

to instruct on H.R. 1308, the Tax Relief, Simplification, and Equity Act of 2003.

The form of the motion is as follows:
I move that the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the Senate amendment to the bill H.R. 1308 be instructed to agree, to the maximum extent possible within the scope of conference, to a conference report that:

Number 1, extends the tax relief provisions which expire at the end of 2004; and

Number 2, does not increase the budget deficit.

CONSIDERATION OF MEMBER AS FIRST SPONSOR OF H.R. 2119

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that I may hereafter be considered as the first sponsor of H.R. 2119, a bill originally introduced by Representative BALLANCE of North Carolina, for the purposes of adding cosponsors and requesting reprintings pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII.

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

There was no objection.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken tomorrow.

COMMEMORATING THE OPENING OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate joint resolution (S.J. Res. 41) commemorating the opening of the National Museum of the American Indian.

The Clerk read as follows:

S.J. Res. 41

Whereas the National Museum of the American Indian Act (20 U.S.C. 808 et seq.) established within the Smithsonian Institution the National Museum of the American Indian and authorized the construction of a facility to house the National Museum of the American Indian on the National Mall in the District of Columbia;

Whereas the National Museum of the American Indian officially opens on September 21, 2004; and

Whereas the National Museum of the American Indian will be the only national museum devoted exclusively to the history and art of cultures indigenous to the Americas, and will give all Americans the opportunity to learn of the cultural legacy, historic grandeur, and contemporary culture of Native Americans: Now, therefore, be it

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

SECTION 1. NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN.

Congress—

(1) recognizes the important and unique contribution of Native Americans to the cultural legacy of the United States, both in the past and currently;

(2) honors the cultural achievements of all Native Americans;

(3) celebrates the official opening of the National Museum of the American Indian; and

(4) requests the President to issue a proclamation encouraging all Americans to take advantage of the resources of the National Museum of the American Indian to learn about the history and culture of Native Americans.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS) and the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS).

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

Senate Joint Resolution 41 commemorates the opening of the National Museum of the American Indian.

Today brings to a conclusion a concept that started over 20 years ago, to create a national museum in our Nation's capital which is dedicated exclusively to Native American art, history, and culture.

Today will also mark the beginning of a lasting tribute to those individuals who were our country's earliest inhabitants.

The Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian sits adjacent to the National Air and Space Museum on over 4 acres of land, just southwest of the U.S. Capitol.

The building's appearance is unlike any other in Washington, D.C., and it has symbolic references to Native American culture. The building's limestone exterior gives it the appearance of natural rock formations that have been carved by wind and water.

Three-quarters of the site is reconstructed natural habitats that are indigenous to this southeastern region, and the building itself will display about 8,000 objects from its permanent collection. The displays will include not only historical artifacts, but will also portray ongoing vital contributions Native Americans bring to this Nation's art and culture.

The building has some special features which include an entrance facing east toward the rising sun, a prism window and a 120-foot high atrium called the Potomac, which was designed in consultation with many Native Americans.

Native Americans indeed have had profound influences on our Nation's culture from the very birth of our country through today and will continue into the future.

At a time when our military receives so much focus, it is important to remember that some of our military's great heroes, such as the code talkers, were Native Americans who helped preserve our country's ideals and beliefs.

It is also important to note that Native Americans make up less than 1 percent of the total U.S. population, but represent half the languages and cultures in the Nation.

The term "Native American" includes over 500 different groups and reflects great diversity of geographic location, language, socioeconomic conditions, and retention of traditional spiritual and cultural practices. However, many teaching materials present a generalized image of Native American people with little or no regard for differences that exist from tribe to tribe. I believe this museum provides a strong presentation of these differences and will be very educational to the viewer and to the Nation.

It is remarkable that Native Americans have retained many of their longstanding traditions, even though numerous outside influences create pressures for change.

Thanks to the efforts of Senator INOUE and our former House colleague, Senator BEN NIGHORSE CAMPBELL, legislation was signed by former President George Herbert Walker Bush on November 28, 1989; and today this museum has become a reality.

I hope all my colleagues and all who visit our Nation's capital will take the opportunity to visit this wonderful museum, and I urge my colleagues to support S.J. Res. 41.

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

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. LARSON of Connecticut asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks, and include extraneous material.)

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I would like to associate myself with the remarks of the gentleman from Michigan. Indeed, I am pleased to support Senate Joint Resolution 41, commemorating the successful 15-year effort to create the National Museum of the American Indian and requesting the President to issue a proclamation for this occasion.

What a day it has been already, having the celebration kicked off this morning. So many Native Americans from my great State of Connecticut are down here for this very special commemoration.

I would also echo the remarks and sentiments of the gentleman from Michigan. What a great tribute. This is the 18th such museum that the Smithsonian has put up; and under their tutelage, we know that it is going to continue to be as spectacular as the 17 others that come under their control and auspices.

I am equally proud as well that so many tribes in the great State of Connecticut have contributed not only to our great economy and employment there but they themselves have been leaders. The Mashantucket Pequots of Mashantucket have put together their own museum and are going to collaborate here with the national museum.