There was no objection.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION WAIVING POINTS OF ORDER AGAINST CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1654, NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2000

Mr. REYNOLDS (during debate on H. Con. Res. 368) from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 106–844) on the resolution (H. Res. 574) waiving points of order against the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 1654) to authorize appropriations for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration for fiscal years 2000, 2001, and 2002, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

SCOUTING FOR ALL ACT

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4892) to repeal the Federal charter of the Boy Scouts of America.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4892

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Scouting for All Act''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds the following:

(1) Federal charters are prestigious distinctions awarded to organizations with a patriotic, charitable, or educational purpose.

(2) Although intended as an honorific title, a Federal charter implies Government support for such organizations.

(3) In 1916, the Federal Government granted a Federal charter to the Boy Scouts of America.

(4) Although the Boy Scouts of America promotes the social and civic development of young boys through mentoring, it also sets an example of intolerance through its discriminatory policy regarding sexual orientation.

(5) Federal support for the Boy Scouts of America indirectly supports the organization's policy to exclude homosexuals.

(6) A policy of excluding homosexuals is contradictory to the Federal Government's support for diversity and tolerance and should not be condoned as patriotic, charitable, or educational.

SEC. 3. REPEAL OF FEDERAL CHARTER OF BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA.

(a) REPEAL.—Chapter 309 of title 36, United States Code, which grants a Federal charter to the Boy Scouts of America, is repealed.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis at the beginning of subtitle II of title 36, United States Code, is amended by striking the item relating to chapter 309.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HUTCHINSON) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HUTCHINSON).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 4892.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, while I do not support this bill, I do believe it is appropriate that it be brought up for consideration at this time. I rise in opposition to H.R. 4892.

This legislation that has been offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is a bill to revoke the 80-year-old Federal charter of the Boy Scouts of America.

Tonight, scouts and scout leaders all across this great country are watching these proceedings. They are watching with amazement that the Congress of the United States is debating a bill to revoke their charter.

Now, why is this bill being offered? Why should it be considered to revoke the charter of the Boy Scouts? It is hard to figure.

First of all, there are no appropriated Federal funds that are used to support the Boy Scouts of America. It is simply a Federal charter that is granted to other patriotic-type organizations that allow them to protect the emblems and symbols that they have.

The Boy Scouts have worked for over 80 years with the youth of our Nation, building leadership and molding character. The charter of the Boy Scouts, granted by this Congress, states that they will promote patriotism, courage, self-reliance, and kindred virtues, virtues that we desperately need in this country.

Millions of scouts are trained under the leadership of this great organization. They provide over 3 million boys and young adults the opportunity to participate in educational programs. In 1998, the Boy Scouts contributed over 52 million community service hours to our Nation and is committed to providing an additional 1 million service hours to preserving the environment at our national parks.

Another reason that this bill is ill-advised is that the Supreme Court of the United States affirmed the first amendment freedom of the Boy Scouts to exclude scout masters who do not support the values of the Boy Scouts of America. We should adhere to the opinion of the United States Supreme Court.

Finally, the Attorney General of this country has given an opinion that the use by Federal lands of the Boy Scouts does not convene even in any executive order of this administration.

Mr. Speaker, the Boy Scouts of America today are under attack by this legislation and by others in America. I believe an organization that supports our values and our freedoms and builds leadership among young people should be supported and we should defend the Boy Scouts of America.

This legislation that is being offered is punitive in nature to revoke their charter, it is ill-advised, and should be defeated.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today under some very confusing circumstances. I would like to refer to the manager of the bill, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HUTCHINSON). I thought I heard him say that he was moving to suspend the rules and pass a bill that he is now saying that he is opposed to.

I thought he was the one that caused this bill to be brought to the floor and that it was him that is urging its passage.

Did I hear him correctly?

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

Mr. CONYERS. I yield to the gentleman from Arkansas.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation being offered by Members on their side is being brought under the Suspension Calendar, and in order to debate it and provide the sponsors of the legislation an opportunity to explain their reasons why the Boy Scouts charter should be revoked, is being brought up. And so I procedurally asked that the rules be suspended for its consideration.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I see. I thank the gentleman for that information.

Now, we are both on the Committee on the Judiciary. Did this bill go through the committee?

I continue to yield to the ranking member on the Republican side.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

The legislation has not been reported by the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank you.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the gentleman, have there been any hearings in the Committee on the Judiciary?

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, as the ranking member, I think the gentleman is fully aware that we have not conducted any hearings on this legislation.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman again for his comments. And so you are against this bill, have not had any hearings, there have been no votes in committee, and you are urging that we rush it through this process when it has never been through the committee.

If that is the case, sir, then I would ask unanimous consent to have this suspension bill removed from the calendar.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Does the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HUTCHINSON) yield for that request?

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I certainly object to the request. I would ask the gentleman to yield for a response.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman objects. The unanimous consent is not ordered.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, would the gentleman be willing to have hearings on the bill before the measure is passed which he is apparently very sincerely opposed to?

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would continue to yield, I think the reason, and this is somewhat of an unusual circumstance, well, actually it is not unusual that it is being brought up on suspension. We do that all the time to bring up a bill on suspension without going through the committee. The gentleman well knows that. But I believe in this circumstance, when the administration has suggested that the Boy Scouts of America should not use Federal land under current executive order that they need a statement that their charter is in good standing. And I think that legislation revokes the charter.

We are saying, hopefully, by defeating that, that we stand with the Boy Scouts of America and we believe that their charter should not be revoked and that would put an end to the matter, I would hope.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman. He is not confusing me more, but we have increasing numbers of ambiguity.

Let me turn, then, to the offer of this proposal, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY). And if I could ask her, and we have not talked about this, has she requested that this bill be placed on the floor for disposition?

