

Mr. COMBEST. Mr. Chairman, on rollcall No. 314, the Paul of Texas amendment, I was inadvertently detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise. The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. FOLEY) having assumed the Chair, Mr. CALVERT, Chairman pro tempore of the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2415) to enhance security of United States missions and personnel overseas, to authorize appropriations for the Department of State for fiscal year 2000, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, July 12, 1999, because of weather conditions, my plane was detained, and I would like the RECORD to reflect how I would have voted on the following votes had I been present:

On rollcall vote 277, a vote on the approval of the Journal, I would have voted "yea."

On rollcall vote 278, on House Concurrent Resolution 107, dealing with rejecting the conclusions by the American Psychological Association, I would have voted "yea."

On rollcall vote 279, concerning the United Nations, I would have voted "yea."

#### TEACHER EMPOWERMENT ACT

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, by the direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 253 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

##### H. RES. 253

*Resolved*, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1995) to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to empower teachers, improve student achievement through high-quality professional development for teachers, reauthorize the Reading Excellence Act, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. 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 Education and the Workforce. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Education and the Workforce now printed in the bill. The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. No

amendment to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report 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 the amendments printed in the report are waived. 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 to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute. 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.

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MOAKLEY), the ranking member of the Committee on Rules, 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 253 is a structured rule providing for the consideration of H.R. 1995, the Teacher Empowerment Act. The rule provides for 1 hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce. For the purpose of amendment, the rule makes in order, as an original bill, the committee's amendment in the nature of a substitute now printed in the bill.

Under this fair and balanced rule, 12 amendments are made in order, 6 offered by Democrats and 6 offered by Republicans. That means Members from both sides of the aisle will have equal opportunity to amend this bill.

The rule makes in order a number of minor amendments as well as an amendment offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Chairman GOODLING) which reflects bipartisan compromise on a number of issues and a substitute amendment offered by a Democrat member on the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

All 12 amendments are printed in the Committee on Rules report and may be offered only by a Member designated in the report.

The amendments shall be considered as read and shall be debatable for the

time specified in the report. These amendments are not subject to amendment or a demand for a division of the question.

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All points of order against the amendments are waived.

In addition to the amendment process, the minority will have another opportunity to change the Teacher Empowerment Act through the customary motion to recommit, with or without instructions.

Finally, the rule allows for orderly and timely consideration of the bill by allowing the Chair to postpone votes and reduce voting time to 5 minutes on a postponed question, as long as it follows a 15-minute vote.

Mr. Speaker, we can all remember our favorite teacher who made school more interesting and learning more exciting. These special individuals had a lasting impact on us and contributed in a major way to our attitudes toward school and our development as young people.

We cannot underestimate the value and influence of a good teacher, and our investment in teachers should reflect their worth.

The Teacher Empowerment Act recognizes teachers as perhaps the most important determinant in our children's academic success, and the bill seeks to enhance student performance through funding programs to improve teachers' skills.

Specifically, H.R. 1995 streamlines the Eisenhower Professional Development Program, Goals 2000, and the "100,000 New Teachers" program to give States and localities more flexibility in their use of these funds to advance teachers' professional development.

Ninety-five percent of these funds will be distributed to local districts where those who are most familiar with the needs of their local schools will play a greater role in determining how the money is used to provide teachers with the tools to improve student learning.

Some of my colleagues oppose the consolidation of government programs and may fear local control. But given the failure of a bloated education bureaucracy and the micromanagement of education by the Federal Government, it is hard to understand any aversion to the reasonable changes this legislation envisions. It is time to challenge the status quo and move our education dollars to the local level to give school boards, principals, and teachers some flexibility to use these dollars as they see fit.

That does not mean we are giving away Federal dollars, turning our heads the other way and hoping for the best. The Teacher Empowerment Act actually increases accountability to parents and taxpayers by providing public access to information about the qualification of teachers and the average statewide class size. Additionally,