

(Rept. No. 110-769) on the resolution (H. Res. 1368) relating to the House procedures contained in section 803 of the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Ms. Evans, one of his secretaries.

#### PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3999, NATIONAL HIGHWAY BRIDGE RECONSTRUCTION AND INSPECTION ACT OF 2008

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 1344 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

##### H. RES. 1344

*Resolved*, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3999) to amend title 23, United States Code, to improve the safety of Federal-aid highway bridges, to strengthen bridge inspection standards and processes, to increase investment in the reconstruction of structurally deficient bridges on the National Highway System, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived except those arising under clause 9 or 10 of rule XXI. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute printed in part A of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against that amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived except those arising under clause 10 of rule XXI. Notwithstanding clause 11 of rule XVIII, no amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in part B of the report of the Committee on Rules. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived except those arising under clause 9 or 10 of rule XXI. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment, the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the

House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the amendment in the nature of a substitute made in order as original text. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. During consideration in the House of H.R. 3999 pursuant to this resolution, notwithstanding the operation of the previous question, the Chair may postpone further consideration of the bill to such time as may be designated by the Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART). All time yielded during consideration of the rule is for debate only.

##### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials into the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 1344 provides for consideration of H.R. 3999, the National Highway Bridge Reconstruction and Inspection Act of 2008 under a structured rule. The rule provides one hour of general debate controlled by the Committee on Transportation. The rule makes in order 11 of the amendments that were submitted to the Rules Committee.

I would like to thank Chairman OBERSTAR for his leadership in addressing the critical needs of bridges on our Federal highway system. I know that this issue is especially close to home for him, and my other colleagues from Minnesota, because of the tragedy that occurred when the I-35 bridge collapsed in Minneapolis last summer.

The staggering truth is that one-fourth of all bridges nationwide are deficient. Half of all of the bridges in use were constructed in the 1960s. It is projected that motorist traffic will double in the next 30 years. In the same time, freight traffic in the U.S. will likely grow 92 percent in order to accommodate forecasted increases in American economic output. Growing demand for the movement of goods and services will place an unprecedented strain on our aging system.

Our communities need the resources to ensure that our families and friends don't have to worry about their safety during their morning commute to work, quick trip to the grocery store, or the drive to drop their children off at school. We owe it to the American public to regain their trust in the safety of our bridges and highways.

Mr. Speaker, the legislation this rule provides for consideration will go a long way to regain that trust from the American people. The legislation authorizes an additional \$1 billion for bridge repair and replacement, and setting inspection standards for such bridges. It ensures that funds are concentrated on the most pressing bridge safety concerns by mandating that priority bridges be inspected annually and all other bridges biennially.

I would also like to take a moment to acknowledge the work of my Republican colleague from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY) and thank him for the opportunity to work with him and the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. SUTTON) on an amendment that we will offer here today related to the rusting and corrosion damage to bridges. Our amendment expresses the sense of Congress that States should prepare corrosion mitigation and prevention plans when planning the construction of new bridges or the rehabilitation of existing bridges.

Our amendment calls attention to a serious problem: many of our Nation's bridges are simply rusting away because of corrosion. Many of our bridges have surpassed their initial life expectancy, yet we rely on them to support another 20, 30, 40 years of travel.

Corrosion is a significant factor in determining the useful life of a bridge. Without preventative measures, water penetrates and corrodes the steel rebar that reinforces our bridges, causing it to swell and fracture the concrete from the inside out. Weather and salt—especially in the northeast, where we must salt our roads in the winter—cause steel beams to rust and undermine the integrity of the whole structure.

But corrosion can be reduced by using widely available technology and construction methods if they are incorporated into the engineering and design phase of the bridge project. Prevention measures range from simple steps like selecting more resistant building materials, or using coated rebar in concrete structures, to complex methods that cause electrical reactions in water to prevent rust from forming. This sounds complicated, but the same technology is commonly used by the shipbuilding industry to prevent corrosion.

It is much easier and more cost effective to prevent or limit corrosion and rust at the beginning of a project. Corrosion prevention and mitigation plans can cost as little as a few thousand dollars to prepare during the design phase of a bridge project, but they can save municipalities hundreds of millions of dollars down the road in replacement and repair costs; delaying the need for maintenance by a factor of years. Having these plans up front can extend the life of the bridge, thereby saving both lives and millions of dollars in unnecessary repairs. I am hopeful that my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will support the Conaway-Arcuri-Sutton amendment later today.