PERMISSION FOR COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE TO HAVE UNTIL MIDNIGHT, MONDAY, MARCH 29, 2004, TO FILE REPORT ON H.R. 3550, TRANSPORTATION EQUITY ACT: A LEGACY FOR USERS.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure have until midnight, Monday, March 29, 2004, to file a report to accompany the bill, H.R. 3550, to authorize funds for Federal-aid highways, highway safety programs, and transit programs for other purposes.

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

There was no objection.

RESIGNATION AS MEMBER OF COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The SPEAKER laid before the House the following resignation from the Committee on International Relations:


Hon. DENNIS HASTERT, Effective March 26, I hereby resign from the House of Representatives, and I will continue to be involved in matters of foreign policy. Unfortunately, I am writing you today to let you know I will be giving up my seat on this committee.

Sincerely,

CHRIS BELL.


Mr. Speaker, I am going to go back.

Happy St. Patrick’s Day, and I want to thank the CQs and the other people for putting this all together. I got a lot of fun questions from the CQs that I thought were pretty good.

The gentleman from California.

Mr. HOYER. I want to thank the majority leader for the information.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the majority leader for the information. First of all, Mr. Speaker, on the highway reauthorization bill, can the majority leader give us some view? I see the chairman of the Committee on Rules is on the floor. Can the gentleman from Texas give us some view on the rule, under which the majority contemplates consideration of the highway bill?

Mr. DELAY. While I would defer to the Committee on Rules who should have an announcement regarding amendments, I would anticipate that they would make in order a variety of amendments and call for a very lengthy debate.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman. Obviously this is a very important bill. I think most of us believe it is very important to pass this bill.

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

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

Mr. DREIER. The distinguished majority leader is correct that we do hope to have a wide-ranging debate. I would just like to say that the announcement that I will make in just a few moments will be under the rule pursuant to which the majority contemplates consideration of the highway bill?

Mr. DELAY. I appreciate the gentleman reminding me. The gentleman knows, of course, that the other body has already passed their version of the budget resolution; and in working with the other body, I really anticipate moving to go to conference on the budget as early as Monday afternoon of next week.

Mr. HOYER. I am going to go back. There will be no votes until 6:30 on Monday.
Mr. DELAY. That is correct.

Mr. HOYER. I had asked the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) whether or not he contemplated any action on Monday. He indicated that he had not. Subsequently, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. NUSSELE) and the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) have talked, but I do not know whether the gentleman from South Carolina knows that at this point in time. Do we know whether they have really made a decision on that? A new gentleman hopes to do that, but would it be fair to believe that this matter is still under consideration, or is the gentleman positive that there will be action on Monday afternoon?

Mr. DELAY. All I can tell the gentleman is what I know and what I have been advised of. I have been advised that the Budget Committee, at least the House, and the conference committee wanted to start meeting as early as Tuesday morning. In order for that to happen, we would have to go to conference Monday evening.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Leader, let me correct for the record because I was in error. It is my understanding that Mr. Kahn, who is the clerk on the Budget Committee, I am sure that the gentleman from South Carolina now knows. I thank the leader for his comment. I wanted to clarify that, that we have received, apparently, nice.

Is it the majority leader's thought in light of the fact that we will be leaving next Friday for a 2-week break, district work period, that the conference report will be returned to the House next week? Would it be the gentleman's expectation that we might take up the conference report next week?

Mr. DELAY. Certainly we would like to reach an agreement with the Senate prior to our district work period. For that reason, Members really should anticipate a very long work week next week, because we would want to give the House and Senate negotiators all the time that they need in order to hopefully get this done and passed by both Houses before we leave next week. I know that is asking a lot of Members, but it would be nice if we could get the budget done before we break for the district work period.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for his comments. One additional, and I think final, item, the continuity of Congress challenge that we have has been discussed. There are obviously a number of different proposals, including constitutional amendments, as well as legislative action, as well as rules considerations. We have heard on this side there may be something happening next week. The gentleman did not mention it in his announcement. Can he tell us whether or not there is any possibility of having that matter on the floor next week?

Mr. DELAY. I appreciate the gentleman asking about the continuity in Congress bill. We had it sort of waiting in the wings, but it looks like next week is going to be a pretty full week, and we may have to look for another time to bring that bill to the floor.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for that information.

Reclaiming my time, I think we still have some work to do on that, hopefully in a bipartisan fashion. This is obviously a critical problem confronting the Congress and the American people. Hopefully, perhaps, we can reach some agreement on that. If we had some extra time, that might be possible.

Mr. DELAY. I want to congratulate the gentleman, because I know he has worked on it and others have. I have been very pleased with the bipartisan-ship that has been exhibited in working on this continuity of government bill. I am very pleased that it is coming along. I think we can continue to work together and come to some sort of solution to protect this House in case of some calamity.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the leader for his comment.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, MARCH 29, 2004

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Monday, March 29, 2004, for morning hour debate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas? There was no objection.

DISPENDING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas? There was no objection.

AMENDMENT PROCESS FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3550, TRANSPORTATION EQUITY ACT: A LEGACY FOR USERS

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, the Committee on Rules may meet the week of March 29 to grant a rule which could limit the amendment process for floor consideration of H.R. 3550, the Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy For Users. The Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure ordered the bill reported on March 24.

Members wishing to offer an amendment should submit 55 copies of the amendment and one copy of a brief explanation of the amendment to the Rules Committee in room H-312 of the Capitol by 10 a.m. on Tuesday, March 30. Members should draft their amendments to the text of the bill as reported by Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure which is available for their review on the Web sites of both the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure as well as the Committee on Rules.

Members should use the Office of Legislative Counsel to ensure that their amendments are drafted in the most appropriate format. Members are also advised to check with the Office of the Parliamentarian to be certain that their amendments comply with the rules of the House.

MOURNING THE PASSING OF ROBERT N. BROWN, COLUMBUS, INDIANA, NEWSPAPER PUBLISHER

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

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, today the city of Columbus, Indiana, bid farewell to one of its great sons, Robert N. Brown. Robert N. Brown was born 83 years ago in the city of Columbus. During the course of his lifetime, he was a publisher of newspapers, a World War II veteran and D-Day Plus 3, the proud father of four and grandfather to many, many more in our community. It was my privilege to offer the eulogy today at First Christian Church in Columbus, Indiana.

I rise today to offer my condolences to the family and to the community at his loss. May he and his family feel the peace of Christ in this time of loss.