

(e) Any hearings or investigations which may be desired, aside from the regular hearings on appropriation items, when approved by the Committee, shall be conducted by the subcommittee having jurisdiction over the matter.

SEC. 9: OFFICIAL TRAVEL

(a) The chairman of a subcommittee shall approve requests for travel by subcommittee members and staff for official business within the jurisdiction of that subcommittee. The ranking minority member of a subcommittee shall concur in such travel requests by minority members of that subcommittee and the Ranking Minority Member shall concur in such travel requests for Minority Members of the Committee. Requests in writing covering the purpose, itinerary, and dates of proposed travel shall be submitted for final approval to the Chairman. Specific approval shall be required for each and every trip.

(b) The Chairman is authorized during the recess of the Congress to approve travel authorizations for Committee Members and staff, including travel outside the United States.

(c) As soon as practicable, the Chairman shall direct the head of each Government agency concerned not to honor requests of subcommittees, individual Members, or staff for travel, the direct or indirect expenses of which are to be defrayed from an executive appropriation, except upon request from the Chairman.

(d) In accordance with Clause 8 of Rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives and Section 502 (b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended, local currencies owned by the United States shall be available to Committee Members and staff engaged in carrying out their official duties outside the United States, its territories, or possessions. No Committee Member or staff member shall receive or expend local currencies for subsistence in any country at a rate in excess of the maximum per diem rate set forth in applicable Federal law.

(e) Travel Reports:

(1) Members or staff shall make a report to the Chairman on their travel, covering the purpose, results, itinerary, expenses, and other pertinent comments.

(2) With respect to travel outside the United States or its territories or possessions, the report shall include: (1) an itemized list showing the dates each country was visited, the amount of per diem furnished, the cost of transportation furnished, and any funds expended for any other official purpose; and (2) a summary in these categories of the total foreign currencies and/or appropriated funds expended. All such individual reports on foreign travel shall be filed with the Chairman no later than sixty days following completion of the travel for use in complying with reporting requirements in applicable Federal law, and shall be open for public inspection.

(3) Each Member or employee performing such travel shall be solely responsible for supporting the amounts reported by the Member or employee.

(4) No report or statement as to any trip shall be publicized making any recommendations in behalf of the Committee without the authorization of a majority of the Committee.

(f) Members and staff of the Committee performing authorized travel on official business pertaining to the jurisdiction of the Committee shall be governed by applicable laws or regulations of the House and of the Committee on House Administration pertaining to such travel, and as promulgated from time to time by the Chairman.

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SAFE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, last week I re-introduced the Security and Financial Empowerment Act, better known as the SAFE Act, to help stop a cycle of violence that exists in many American families today.

Domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking are serious, widespread social problems which impact all Americans regardless of race, ethnicity or social status. The reality of this violence is highlighted by the fact that 1 in 4 American women report being physically or sexually abused at some point in their life.

These serious crimes, primarily against women, have both physical and psychological consequences. Yet credible research has found that many women stay in abusive relationships because they cannot support themselves. As a result, many victims are faced with the terrifying decision of living with the abuse or leaving without financial security.

For victims of domestic violence, this choice is even more daunting during tough economic times like now, for research tells us that as the economy worsens the incidence of violence increases.

The SAFE Act will provide the safety net many need to create a safe and stable environment for themselves and their children by eliminating obstacles that may prevent them from gaining meaningful employment or seeking help.

My bill makes it possible to take limited leave from work for safety planning and necessary court appearances without the threat of losing a job. The SAFE Act also provides job protection when reasonable workplace safety modifications are requested.

To protect victims of violence who seek help against their abuser, the SAFE Act prohibits employers or insurance providers from basing insurance coverage or hiring decisions on an individual's history of abuse.

The SAFE Act also makes a survivor of domestic and dating violence, sexual assault and stalking, eligible for unemployment insurance if it is necessary to leave a job to escape the abuse.

Madam Speaker, the SAFE Act is needed to provide these victims with equal protection throughout our country. While several States have laws similar to the SAFE Act, the reality is that today a person's financial ability to leave an abusive environment depends primarily on where they live.

I thank the many dedicated advocates who daily work to empower women against the horrific crimes of dating and domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking for their invaluable input, expertise and support of the SAFE Act.

I encourage my colleagues to join me and Representative TED POE in cosponsoring and helping to pass the SAFE Act which, for many of these victims, can make the difference between life and death.

CONSEQUENCES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. CHAFFETZ) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to comment about a growing concern among my constituents. They are concerned about our unwillingness to hold ourselves and others accountable.

As the Senate debates the \$1 trillion stimulus package, my constituents are begging us to consider the consequences. Every American knows about consequences. They pay them all the time. But they're beginning to wonder if Congress knows about consequences. The continued commitment to deficit spending exacts a huge price upon this country. Yet, it is not nearly enough discussion about the consequences.

It's easy to ignore the consequences. It's easy to pretend they don't exist. It's easy to get caught up in short-term fixes that ignore long-term results. But we weren't elected to do the easy thing. We were elected to make tough choices. We cannot be all things to all people.

It's time to turn things around. If we're serious about change, we have to get serious about accountability.

I'm concerned that Congress has been sending the wrong message to the American people. Consider what they see on a daily basis. They see Wall Street exploiting people, breaking rules and ruining lives. For the offenders, the consequences are minimal. But there is a price. The American people get stuck paying it.

They see financial gurus allegedly ripping people off, and consequences are minimal. But there's a price and the victims pay it.

They see tax evaders nominated to serve the highest offices in our government and, oops, there doesn't seem to be much after of a consequence. But there's still a price. The American government pays it, as we undermine our own credibility.

Now the American people see a government spending trillions of dollars of borrowed money. Congressional leadership is telling them there won't be a consequence. But they know better, and so do we.

We need to join the President's calls to raise our standards. In his inauguration speech, the President said, "Those of us who manage the public's dollars will be held accountable, to spend wisely, reform bad habits and do our business in the light of day, because only then can we restore the vital trust between people a government."