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, no, I have not made that request at this time. I was hoping for hearings and a markup and to bring this issue that is important to full light to this Congress with a full debate.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for her comments.

I ask the gentlewoman, has she had any response from the Committee on the Judiciary about the disposition of the matter? She wanted hearings. She did not request that we come to the floor today.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I did not. As a matter of fact, I was surprised. We heard about this suspension at 6 o'clock last night D.C. time when I was in California. And the idea that we would bring a controversial, important issue like this onto the Suspension Calendar was a total surprise to me, because I think of suspensions as noncontroversial issues, such as naming a post office.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the gentlewoman, the author of the amendment, would she find that hearings and markups in the regular process would be helpful in developing an understanding around her motive and purpose for introducing this bill?

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, absolutely. A hearing was necessary. A markup is necessary to bring an issue of this importance to our Nation in the dark of night instead of in the light of day is a mistake.

To suggest that it is noncontroversial and could pass with a two-thirds vote is very short-sighted.

Mr. CONYERS. Well, that is the understanding I have heard from my good friend, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HUTCHINSON), is that he considers this apparently a noncontroversial bill to which he is opposed to which hearings have never been heard.

Well, now, if there has ever been a parallel like this ever in the history of this Congress, it has not been since I have been here.

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

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the great gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUYER).

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

Mr. Speaker, I think what is obvious, if they know they are going to lose on the substance of a bill, then they argue process. If they are ashamed of having authored a particular bill, then do not submit it.

I have authored legislation. I would be eager as soon as I drop it for it to come to vote. I would be eager for that. I would be proud of the legislation that I actually drafted.

I rise in opposition to this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to H.R. 4892, the Scouting for All Act. On June 28, the Supreme Court ruled in Dale vs. Boy Scouts of America, that private organizations have the right to set their own standards for membership and leadership. This allows the Scouts to continue developing young men of strong moral character without imposing standards on them that they find incompatible with their beliefs.

In response to the Supreme Court ruling, the Boy Scouts have faced an onslaught of criticism, intimidation and extortion from those who seek to inflict their beliefs on an organization that promotes moral character and personal responsibility.

Protests were organized in twenty-one states including my district in Indiana, urging businesses to revoke their sponsorship of the Scouts. Last month, the Interior Department attempted to bully and harass the Boy Scouts over access to public lands. In Los Angeles, some delegates to the Democratic national convention booed a group of Scouts as they stood on the stage of the Staples Center.

Now, in an attempt to punish the Boy Scouts for refusing to toe the line, proponents of H.R. 4892 seek to revoke the Boy Scouts' federal charter, originally granted by Congress in 1916.

This bill claims to be acting in the name of tolerance and inclusion. In reality, it is this bill, not the Boy Scouts, that promotes intolerance. The Boy Scouts respect others' rights to hold differing opinions than its own. All the Scouts ask is that others respect its beliefs. The sponsors of this bill believe just the opposite.

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They believe if one does not subscribe to their view of the world then they must be humiliated, silenced, and reformed in the name of tolerance. They are in error, and I suppose now today ashamed of the bill that they have dropped. Tolerance does not require a moral equivalency. One can be tolerant of one's beliefs of others while being intolerant of their behavior and actions.

Today, millions of boys from every ethnic, religious, and economic background, including those with disabilities and special needs, participate in Scouting programs across America. The Boy Scouts are a model for inclusiveness. Our youth today face a daily onslaught from some parts of our culture that promote self-gratification and alternative lifestyles. As one of the few counters to this, the Boy Scouts keep such, I guess, out-of-fashion values as duty to God and country, honor, respect, self-sacrifice, and community service.

I believe we should commend, not punish, an organization that attempts to foster a sense of personal responsibility and strong character in our boys and young men. I urge all of my colleagues, 50 percent of whom were Boy Scouts, to side with the vast majority of Americans and vote no against this ill-advised bill.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2¼ minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER).

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, as the Republican co-chairman of the Congressional Scouting Caucus, as a proud Eagle Scout and as a supporter, an unapologetic supporter of Scouting in America, I stand here tonight to commend the Boy Scouts of America for what they have done over these last 90 years in strengthening the American character, developing good citizenship, and enhancing both the mental and physical fitness among America's youth.

Instead of attacking the Boy Scouts, we should be celebrating the fact that the Supreme Court has upheld the sanctity of our First Amendment; and we should applaud the Scouts for standing strong under pressure to compromise their own principles. H.R. 4892 proposes to revoke the Federal charter of the Boy Scouts of America because they have maintained a moral standard, rejected by America's liberal left. But the Scouts, like everyone else, have rights to set their own standards, and not to be targeted for doing so. That is what freedom of association is all about. That is what the Supreme Court confirmed in its decision.

In recent months, we have witnessed the despicable booing of Boy Scouts by Democrat delegates during their convention; a 55,000 signature petition delivered to the Boy Scouts headquarters demanding that they scrap requirements for Scout masters, and in my own county in Orange County, California, where the ACLU and others have tried to force the Scouts to take

God out of their Scout oath; and we have also witnessed a malicious and reprehensible effort by the part of some corporations and even the United Way in some areas to choke off funding for the Scouts in an attempt to force them into submission.

Everyone is free to choose their own life-style and I would stand up for anyone's right to have their own privacy and their own life-style, as the Scouts stand up for that; but the Scouts, too, have their rights and we should be applauding them for standing up for their own principles and their own beliefs rather than trying to attack them now and to destroy the freedom of association guaranteed by our Constitution.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute.

Mr. Speaker, this is a Republican theme tonight, how dare we bring up this bill that they bring up. The gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HUTCHINSON) has said that the bill has not been through committee, no hearings. The author of the bill was notified in California that it was coming up, and now everybody is saying that this is a bill that they object to for many reasons. Is this some kind of a cynical political stunt that we are playing here tonight? Nobody wants the bill, but the Republicans sponsor it on a suspension on which they say there is supposed to be very little dissension about the bill. So I am in some confusion of what we are trying to do.

I plan to vote present on this measure.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BARR), a member of the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. BARR of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HUTCHINSON) for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, one of the sorriest and most shameful exhibitions of a cynical political move, to use the word of the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS), that our Nation has ever witnessed was a couple of weeks ago at the Democrat National Convention when a member of a Boy Scout troop, at the invitation of the Democrat National Convention, appeared before that body to lead that body in the pledge of allegiance, and for that show of patriotism that Scout was booed and hissed at by the party that sits on the other side in support of this resolution.

Not being content with booing and hissing a Boy Scout, they have now moved the forum for their denigration and assault on the Boy Scouts of America to this Chamber. They truly ought to be ashamed.

What is it, I ask my colleagues on the other side, that they find so reprehensible in the Scout oath, which includes words that Scouts are physically strong? Do they object to that? That Scouts shall be mentally awake, do they object to that? That Scouts may be morally straight, apparently there is the rub, that is what they find so reprehensible about Scouts that they would boo a Scout and hiss at a Scout for standing up and leading our Nation and their party in the pledge of allegiance, and why they now come before this body, before this flag, before this speaker, before the American people, and tell us that the Boy Scouts for being morally straight are so reprehensible in their eyes that they ought not to even have the historical charter granted by this body.

Have they no shame, Mr. Speaker? Have they no shame? And now we have the gentleman on the other side saying he does not even have the courage to stand up and vote for the resolution that they support. This resolution ought to be soundly defeated.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY).

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because I support H.R. 4892, the Scouting for All Act, an act to repeal the Boy Scouts of America's congressional charter. I urge all of my colleagues to join me in sending a clear message that the civil rights movement is alive and well in the United States of America, and that this Congress does not support discrimination in any form.

Contrary to what some of my colleagues on the other side are alluding to, we are not saying that the Boy Scouts are bad. We are saying that intolerance is bad. I was a Girl Scout. One of my sons was a Boy Scout. I know the value of Scouting, and that is why I believe that Scouting should be available to all boys, not just some boys.

I am not standing here today to override the Supreme Court. The unchangeable fact is that towards the end of June the Supreme Court upheld the Boy Scouts' discriminatory policy. So I stand here not to ask if the Boy Scouts have a right to a discriminatory policy but to ask if their discriminatory policy is right.

In 1939, Marian Anderson, an African American opera singer, was invited to perform at Constitutional Hall, then operated by the Daughters of the American Revolution, another chartered organization.

The DAR said that Marian Anderson could not perform at Constitution Hall because she was black. As a result, then First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt resigned her DAR membership and coordinated a concert for Marian Anderson at the Lincoln Memorial. 75,000 people attended and ultimately the DAR changed its policy of discrimination.

Simply because an esteemed organization holds a belief does not make that belief right. It was wrong for the Daughters of the American Revolution to discriminate against African Americans then and it is wrong for the Boy Scouts of America to discriminate against gays today.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle suggest that they speak for the average American; that the vast majority of Americans support intolerance. They are wrong.

This poster alone will show the headlines from the newspapers across this Nation that are reporting the reaction to the Boy Scouts' position of intolerance. It is clear that opposition to the Boy Scouts' intolerant policy is not a fringe movement. It is part of the mainstream belief that intolerance in any form is un-American. From Fall River, Massachusetts, to Broward County, Florida, from Chicago to San Francisco, American cities, American private corporations, nonprofit organizations, schools, churches, families are saying no to intolerance.

In the city of Chicago, the Boy Scouts can no longer use city parks, schools or public sites because their policy, the Boy Scout policy of intolerance, conflicts with the city's existing nondiscrimination policy.

In Fall River, Massachusetts, the local United Way voted overwhelmingly to withdraw support from the Boy Scouts.

Private companies are also finding that the Boy Scouts' intolerance is unacceptable. Among other corporations, Textron, Inc., Knight Ridder and others have pulled their support from the Scouts. Because when people stand up and say intolerance is wrong, they do make a difference. One of those people is Steven Cozza, a teenager from Petaluma, California, where I live.

Steven, as a 12-year-old Boy Scout, working to earn his Eagle Scout badge, became aware of the intolerance policies against gays in Scouting. And as a Scout, he decided, he was 12 years old, he decided to do something about it. That was 3½ years ago. Since then, Steven and his dad, Scott Cozza, neither one of them is gay, they have nothing to gain except they know that intolerance is wrong, they started an organization called Scouting for All. Scouting for All is a campaign, a national campaign, encouraging the Boy Scouts to change their policy.

To date, they have gotten more than 53,000 signatures to support change of the policy. Steven Cozza supports abolition of the Scouts' prohibition on gays. He knows that it is wrong. It is wrong to exclude some boys based on sexual orientation, and it is wrong to teach other boys by example to be intolerant. Perhaps some of my colleagues believe that intolerance is okay. I do not, and neither do millions of people across the Nation who live in the cities that have stood against intolerance, or worked for the companies that have withdrawn their support or made contributions to the organizations that no longer support Scouting.

My colleagues would do well to get outside the Chambers and talk with parents in Montclair, New Jersey, who are circulating a petition opposing the

Boy Scouts' policy. They should also talk with the elected officials of San Jose, California, who say that Boy Scout intolerance is incompatible with their city laws.

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Repealing the Boy Scouts Federal charter is a sensible and reasonable way for this Congress to take a stand against intolerance and not have it look as if our Nation supported intolerance. A charter is an honorary title that Congress awards to organizations that serve a charitable, patriotic, and educational purpose. But to me, there is nothing charitable, there is nothing patriotic; and it certainly is not a value we want our children to learn.

Mr. Speaker, revoking the charter does not cut off Federal funding for the Boy Scouts. It does not change their tax status. Revoking the charter sends a clear message that Congress does not support intolerance.

Mr. Speaker, I call on my colleagues to join me in support of H.R. 4892. Together we can show the American people that like them, this Congress does not accept intolerance. As a representative of the people, let us make their message of support for tolerance heard throughout this House.

We are not saying that Boy Scouts are bad; we are saying that intolerance is bad.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) for her sincere comments, and I appreciate the fact that the gentlewoman is standing strong in support of her bill that would revoke the charter of the Boy Scouts of America; and she indicates that she is not saying that the Boy Scouts are bad; but, Mr. Speaker, I believe that all of America is seeing an attack on the Boy Scouts, and I think that our efforts today in Congress is simply to defend them.

The question is about tolerance. The Attorney General of the United States issued a statement in response to requests for an opinion that said that the Boy Scout jamborees are not federally conducted education or training programs. In other words, this is a private association. The Supreme Court has said they have a right to associate and to conduct themselves freely; that is what this country is about. They have African American Scouts, Asian American Scouts; and so they have a broad range, but they have some beliefs that they stand for and do not want to be compromised. I believe that is consistent with freedom.

The gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) referred to Boy Scouting for all. They have the freedom of association, but so does the Boy Scouts of America.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. Ballenger).

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, I speak as one of the proud 50 percent of this body that was a member of the Boy Scouts.

Mr. Speaker, the Boy Scouts are a private organization with a long-standing reputation protected by the first amendment. Now, despite the Supreme Court endorsement of its mission, we are engaged in a politically motivated attempt to attack a great organization. The Boy Scouts bylaws state that one of the purposes of the organization is to teach morals to young men and boys and to help develop a strong group of core values.

For years, this has been a great success. Now it seems that some in Congress want to legislate what these core values should be. Obviously, core values taught in Scouting today were seen to be fit when Boy Scouts were granted their first Federal charter and have remained the same unchanged since then. So why is this an attack?

The Boy Scouts engage in hundreds of projects of good works across the country, and I think we should leave the seal of approval on this organization as American as apple pie and baseball; and I recommend a vote against this bill.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY).

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to respond to the comments of the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HUTCHINSON) that we are attacking the Boy Scouts. Indeed, the Boy Scouts do good work.

My point and our point is that all boys should be involved in Scouting, not just some boys; and it is perfectly all right as a private organization to do as you choose. It is not all right for the Federal Government to support intolerance.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CANNON), who is a member of the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. CANNON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to this dangerous bill that attacks a treasured American institution, the Boy Scouts of America.

A small group of extremists on the minority side is attempting to revoke the charter of an organization that has done much good. The attack today is because this private organization, the Boy Scouts, demands traditional moral rectitude from its members.

This attack on the Boy Scouts alone would be repugnant to most Americans. But today's attack goes beyond just the Boy Scouts. It is an attack upon the fundamental values of America.

Our debate on this bill is just one skirmish of a much larger cultural war for our Nation's heart and soul. The gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) has laid out the legal and governmental opposition to the Boy Scouts.

This war is a big deal, and it will affect us all. Mr. Speaker, perhaps no civic organization has done as much as the Boy Scouts to instill the core American values of faith, loyalty, duty, honor, patriotism, community service, and individual responsibility in the young men of this Nation.

We will prevail today in defeating this attack on the Scouts, but only because the spotlight of American's attention has been focused on our opponents. Some on this side disavowed this bill they once co-sponsored because the glare of attention has exposed the extremism of their views.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues and fellow citizens to oppose this bill.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, because we have 4 minutes left and my dear friend, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HUTCHINSON) has 8 minutes left, I would ask him to go forward if he would.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PITTS).

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 4892. The other side acted as if voting on bills on suspension is unusual. This week the notice says we are voting on 27 bills on suspension. We just finished voting on 5 of them.

After booing the Boy Scouts at their national convention, after the Clinton-Gore administration contemplated barring them from national park programs, now the Democrats have introduced legislation to revoke the Boy Scouts charter.

In 1916, the U.S. Congress gave the Boy Scouts of American a national charter because we believed in what they were doing. We believed in the values that the Scouts stood for: the Boy Scout oath is an oath every Member of this body would do well to be familiar with. Evidently, the Democrats no longer believe in the values embodied in this oath. Evidently, they believe the Boy Scouts are dangerous. The Democrats believe times have changed, that the old rules of right and wrong no longer apply.

Evidently, the American people are wrong, but the Boy Scouts is not a hate organization. They are the premier youth organization of America, training young people in character, volunteerism and patriotism, self-reliance to believe in God and country.

Mr. Speaker, I urge that we defeat this outrageous bill.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. BARTLETT).

(Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this bill.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER).

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

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this legislation.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODE).

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

Mr. GOODE. Mr. Speaker, this bill would wreck 90 years of patronage of the Boy Scouts of America. I urge opposition.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY).

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

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this bill, which is an insult to the millions of Americans who devote so much time and energy to the Boy Scouts of America.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. RILEY).

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

Mr. RILEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this Democratic bill, which defies everything that is American.

I believe that this bill—this whole unbelievable argument—does nothing more than punish and browbeat one of the most respected organizations for young men in America today.

The name itself has become synonymous with being a good person in everyday conversation we even call trustworthy, noble hard-working people: ''Boy Scouts.''

Mr. Speaker, this bill is simply wrong.

Our government shouldn't fear the Boy Scouts.

The Boy Scouts shouldn't have to fear our government.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SAM JOHNSON).

(Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this Democrat proposition, and I wonder why we are even doing it when America is such a great Nation.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN).

(Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak out in opposition to this Democratic initiative to ban the Boy Scouts from enjoying the rights that they have enjoyed since their existence.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER).

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

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker,

I rise in opposition to this initiative to revoke the Federal Charter of the Boy Scouts of America.

Mr. Speaker, as a former Boy Scout who only attained the rank of second class, I nonetheless recognized early on the great contribution that this nation receives from the Boy Scouts.

We are a nation of great industrial production. No other nation manufactures the wide array of products that stream from our assembly lines.

But the greatest American product is character. It is the character of strength, compassion, integrity and courage that makes the last 100 years ''the American century.''

The Boy Scouts of America have been a primary factory of American character. Their ideals and values strengthen us. They also offer wholesome association for the boys of America, many from broken families.

In this world that has become increasingly dangerous for youngsters, the Boy Scouts is a safe haven for those who want their children to grow in an environment of traditional American values that has illuminated the world in the 20th century.

Support the Boy Scouts.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. RYUN).

(Mr. RYUN of Kansas asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RYUN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this, and I am wondering why we are even dealing with this. I know the wonderful values that the Boy Scouts represent.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES).

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I stand in strong opposition to H.R. 4892, and I wonder so many times the American people are wondering why America's in such moral decay, and then I look at this legislation, and then I ask myself how in the world can we in Congress even be debating such an outrageous bill such as H.R. 4892, because, Mr. Speaker, in the Scout oath the word ''morally straight,'' what does morally straight mean to the other side that is supporting this legislation?

I realize the President of the United States does not understand what morally straight means, but there are many people throughout the district that I represent and throughout this country that understand that we need to be morally straight. We need to look to God, we need to look to the Ten Commandments. That is what the Boy Scouts help the youth of America do.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HUTCHINSON) for giving me this opportunity, and I want to say to the Democrats who booed the Scouts at the Democratic convention, you should be ashamed of yourselves. There should have been one leader at the Democratic convention to stand up to chastise those who booed the Boy Scouts. God bless America. God bless the Boy Scouts.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HAYES).

Mr. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the legislation of the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) to revoke this charter. This type of Federal charter is issued to organizations with patriotic, charitable, and educational purposes.

There is no organization in this country that lives up to these principles more than the Boy Scouts. The motto of the Boy Scouts is ''God, Country, Honor, Helping Others.''

Boy Scouts confirm that character counts. These are values that are learned by young men and carried with them throughout their lives. Mr. Speaker, let us tell it like it really is. This ridiculous legislation is meant to shame an organization just because it does not conform to the extreme left wing's view of the world.

Over 3 million young men in the Boy Scouts nationwide are being taught values, values such as duty to God and country, honor, respect, honesty, community service. By revoking the charter of the Boy Scouts of America, the supporters of this legislation are saying that those values do not matter. They are saying that what is important is forcing the Boy Scouts to adopt their agenda, which is clearly wrong, counterproductive to community values and destructive to traditional families.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my fellow Members to vote against this scurrilous attack on American values.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. HAYWORTH).

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, as an Eagle Scout, I rise in strong opposition to the so-called Scouting for All Act, because, Mr. Speaker, the so-called Scouting for All Act means constitutional rights for none. It is as if we tear freedom of association out of the document.

Another federally chartered organization, the Jewish War Veterans. We do not see the southern Baptists or the Buddhists demanding membership in the Jewish War Veterans. Jewish War Veterans as a federally chartered organization have the right of freedom of association based on their spiritual beliefs.

My suggestions to those who place such an emphasis on sexual identity is to have another freely formed association, the sexual identity seekers of America. If that predicates one's world views, that is the choice. The profound intolerance of those who claim to preach tolerance is incredible. Those who would boo the scouts, and the Vice President of the United States, the standard-bearer of his party not standing foursquare for this federally chartered organization. Shame on those who bring shame to this Nation by trying to profoundly alter the Scouts.

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Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds and caution the gentleman, my friend previously in the well. I thought I saw him ripping the Constitution. If that is the case, I would urge that he not do that publicly.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR).

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to rise in opposition to this effort by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY). She is a Member of Congress, elected by the people of her Congressional District, and has every right, as has every Member, to introduce any piece of legislation that she wants. She has every right to demand a vote on it.

My colleagues have every right to speak. I think it is a bit unfair to say ''every Democrat.'' I was not watching the convention, I was not there at the convention, I do not know what might or might not have happened. So the characterization of all Democrats as being against the Boy Scouts I do not think would hold water and is a cheap shot.

I will make this observation: I do not know how many cosponsors the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) has on her bill. I do know my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. SHOWS), has over 300 cosponsors, Republicans and Democrats, trying to restore the promise of health care for our Nation's military retirees. That bill has never had a hearing, it has never had an opportunity for one vote.

If you are going to find the time as the majority to bring a bill to the floor that will probably get less than 10 votes tomorrow, that is fine. It is great that you are giving every Member that opportunity. I would ask for that same opportunity for the 300 of us, and I bet you a bunch of people on this floor are cosponsors of the Shows bill, to demand the same opportunity and privileges as Members of the House if over 300 of us have sponsored that bill. If over 300 of us think restoring the promise of health care for our Nation's military retirees, regardless of the cost, is a priority, then over 300 of us ought to have a chance to vote on it.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SHADEGG).

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the Woolsey legislation. Let me first begin by simply addressing the former speaker's remarks. Let me make it clear that I have fought for health care reform on this floor vigorously and continue to fight for it. I have a bill with many cosponsors that I cannot get brought to the floor. It is a difficult process, but I would suggest that it is a fair process.

Let me talk about the Boy Scouts. I grew up in the Boy Scouts. I was an active Boy Scout and formed an Explorer post.

That organization does more to instill the proper values in young men than any organization I know of in this Nation, and what is at issue here is not sexual orientation. What is at issue here is the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, and, thankfully, the United States Supreme Court made it clear what that amendment says. What that amendment says is private organizations, even with those with a charter, and there are others with similar charters, they have the right to define and the right to decide who should associate with those organizations.

Now, here, because of that Supreme Court decision defending the First Amendment, we see legislation attacking the Boy Scouts. I think it is a tragedy that this issue should have come up. I think it is a tragedy that some want to destroy the Boy Scouts of America and want to go after them and assert upon them and enforce upon them their ''politically correct'' views.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote against this legislation and defend the Boy Scouts of America.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, the Scoutmaster's Handbook emphasizes these points about being morally straight, and I quote from the United States Supreme Court decision. ''In any consideration of moral fitness, a key word has to be courage, a boy's courage to do what his head and his heart tell him is right, and the courage to refuse to do what his heart and his head say is wrong. Moral fitness, like emotional fitness, will clearly present opportunities for wise guidance by an alert scoutmaster.''

Then the court goes on to say, ''It is plain as the light of day that neither one of these principles, morally straight and clean, quote-unquote, says the slightest thing about homosexuality. Indeed, neither term in the Boy Scouts' law and oath expresses any position whatsoever on sexual matters.''

So the process we have been in today, the most unusual one that I can remember being party to on the floor, we have had a bill brought before us that was not considered by the Committee on the Judiciary or the Subcommittee on Immigration and Claims and the sponsor of the bill did not request the bill be placed on the floor. So we can assume only that it has been placed on the floor as a political stunt. I, for one, will not be a part of this cynical game.

Republicans, most of them have no intention of voting for this bill. They have no intention of getting it through the Senate. They have no intention of doing anything to come to the aid of children who are discriminated against because of their sexual orientation.

They, the leadership, have bottled up hate crimes legislation because they do not care enough about the lives of children who are victimized or killed because of their sexual orientation. They will not stand up to gay bashing. They want to do nothing except play these kinds of games, which, to me, does a great disrespect to our legislative process.

I do not believe that revoking the Federal charter of the Boy Scouts is the proper remedy at this time. Revoking the Federal charter would not have any effect on the Boy Scouts.

I urge that those who support me vote present on this matter.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN).

(Mr. WALDEN of Oregon asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I stand as an Eagle Scout in opposition to this measure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ISAKSON). The gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HUTCHINSON) has 3 minutes remaining and has the right to close. All time has expired for the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS).

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I want to express my compliments to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) for the way he has conducted this debate and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) as well. We in this body are intense, we have strong beliefs about things, but we need to be collegiate in these debates. I want to congratulate Members for the way this debate was conducted.

There was a concern raised about we are saying this is a Democratic bill. I will acknowledge there are Democrats that oppose this bill as well that will not be voting for this. This is a bill being offered certainly by your side of the aisle, and there has been expressed a great deal of concern by this administration, so I think that was the underlying reason for that reference. But certainly there will be Members from your side that oppose it.

I want Members to know that we all want to be tolerant. I believe we should practice tolerance in our lives. But, at the same time you have to balance that desire for tolerance with an understanding about freedom. Here in this case we have the Boy Scouts of America, that have served this Nation under a Federal charter for more than 80 years. I believe they have done extraordinary work.

The issue is raised about, well, there are other bills that could be considered. Maybe we would be better off bringing the bills that are offered to this floor, and this bill was offered and ''Dear Colleagues'' letters were sent out asking support for this bill. I think it was something that people in America were concerned about.

I have gotten letters and calls into my office about what they are doing,

the attacks on the Boy Scouts of America. I think America said, what is the Congress going to do? So we stand here and say we are going to defeat this bill.

I think that is a reasonable statement, a reasonable position, for this Congress to take. Yes, we are tolerant; but, yes, we also recognize the importance of freedom. I believe that is what the Supreme Court of the United States said whenever they affirmed in a 5–4 decision the actions of the Boy Scouts of America.

I believe that is what the Attorney General of the United States was saying when she rejected the request to kick the Boy Scouts of America off of the Federal land. She says it is not a Federal activity, so if it is not a Federal activity, they have a right to make decisions that govern themselves. That is the freedom in America, that is the right to association in America. And, yes, the Boy Scouts of America do good work. I believe they are under attack, and I believe it is right for this Congress to stand here today and say we are going to vote down this and make sure it is clear to everyone in America that the Federal charter is right, it should stay there, it should be sustained, it should not be revoked.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to defeat this bill.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, first let me say that the Boy Scouts of America has made a valuable contribution to our society. The Boy Scouts of America have taught America's young men the values and ideals of responsibility, leadership, accountability, and civic duty. They are known for instilling high moral values in our young men, and for being inclusive. This is why many of us were shocked when the Boy Scouts refused to be inclusive of those with a different sexual orientation.

I believe that the Boy Scouts discriminatory policy against homosexuals falls far short of the ideals it has taught generations of young men. James Dale, an Eagle Scout, was kicked out of the Boy Scouts because he attended a seminar on the needs of gays and lesbian youth. He had attained the highest honor in scouting. But they kicked him out anyway. That was wrong. James Dale, and so many others are innocent young men who should not be punished due to their sexual orientation or because they are different.

Recently, the Supreme Court held that the Boy Scouts are a private organization and, therefore, have a right to free association that allows them to discriminate against whomever they choose. But just because it is allowed, does not make it right.

Nevertheless, I must oppose this bill for two reasons:

First, I must object to the process under which we are considering this bill. This bill was not considered by the Judiciary Committee or the Immigration and Claims Subcommittee. The procedure in this case was circumvented.

