans. The latest expression of that is contained within this bill and the rule that controls it.

The bill, first of all, makes inadequate provision for a growing problem in America with regard to veterans health care. It may be the result of so few Members of this House having had the opportunity to have the experience of serving their country in uniform.

Whatever the reason, this bill deals inadequately with the problems of veterans health care, it funds veterans health care inadequately, and, furthermore, it makes provisions to transfer inadequate funds inappropriately and discriminately against the interests of veterans.

There are many reasons why this bill should be defeated, but particularly, today, as our veterans from World War II, from Korea, and even Vietnam are aging, and the illnesses, physical and psychological, which they suffered as a result of those conflicts are expressing themselves more deeply, it is time that we pay attention to the needs of America's veterans and fund health care adequately.

Defeat this rule if you care about the veterans of America.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to my friend the gentleman from New York (Mr. SOLOMON), the chairman of the Committee on Rules.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, as one who has also worn the uniform of the Armed Forces of this country, I take exception to what the gentleman just said. I suggest the gentleman go to the

White House and meet with the President of the United States, whose budget inadequately funded veterans benefits, not only in veterans benefits, but in the medical care delivery system in this country.

This bill, and I want to commend the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STOKES), who we are going to miss desperately in his retirement because of the job he has done, but Mr. Speaker, what we are doing is we are restoring the cuts that the President had recommended. Not only that, but in the Senate bill there is an additional $200 million added to the veterans medical care delivery system. That is why we need to vote for this rule and we need to vote for this bill today.

Mr. Speaker, a number of years ago I sponsored the legislation which created the Department of Veterans Affairs. Before that it was an agency, and before that we had nobody sitting at the cabinet level negotiating for the veterans of this country.

Back in those days we had, unfortunately, a Subcommittee of Housing and Veterans Administration and other agencies. I had legislation pending in the Congress which would separate out and create a new Subcommittee on Appropriations for the Department of Veterans Affairs, which is the second biggest department in the Federal Government beyond Defense.

That is really what we ought to be doing, because now the veterans of this country have to negotiate with HUD and with all the other agencies, and with the space station and NASA in order for their fair share, and it just is not working out.

But this bill before us today helps the veterans of this Nation, and it helps us get to the Senate where we will have a chance to come in with at least $100 million, if not $200 million, more than what the President had recommended in cutting, for our veterans in this country.

So I urge Members to support the veterans by voting for this bill. Again I commend the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS), standing over there in the corner, a great American who does a great job for the veterans, and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STOKES) over here.

Vote for the rule and vote for the bill.

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time. I would simply say that I will ask for a ''no'' vote on the rule, as many of us over here and many of us on both sides consider this rule unfair in many ways.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. LINDER

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. LINDER:

Page 2, line 15, strike ''The amendment'' and all that follows through ''line 3.'' on line 21 and insert the following: ''The amendment printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution, as modified by striking '$5,000,000,000' in the proposed section 425(g) and inserting '$5,000,000', shall be considered as adopted in the House and in the Committee of the Whole. Points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, for failure to comply with clause 2 or 6 of rule XXI are waived except as follows: page 88, line 16, through page 89, line 22.''

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the gentleman from Georgia is recognized for the remaining 1½ minutes to explain his amendment.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, this amendment merely makes a technical correction in the last line of the report from the Committee on Rules that erroneously, by a typo, has put a $5 billion figure in there. It was meant to be $5 million. I tried to move this by unanimous consent, and it was objected to.

The amendment further protects the language in the bill from a point of order that allows the FHA loan ceiling to go up.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. LINDER. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, as the Members know, the language on the FHA increase was protected. We were hoping we were going to be able to have a negotiating position with the Senate where we could get some meaningful reform in the public housing of this country. We now are going to accede to the wishes of some on this side of the aisle and that side of the aisle and further protect that language so it would not be subject to a point of order and be knocked out of the bill.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I move the previous question on the amendment and the resolution.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRIES

Mr. BARRETT of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state it.

Mr. BARRETT of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, if you would be kind enough to explain the procedure, we have an amendment here and we have an underlying rule. Is it permissible under the rules to move the previous question on both the amendment and the underlying rule?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. That is a permissible motion.

Mr. BARRETT of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, further parliamentary inquiry. Is the amendment that has just been offered included in the votes? Will we have one vote on both the amendment and the rule?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The amendment will be subject to a separate vote.

Mr. BARRETT of Wisconsin. And when will that take place?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Right after the vote on ordering the previous question.

Mr. LAFALCE. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state it.

Mr. LAFALCE. Mr. Speaker, I believe there is going to be a separate vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. Linder) which will be separate from the vote on the previous question on the rule, as amended, is that correct?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is correct.

□ 1145

The previous question was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LINDER).

The amendment was agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution, as amended.

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

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. 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. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

Without objection, the vote by the yeas and nays on H.R. 3731 will be a 5-minute vote immediately following this vote.

There was no objection.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 227, nays 195, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 285]

YEAS—227

Aderholt	Christensen	Gekas
Archer	Coble	Gibbons
Armey	Coburn	Gilchrest
Bachus	Collins	Gillmor
Baker	Combest	Gilman
Ballenger	Cook	Goode
Barr	Cooksey	Goodlatte
Barrett (NE)	Cox	Goodling
Bartlett	Crane	Goss
Barton	Cubin	Graham
Bass	Cunningham	Granger
Bateman	Davis (VA)	Greenwood
Bereuter	Deal	Gutknecht
Bilbray	DeLay	Hansen
Bilirakis	Diaz-Balart	Hastert
Bliley	Dickey	Hastings (WA)
Boehlert	Doolittle	Hayworth
Boehner	Dreier	Hefley
Bonilla	Duncan	Herger
Bono	Dunn	Hilleary
Brady (TX)	Ehlers	Hobson
Bryant	Ehrlich	Hoekstra
Bunning	Emerson	Horn
Burr	English	Hostettler
Burton	Ensign	Houghton
Buyer	Everett	Hulshof
Callahan	Ewing	Hunter
Calvert	Fawell	Hutchinson
Camp	Foley	Hyde
Campbell	Forbes	Inglis
Canady	Fossella	Istook
Cannon	Fowler	Jenkins
Capps	Fox	Johnson (CT)
Castle	Franks (NJ)	Johnson, Sam
Chabot	Frelinghuysen	Jones
Chambliss	Gallegly	Kasich
Chenoweth	Ganske	Kelly

Kim
King (NY)
Kingston
Klug
Knollenberg
Kolbe
LaHood
Largent
Latham
LaTourette
Lazio
Leach
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Livingston
LoBiondo
Lucas
Manzullo
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McCrery
McDade
McHugh
McInnis
McIntosh
McKeon
Metcalf
Mica
Miller (FL)
Moran (KS)
Morella
Myrick
Nethercutt
Neumann
Ney
Northup
Nussle
Oxley
Packard
Pappas
Parker
Paul
Paxon
Pease
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Pombo
Porter
Portman
Pryce (OH)
Quinn
Radanovich
Ramstad
Redmond
Regula
Riggs
Riley
Rogan
Rogers
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roukema
Royce
Ryun
Salmon
Sanford
Saxton
Scarborough
Schaefer, Dan
Schaffer, Bob
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Shimkus
Shuster
Skeen
Smith (MI)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (OR)
Smith (TX)
Snowbarger
Solomon
Souder
Spence
Stearns
Stump
Sununu
Talent
Tauzin
Taylor (NC)
Thomas
Thornberry
Thune
Tiahrt
Towns
Traficant
Upton
Walsh
Wamp
Watkins
Watts (OK)
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
White
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—195

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Andrews
Baesler
Baldacci
Barcia
Barrett (WI)
Becerra
Bentsen
Berman
Berry
Bishop
Blagojevich
Blumenauer
Bonior
Borski
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd
Brady (PA)
Brown (CA)
Brown (FL)
Brown (OH)
Cardin
Carson
Clay
Clayton
Clement
Clyburn
Condit
Conyers
Costello
Coyne
Cramer
Cummings
Danner
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Deutsch
Dicks
Dingell
Dixon
Doggett
Dooley
Doyle
Edwards
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Evans
Farr
Fattah
Fazio
Filner
Ford
Frank (MA)
Frost
Furse
Gejdenson
Gephardt
Gordon
Green
Gutierrez
Hall (OH)
Hall (TX)
Hamilton
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Hefner
Hilliard
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Holden
Hooley
Hoyer
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
John
Johnson (WI)
Johnson, E. B.
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy (MA)
Kennedy (RI)
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind (WI)
Kleczka
Klink
Kucinich
LaFalce
Lampson
Lantos
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Lofgren
Lowey
Luther
Maloney (CT)
Maloney (NY)
Manton
Markey
Martinez
Mascara
Matsui
McCarthy (MO)
McDermott
McGovern
McHale
McIntyre
McKinney
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Menendez
Millender-McDonald
Miller (CA)
Minge
Mink
Mollohan
Moran (VA)
Murtha
Nadler
Neal
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pelosi
Peterson (MN)
Pickett
Pomeroy
Poshard
Price (NC)
Rahall
Reyes
Rivers
Roemer
Rothman
Rush
Sabo
Sanchez
Sanders
Sandlin
Sawyer
Schumer
Scott
Serrano
Sherman
Sisisky
Skaggs
Skelton
Smith, Adam
Smith, Linda
Snyder
Spratt
Stabenow
Stark
Stenholm
Stokes
Strickland
Stupak
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor (MS)
Thompson
Thurman
Tierney
Torres
Turner
Velazquez
Vento
Visclosky
Waters
Watt (NC)
Waxman
Wexler
Weygand
Wise
Woolsey
Wynn
Yates

NOT VOTING—12

Blunt
Crapo
Gonzalez
Hill
Kennelly
McNulty
Moakley
Norwood
Rangel
Rodriguez
Roybal-Allard
Slaughter

□ 1207

Mrs. LINDA SMITH of Washington changed her vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

Mrs. CAPPS and Mr. STEARNS changed their vote from ''no'' to ''aye.''

So the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 285 for H. Res. 501, I was inadvertently detained. Had I been present, I would have voted ''no.''

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS). The unfinished business on H.R. 3731 will be further postponed until later today.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on the further consideration of H.R. 4104, and that I may include tabular and extraneous materials.

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

There was no objection.

TREASURY AND GENERAL GOVERNMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1999

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 498 and rule XXIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 4104.

□ 1208

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 further consideration of the bill (H.R. 4104) making appropriations for the Treasury Department, the United States Postal Service, the Executive Office of the President, and certain Independent Agencies, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1999, and for other purposes, with Mr. DREIER in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. When the Committee of the Whole rose on Wednesday, July 15, 1998, all time for general debate had expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

During consideration of the bill for amendment, the Chair may accord priority in recognition to a Member offering an amendment that he has printed in the designated place in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. Those amendments will be considered read.

The Chairman of the Committee of the Whole may postpone a request for a recorded vote on any amendment and may reduce to a minimum of 5 minutes the time for voting on any postponed question that immediately follows another vote, provided that the time for voting on the first question shall be a minimum of 15 minutes.

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Chairman, at this point in the RECORD I will insert a table showing the details of this bill.

The material referred to is as follows: