

## LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

(Mr. BLUNT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I rise for the purpose of inquiring about next week's schedule from my friend, the majority leader; and I yield to my friend.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the distinguished Republican whip for yielding; and I would tell him on Monday, the House will meet at 12:30 p.m. for morning hour business and 2 p.m. for legislative business. We will consider several bills under suspension of the rules, as we usually do; but there will be no votes until 6:30 p.m. on Monday.

On Tuesday, the House will meet at 10:30 a.m. for morning hour business and noon for legislative business. We will consider additional bills under suspension of the rules, a complete list of which will be available by the end of the week. We also expect to consider H.R. 1227, the Gulf Coast Hurricane Housing Recovery Act, which has been reported out of the Financial Services Committee.

On Wednesday and Thursday, the House will meet at 10 a.m. On Friday, the House will meet at 9 a.m. We will consider the U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Health and Iraq Accountability Act; the Caller ID/spoofing bill; and the D.C. vote bill.

Mr. BLUNT. I thank my friend for the information.

Mr. Speaker, on the I guess what I would consider the two major bills, the supplemental appropriations bill and the D.C. voting bill, I may be wrong in characterizing those are the two, but I would think they would.

You would expect both of those to be on the floor next week, is that what I heard?

Mr. HOYER. I do.

Mr. BLUNT. On the supplemental, we have a fairly firm sense that that will be ready next week? The committee has dealt with it today.

Mr. HOYER. The committee has favorably reported that bill, and we expect it to be on the floor next week.

Mr. BLUNT. You would expect that to be near the end of next week?

Mr. HOYER. Yes, sir.

Mr. BLUNT. I thank my friend for that.

On both of those bills, do you have a sense of the opportunities we will have on the D.C. voting bill and the supplemental to have amendments to those bills, to have the ability to change them?

Mr. HOYER. Because the bills, not the D.C. bill, but the supplemental was just reported out, I have not had, nor do I believe the Speaker has had an opportunity to discuss with Mr. OBEY his recommendation on a rule, so I unfortunately don't have an answer for you on the supplemental.

On the D.C. bill, they are marking up right now, so I am in the same position, because they haven't finished their markup. They are marking up as

we speak on that bill. So I have not had the opportunity to talk to Mr. WAXMAN about his advice or desire, or Mr. CONYERS. It's a joint referral, they are considering it together, the D.C. bill. So I cannot give you an answer. I apologize at this point in time.

Mr. BLUNT. I thank my friend for that response. I would say that there are few exceptions to the rule, but my experience has been, and I have had some experience on this question when we were in the majority and had chairmen, the chairman almost never wants to believe that the bill can be improved.

So the chairman's desire for a closed rule is generally unanimous, though I know the chairman of the Finance Committee last week took a different view, and I was pleased to see his different view of that.

I think on appropriations bills, there are very few, if any, exceptions where those bills have not come to the floor with an open rule. The gentleman is a member of the committee and would have a sense of that, but the tradition here is pretty strong.

I don't know of any more important bill we are likely to deal with this year than this particular appropriations bill. I would hope that we have this kind of open process on the appropriations bill that we have had in the past.

I would yield for a response.

Mr. HOYER. I appreciate your yielding and appreciate your observation. Although I am not now on the Appropriations Committee, you are correct, I served there for 25 years. I am on leave. I have no expectation of going back soon, I hope.

In any event, the gentleman is correct. As you know, the bill we are talking about is probably, as we discussed on the floor, one of, if not the most important bill that we might consider this year on funding our troops, supporting our troops in Iraq, and dealing with the policy that we are pursuing in Iraq.

Obviously there is a broad spectrum of views on that. Just as obviously, if you had some bills that in many instances come with an open rule, very frankly, I don't know about your experience, but our experience has been that there are a wide range of views.

It may well be that we will solicit a request for possible amendments and make decisions on them, because this is, to some degree, as you know, not a straight appropriations bill in the sense that this is where the money is, in or out, up or down. This is a consideration of policy and authorizing bills. Usually the tradition is to have amendments offered in the Rules Committee and the Rules Committee determines which amendments they want to make in order.

I cannot anticipate what we are going to do at this point in time. The gentleman's point is well taken, but we will have to see how we want to bring to this floor to try to reflect in the final product, as best we can, the views

of the American people, which are divided, and I think will be reflected in the floor vote on that bill.

Mr. BLUNT. I thank the gentleman for that response. I would say that I believe that I reflect the view of this side that the debates both on the policy issues, that I frankly think may be appropriate in some other bill besides an appropriations bill, on the policy issues and the spending issues, a full and free opportunity to discuss those is the desire of this side. I think it serves the best interest of the country.

As this appropriations bill gets broader and broader in the areas it deals with, it becomes more and more like the regular appropriations bills we will bring to the floor, and the tradition of the House, unaltered by any pattern I am aware of, has been on appropriations bills, as long as the Member was willing to say where they would pay for the change that they want to make, that they have been given the opportunity to make those amendments.

I was disappointed, as broad-based and as big as the continuing resolution was that we passed earlier, that it violated what I considered a well-understood and time-honored principle of amending those bills. This bill would go even further if we did that, and it would be a bad pattern, I think.

On the budget, does the gentleman have any information on the budget itself, when we might be able to see the majority's budget and when we would be voting on it, both?

I would yield to my good friend.

Mr. HOYER. We expect the budget to be marked up in the latter part of next week, the middle or latter part of next week, and we expect the budget to be on the floor the following week. As I indicated last week, we are still on that path, that schedule.

Mr. BLUNT. And so my friend's expectation from the previous week is unchanged, that we will see the supplemental on the floor next week and the budget on the floor the following week would be your anticipation?

Mr. HOYER. That is my anticipation.

Mr. BLUNT. I have no other questions. I am pleased for the information and hope we have an opportunity to debate these bills.

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HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW, ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, MARCH 19, 2007, AND HOUR OF MEETING ON FRIDAY, MARCH 23, 2007

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at noon tomorrow; when the House adjourns on that day, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Monday, March 19, for morning hour debate; and further, when the House adjourns on Thursday, March 22, it adjourn to meet at 9 a.m. on Friday, March 23.

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