If this Congress is serious about dealing with confronting intolerance, then why has Hate Crimes legislation been bottled up in the House?

Second, I do not believe that revoking the federal charter of the Boy Scouts is the proper remedy at this time. A Federal Charter is conferred upon an organization to give them a imprimatur designation to say that your organization is one that has a patriotic mission and significantly contributes to the benefit of our nation, and our society. Revoking the federal charter would not have any effect on the Boy Scouts and would not help to heal the wounds of intolerance in this country. Although the revocation of a Federal Charter is merely a symbolic gesture, this certainly sets a dangerous precedent where the Congress could be in the business of revolving Federal Charters to other organizations just because we disagree with their beliefs. I certainly think this type of action should only be done if there is a full hearing.

The Congress should stand for the right of all Americans to live free from fear of harassment or violence based upon hatred of who they are. We should pass hate crimes legislation immediately.

Mr. BARR of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the proposed repeal of the federal charter of the Boy Scouts of America. Since its founding in 1910, the Boy Scouts of America has promoted educational programs for young men that build character, patriotism, and to develop personal fitness. Ninety million young men from every ethnic, religious, and economic background in suburbs, farms, and cities have participated in this institution, and abided by the Scout Oath and Law by staying ''physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight.''

Many now wish to infringe upon this private, charitable organization, and force upon it views that run directly contrary to the traditional values of the Boy Scouts of America. As a private organization, the Boy Scouts dismissed adoption of such views, stating that they have a constitutional right ''to create and interpret its own moral code.'' I agree with the organization's stance, and on June 28th, of this year, so did the Supreme Court, when they ruled ''the First Amendment protects the Boy Scouts' method of expression.''

In response to this decision, many feel the Boy Scouts must now be punished for observing their First Amendment rights of free association and free speech; a repeal of their federal charter is one such punishment.

In recent years, we have seen that many American youth live in an unhappy world—violent video games have become the new outdoors; drugs, the new game on the playgrounds; and guns, the new books brought to class. Throughout this corruption of America's children, however, the Boy Scouts of America has stood steadfast—providing our youth with a foundation of character, and a sense of value for citizenship and morality through the continuance of the Scout Oath and Law.

In a time where our nation's youth is subjected to moral and character dissolution, and we on Capitol Hill search for solutions, I cannot fathom the reasoning behind why we would want to take away the imprimatur of support that a federal charter affords to an institution that provides our youth positive guidance in a misguided world.

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, the Republican leadership of the 106th Congress has brought some asinine proposals to the floor. A trillion-dollar tax cut for the wealthiest Americans, a prescription drug proposal that subsidizes HMOs, not seniors, and a ''managed care'' bill that protects the insurance industry rather than patients.

However, today marks a new low-point, even for this Congress. Mr. Speaker, today we have a bill on the floor which would revoke the Federal Charter from the Boy Scouts of America.

Let me repeat myself. Today the Congress will vote to revoke the Boy Scouts of America's Federal Charter.

Mr. Speaker this is an outrage and it must be stopped.

The Boy Scouts are an American institution and one of America's most patriotic organizations, dedicated to serving God and country. Scouts are a shining example to the world of what is good about America.

In 1916, the United States Congress granted the Boy Scouts a Federal Charter, because it recognized the valuable contributions that Scouts make to America. The Scouts are one of the most important civic institutions we have in this great nation, devoted solely to building character in boys and young men.

The Scouts have led drives to increase blood, organ and tissue donation.

They have pioneered youth anti-drug efforts.

Scouts have fought against hunger, child abuse and illiteracy.

Scouts were there for America. Yet now, the sponsors of this legislation would turn their back on the Scouts. Mr. Speaker, that is wrong.

I am proud of my association with the Boy Scouts. The Scout Troops in Michigan's 16th District have a long and distinguished tradition of community service, from Dearborn to the fine young men in Monroe. I have joined with Scouts on many occasions during my service in Congress in community efforts, from river clean-ups to assistance for the needy and less fortunate. They represent the best of what America is and strives to be.

This effort, to revoke their Federal Charger is an insult to the Scouts. It is no small wonder that the public's confidence in this body plummets each year thanks to ridiculous, unnecessary and foolish legislative endeavors such as this, which helps no one and angers many.

The Boy Scouts develop and cultivate the best characteristics of American citizenship: self-reliance, leadership, and patriotism; love of the outdoors, pride in America, conservation and individualism; Americanism, dedication to the Constitution and to the Declaration of Independence.

These are good, meritorious ideals.

For the benefit of my colleagues supporting this legislation, let me recite the Scout Law, the principles upon which Boy Scouting is based: trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean and reverent.

These are the values that this Congress should be supporting, not discouraging.

Vote no on this preposterous idea.

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 4892, the Scouting for All Act and I commend my colleague, Congresswoman LYNN WOOLSEY, for authoring this bill and taking a strong stand against intolerance.

The Boy Scouts of America have a long history of promoting social and civic responsibility among our nation's youth and I commend them for this. However, I am extremely disappointed in their decision to exclude potential members solely on the basis of their sexual orientation.

I support the right of private groups to determine their membership. However, since Congress would neither endorse nor charter any group that discriminates against Latinos, African Americans, women or people with physical challenges, just to name a few, Congress cannot in good conscience continue to tacitly endorse the Scouts' discriminatory policy. We believe discrimination against any of these groups is wrong and most of us here would stand up and demand that discriminatory policies be ended. The Boy Scouts must be held to the same standard and therefore Congress has the moral responsibility to revoke the group's Congressional charter.

