

and controlled by the chairman and ranking member of the Committee on the Judiciary. And as the sponsor of this legislation, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Committee on the Judiciary, especially the gentleman from Florida (Mr. McCOLLUM), the chairman of the Subcommittee on Crime, for all of their work on the bill and their efforts to move this legislation forward.

The rule waives all points of order against consideration and against certain provisions of the bill. The bill will be open for amendment at any point, and under this open rule any Member who seeks to improve upon the legislation may offer any germane amendment. However, priority recognition will be given to those Members who have preprinted their amendments in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. Additionally, the rule offers an opportunity to change the bill through the customary motion to recommit with or without instructions.

Finally, to ensure timely and orderly consideration of the bill, the rule allows the chairman of the Committee of the Whole to postpone votes and reduce voting time to 5 minutes as long as the vote follows a 15-minute vote.

As the sponsor of this legislation, I am pleased that the House will have the opportunity to fully debate this important issue surrounding the tragedy of child abuse under a fair and open process.

It is hard for most of us to fathom a rage so blinding that it could compel an adult to attack a helpless child, much less their own child. It may shock my colleagues to realize that every 3 minutes a child will be reported abused or neglected. And, sadly, that is just in my own State of Ohio. Nationwide, the crisis of child abuse is even more staggering. An estimated one million violent crimes involving child victims are reported to police annually. And on top of that, another 1.1 million cases of child abuse are substantiated by child protection agencies annually.

This is a national crisis, and as leaders, we have the responsibility to take a stand and fight back against the cruelty that robs children of their innocence and produces troubled and violent adults.

As a former prosecutor and judge, I have seen firsthand the manifestation of child abuse in the criminal behavior of adults. Breaking this cycle of violence in our society begins with child abuse prevention.

But the most compelling case for child abuse prevention is not found in these troubled adults but in the eyes of children who live in constant fear. Children should be focused on school, little league, piano lessons, not reeling from punches or cowering from the adults who should be embracing them.

The CAPE Act focuses on two critically important fronts: child abuse prevention and improved treatment of the victims of child abuse.

The bill has a host of bipartisan co-sponsors and has been endorsed by a wide variety of groups from every ideological background, including the National Child Abuse Coalition, Prevent Child Abuse America, National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, and the Family Research Council.

The CAPE Act would make three changes to current law: first, the bill expands a Department of Justice grant program that helps States provide equipment and personnel training for closed-circuit television and video taping of children's testimony in child abuse cases. Under the CAPE Act, these grants could be used to provide child protective workers and child welfare workers access to criminal conviction information and orders of protection based on claims of domestic or child abuse. Or the grants could be used to improve law enforcement access to custody orders, visitation orders, protective orders, or guardianship orders.

Second, the CAPE Act expands the use of the Byrne law enforcement grants to improve the enforcement of child abuse and neglect laws, and, more importantly, child abuse prevention.

Finally, the bill allows additional dollars from the Crime Victims Fund to be used for child abuse assistance programs, increasing the earmark from \$10 million to \$20 million. This increase reflects a growth in contributions to the fund since the set-aside for victims of child abuse was first established.

Mr. Speaker, all of these changes will funnel more resources to the State and local level, where the individuals who are on the front lines in the fight against child abuse are best equipped to help our children. And I know my colleagues will be pleased to know that the CAPE Act draws on existing resources instead of creating a new Federal program that requires more taxpayer financing.

The CAPE Act has bipartisan support and was favorably reported by the Committee on the Judiciary without controversy or amendment. So while we do not expect numerous amendments to be offered today, this issue is simply far too important to deny a full and fair debate. That is why the Committee on Rules has reported this open rule, which I hope my colleagues will support.

I look forward to today's debate, which I hope will not only be a prelude to the passage of legislation that gives hope to millions of children, but also an effort to raise awareness about the horrors of child abuse and the steps we can take to end it.

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

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Ohio (Ms. PRYCE), for yielding me this time, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

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

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, the rule for H.R. 764 is an open rule, and I am pleased to support its consideration.

Mr. Speaker, every year, millions of children are the victims of child abuse or are witnesses to terrible violence. The repercussions of this violence is often felt for the rest of that child's life. Study after study suggests that children who are victims of child abuse or neglect are far more likely to run afoul of the law either as adolescents or adults. Statistics show that most people who are abusers were abused as children themselves.

Even as the crime in some areas is going down, experts tell us the number of crimes against children is going up. This bill is an important effort aimed at child abuse treatment and prevention. It was passed just a few days ago by a voice vote in the Committee on the Judiciary and is now here on the floor for consideration by the full House.

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Several important amendments have been identified, and I look forward to the thoughtful debate concerning this most important issue.

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

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I hope my colleagues will join me in participating in today's debate and strengthening the voice of millions of children who live each day with terror and in pain.

Raising awareness is the first step toward ending the living nightmare of child abuse. The next step is providing the resources to eradicate this scourge on our society. Today, happily, we can do both.

I urge my colleagues to vote for this fair and open rule and the Child Abuse Prevention and Enforcement Act.

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

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. JENKINS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 764.

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

There was no objection.

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION AND ENFORCEMENT ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JENKINS). Pursuant to House Resolution 321 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares