

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4173, WALL STREET REFORM AND CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT OF 2009

Mr. ARCURI, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 111-370) on the resolution (H. Res. 964) providing for further consideration of the bill (H.R. 4173) to provide for financial regulatory reform, to protect consumers and investors, to enhance Federal understanding of insurance issues, to regulate the over-the-counter derivatives markets, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 3288, CONSOLIDATED APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2010

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 961, I call up the conference report on the bill (H.R. 3288) making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WEINER). Pursuant to House Resolution 961, the conference report is considered read.

(For conference report and statement, see proceedings of the House of December 8, 2009, in Book II at page H13631.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. OLVER) and the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LATHAM) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include tabular and extraneous material on the conference report to accompany H.R. 3288.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 3 minutes.

It is my privilege and pleasure to present the Consolidated Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2010 to the House.

This conference report is the product of many hours of hearings and briefings across six subcommittees, always with bipartisan input and excellent Member participation, and culminated by extensive negotiations with our Senate colleagues. I especially would like to recognize the important contributions of our ranking member, TOM LATHAM of Iowa, in putting together the Transpor-

tation and Housing portions of this bill. While we may not always agree, I always appreciate his partnership, and his input has made the bill better.

I am particularly proud of the Transportation and Housing portion of the report because it demonstrates our mutual commitment to investing in our Nation's housing and transportation infrastructure; our mutual commitment to maintaining critical services in urban and rural communities; our mutual commitment to vulnerable populations such as the elderly and disabled; our mutual commitment to building sustainable communities for our Nation's families; and our mutual commitment to maintaining an efficient and safe transportation system that contributes to America's place in a global economy.

Notably, the conference agreement provides funding to improve and repair roughly 1 million miles of Federal aid highways; to support and expand a public transit system that carried more than 10 billion riders last year; to meet demand for 21st century intercity passenger rail systems, demonstrated by Amtrak's 11 percent growth in annual ridership; and modernizing the air traffic control system that is outdated and manages over 10.5 million flights annually.

Within the Housing and Urban Development programs, the conference agreement fully funds the section 8 rental housing assistance program, thereby ensuring affordable housing for 3½ million families and individuals; the agreement provides 10,000 new vouchers to homeless veterans; the agreement keeps a roof over the heads of 1.2 million households living in public housing; and the agreement helps communities improve local economies and create jobs through the Community Development Block Grant program.

In conclusion, we worked hard to balance many competing demands to produce a bill that reflects the bipartisan needs for transportation and housing, and strengthens the foundation upon which our economic turnaround is being built. This is a good product, and I urge Members to support it.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 5 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I first want to thank Chairman OLVER for his kind words and his leadership this year. The gentleman from Massachusetts truly is a gentleman. And I appreciate very much the work that he has done. He has very artfully negotiated a good conference report for the House. Those of you who know JOHN OLVER know that he puts a great deal of effort and thought into this bill and to the issues in the transportation and housing worlds. In fact, sometimes you feel like he has gone a little bit too far into the weeds, but his dedication is to be admired.

It is all the more unfortunate that we are here today under these cir-

cumstances. Instead of presenting a Transportation-HUD conference report, Chairman OLVER is forced to carry five other bills with him, bills that should be considered on their own as conference reports.

The Transportation-HUD bill, like all appropriations bills, was considered under a closed rule in the name of expediency. The Transportation-HUD bill passed the floor of the House in July. The Senate even passed the bill. That was on September 17. The Senate, apparently the body that can't get their work done on time, managed to do it at that time under an open amendment process. They even actually got to offer amendments on the bill, which is something we didn't get to do here in the House.

□ 1230

Realistically, we could have and should have been able to bring the Transportation-HUD conference report to the floor by the end of the fiscal year. Instead, here we are today 3 months into the fiscal year, 3 months after the Senate passed its bill in an omnibus today.

The Transportation-HUD is not alone in this situation. The MilCon-Veterans bill was also considered and passed by both bodies. MilCon-VA should be a stand-alone conference report. Commerce, Justice, Science actually had a conference meeting noticed up, but that got yanked. The CJS should be a stand-alone bill. Instead, it also got stuck in this omnibus. Three other bills—the Foreign Operations bill, the Financial Services bill, and even the Labor-HHS bill, Mr. OBEY's own bill—weren't considered in the Senate and are buried in this package.

Members of this House should be aware you voted against this type of a package on Tuesday. The House voted to adopt a motion to instruct that said no extraneous matters may be added to the Transportation-HUD conference report. Instead, against the wishes of the House, we've added five bills to this conference report.

I regret very much that I am unable to support this bill. It's my first year on this bill and I have enjoyed, obviously, working with the chairman. The issues are interesting and our subcommittee members are really engaged and bring a variety of experiences to the table. However, the price tag on this bill is simply too high.

Mr. LEWIS offered an amendment, very reasonable, to have the spending levels proposed by Congress at the 2010 level, everything but Defense and Veterans, at 2 percent over last year. We spent a lot of money last year, so a 2 percent increase over last year would really be quite generous.

However, when we finish the 2010 bills, the Democrats will have increased government spending by 85 percent, 85 percent over the last 2 years. You tell me one American family that has 85 percent more in 2009. I can tell you none of my constituents have an