We must remember, that discrimination is always wrong, whatever form it takes. Whether it's the policies of the Boy Scouts, a corporate employer or a social club, Congress must not condone discrimination. We must lead by example and we must send the message that Congress will not tolerate nor endorse such policies targeted at any group.

I support this bill, and I urge each of my colleagues to do the same. Congress must not lend its seal of approval to any organization which discriminates.

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this bill and to voice the strongest possible support for the Boy Scouts of America.

The Boy Scouts have always emphasized God and Family and Country.

We need more organizations like the Boy Scouts, and we should be doing everything we can to support and encourage them.

I was a Criminal Court Judge for 7½ years before coming to Congress.

I was told on my first day as a Judge that 98 percent of the defendants in felony cases came from broken homes.

I read thousands of reports going into the backgrounds of the people before me. I read over and over things like: ''Defendant's father left home when Defendant was two and never returned.'' ''Defendant's father left home to get pack of cigarettes and never came back.''

Several years later I read in the Washington paper that two leading criminologists had studied 11,000 felony cases from around the country.

They said the biggest single factor in serious felony crimes was father absent households.

Everything else, like drugs and alcohol, was secondary to the absent father problem.

So many young boys are growing up today without good male role models.

We need the Boy Scouts today more than ever before.

This is a time when we should be doing more for the Boy Scouts, not trying to harass and intimidate them.

We definitely should not be taking the intolerant, bigoted, ''politically-correct'' position of this legislation.

If this is still a free country, then the Boy Scouts should be free to operate as it has without being discriminated against as this legislation would do.

I urge all my colleagues to oppose this bill and support the Boy Scouts.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, today, we find ourselves debating an intolerance-laden bill advanced by those who will claim to be the ''tolerant'' ones. What the bill's proponents are really saying is that they are intolerant of an individual's freedom to associate with those whom they, as individuals, see fit. Two vital issues are raised by this bill's ascendancy to the House floor. The first is that of our constitutional right to freedom of association. The second being the notion of ''federal charters.''

On June 28, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the Boy Scouts of America was within its rights when the private organization expelled an adult scout leader because he was gay. In its five-to-four opinion, the court found that requiring the Boy Scouts to admit homosexuals violated the group's free association rights.

Nevertheless, this Congress has decided to bring to the floor a bill attempting to penalize this private group of citizens for exercising their first amendment ''freedom of association'' rights. This is very close to denying the very right itself. To the extent the Boy Scouts should be penalized for their exercise of free association (or exclusion in this case), that penalty should only manifest itself through other private citizens exercising their freedom not to associate with individuals or groups whose associations (or lack therof) they find offensive.

As to the ''federal charter'', where do we find authority for the federal government to charter organizations it deems ''honorable''? To the extent the ''charter'' is an honorary title awarded by Congress to organizations which is then ultimately used to threaten exercise of the right to freedom of association, I suggest we repeal not only the Boy Scout's charter but all federal charters such that they won't be used as tools of federal meddling.

While I hesitate to further propagate this system of federal charters by which the federal government manipulates private groups, I despise more so this congressional attempt to penalize the Boy Scouts for merely exercising their constitutional rights—or as syndicated columnist Charley Reese recently put it in the Orlando Sentinel:

> I think that it's time for all patriotic organizations that have these federal charters to surrender those documents. It is impossible for a dishonorable organization to honor anyone. And these charters are, practically speaking, worthless. If the federal government believes that mindless non-discrimination trumps morality, then it's time to disassociate from such bad company.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HUTCHINSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4892.

The question was taken.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

RECOGNIZING CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE BIRMINGHAM PLEDGE

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 102) recognizing that the Birmingham Pledge has made a significant contribution in fostering racial harmony and reconciliation in the United States and around the world, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.J. RES. 102

Whereas Birmingham, Alabama, is an international symbol of the racial strife in the United States in the 1950's and 1960's;

Whereas out of the crucible of Birmingham's role in the civil rights movement of the 1950's and 1960's, a present-day grassroots movement, embodied in the Birmingham Pledge, has arisen to continue the effort to eliminate racial and ethnic divisions in the United States and around the world;

Whereas the Birmingham Pledge, authored by Birmingham attorney James E. Rotch, sponsored by the Community Affairs Committee of Operation New Birmingham, and promoted by a broad cross-section of the community, increases racial harmony by helping individuals communicate in a positive way concerning the Nation's diversity and by encouraging people to make a commitment to racial harmony;

Whereas the Birmingham Pledge, signed by individuals as evidence of their commitment to its message, reads as follows:

''I believe that every person has worth as an individual.

''I believe that every person is entitled to dignity and respect, regardless of race or color.

''I believe that every thought and every act of racial prejudice is harmful; if it is in my thought or act, then it is harmful to me as well as to others.

''Therefore, from this day forward I will strive daily to eliminate racial prejudice from my thoughts and actions.

''I will discourage racial prejudice by others at every opportunity.

''I will treat all people with dignity and respect; and I will strive to honor this pledge, knowing that the world will be a better place because of my effort.'';

Whereas more than 70,000 people have signed the Birmingham Pledge, including the President, Members of the Congress, State Governors, State legislators, mayors, county commissioners, city council members, and other people around the world;

Whereas the Birmingham Pledge has achieved national and international recognition;

Whereas efforts to obtain signatories to the Birmingham Pledge are being organized and conducted in communities around the world;

Whereas every Birmingham Pledge signed and returned to Birmingham is recorded at the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute as a permanent testament to racial reconciliation, peace, and harmony; and

Whereas the Birmingham Pledge, the motto for which is ''Sign It, Live It'', is a powerful tool to facilitate dialogue on the Nation's diversity and the need for people to take personal steps to achieve racial harmony and tolerance in communities: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That—

(1) the Congress—

(A) recognizes that the pledge popularly known as the Birmingham Pledge has made