



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 112th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 158

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, MAY 16, 2012

No. 70

House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BARTON of Texas).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
May 16, 2012.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JOE BARTON to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 17, 2012, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. The Violence Against Women Act has been one of the great legislative successes of the last two decades. Since it was first signed into law by President Clinton, there is no question that it has helped millions of women by funding a variety of community violence protection programs and a variety of victim assistance services from coast to coast while providing a legal framework for protec-

tion. Republicans and Democrats alike have supported the legislation in all subsequent reauthorizations because of the recognition for the vital nature of the services that are provided and the impact that it has not just on women, but on the children in these families. That's why it was reauthorized in 2000 and then again in 2005 under a Republican administration with President Bush.

In this Congress, that tradition of bipartisan support continues in the Senate, which has approved a stronger version of the legislation developed in the Senate Judiciary Committee, co-sponsored by both Chair LEAHY and Ranking Member CRAPO. Sadly, it's facing a decidedly different fate in the House.

Once again, the Republican majority is advancing legislation by one of their new Members that is designed not to bring people together to solve problems, but to create unnecessary divisions. Their bill would actually roll back, for the first time, these established rights rather than increase them. The House legislation would fail to provide protections for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transsexual individuals. It would fail Native American victims who are assaulted on tribal lands by nontribal predators. The bill would discourage immigrants from reporting sexual assaults and other crimes by placing unnecessary restrictions on new visa programs and not increase the emergency visas for individuals who immigrate to the United States on a marriage or fiancée visa and are subject to an abusive relationship.

Not only does the House bill miss these opportunities, but it would remove the current confidentiality protections for victims who still had immigrant status. It would inexplicably reduce violence reporting requirements on colleges and universities. These are all tools widely used and supported by law enforcement officials to help keep

communities safe by prosecuting criminals and protecting victims.

The House bill would decentralize the Violence Against Women immigration adjudication process, bypassing examiners who are trained in domestic violence and sexual assault, instead, mandating additional interviews on battered immigrants. These are people who usually have very limited options to protect themselves. We should not complicate the lives of some of the most vulnerable people in the United States. These victims of violence—usually women in the most difficult of circumstances—will be burdened, hindered, and discouraged from seeking and getting the help they need.

The House bill would represent the triumph of ideological partisan politics over solid legislation with an opportunity for solid bipartisan support. It should be firmly rejected.

Instead, the House should use this opportunity to build on a record of proven success, bipartisan cooperation, and a commitment to strengthening the protection of society's most vulnerable by using the Senate bill as a template. These victims and potential victims deserve no less. They, their families, and the communities they live in deserve no less.

Domestic violence is an assault on the entire community and should not be tolerated. We should not retreat on the Violence Against Women Act, but strengthen it by using the Senate bill as a point of departure and reject the House version.

NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MARINO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MARINO. Mr. Speaker, as a foster parent, a father of two adopted children, and a cochairman of the bipartisan Congressional Foster Youth

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



Printed on recycled paper.

H2717