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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
September 10, 2013.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN 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 3, 2013, 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.

LET'S WORK TOGETHER

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Congress returns to Washington this week after a month connecting with people at home, hopefully with a little time with family and friends.

Some think our overwhelming agenda was made nearly impossible with the Syrian question, which no one expected when we recessed—somewhat ironic—even though 100,000 Syrians have been killed and 2 million refugees

are flooding into neighboring countries.

We face a looming budget showdown and a debt ceiling crisis. While we have futile votes to defund ObamaCare, the rest of the country is in the midst of a dramatic change in health care, perhaps the most profound in half a century. The health care reform train has left the station.

What if we took a break from sabotaging ObamaCare and creating a debt ceiling crisis to do our job as representatives of the people and as leaders?

What are we for?

We might start with Syria. I have deep reservations about the use of force, but as one of the people who called upon the President to involve Congress in this decision, I think we have an obligation to at least hear him out. Let's work to refine the Russian proposal, which appears to have had some American origins.

What about the 2 million refugees who need our help, to say nothing of their host countries?

Let's seize upon some of the promising signs out of Iran, from their new leadership, to make progress, both in Syria and with the Iranian nuclear question.

Domestically, let's spend our time rebuilding and renewing America, not just lamenting the poor shape of our infrastructure. Let's work together to support the vision and the resources to rebuild and renew the country and put Americans back to work.

Internationally—I see my good friend and colleague, Congressman TED POE, on the floor. Why don't we zero in on the efforts with our international Water for the World legislation to help deal with sanitation and safe drinking water for poor people around the globe?

Think about those 200 million hours women will spend in sub-Saharan Africa gathering water today, time that they won't spend in school or working for their families.

Let's use the fall to identify and move forward on the vast array of things where we actually agree we can work together and they won't cost very much. America will be the better for it, and so will Congress.

THE WAR ON SYRIA

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

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Madam Speaker, Russia's diplomatic intervention in the Syrian crisis is indeed welcome news. But whether it is real or illusory, the President needs to step back from the dangerous precipice that he has brought us to.

Certainly, he's made his case for war with Syria very clearly, that the United States must punish the use of chemical weapons, and if we don't, they're more likely to be used again. He assures us that the strike will be limited and that it will aid moderates fighting the regime. He warns that American credibility is at stake. The case is quite clear: it is simply not convincing.

It's possible that an attack on Syria will convince Assad not to use chemical weapons in the future. But it is just as likely to convince him that, being in for a penny, he might as well be in for a pound and unleash his entire chemical arsenal.

It is just as likely that an American strike on Syria will produce a retaliatory strike, possibly by Hezbollah against Israel, requiring a retaliatory strike by Israel, possibly on Iran, in a catastrophic chain reaction.

We don't know where it will lead, but we can be sure that the morning after the attack we would confront a most uncomfortable irony. In retaliation for Assad killing Syrian civilians with chemical weapons, the United States will have killed Syrian civilians with

□ 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.



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conventional weapons, for civilian casualties are an unavoidable tragedy of war.

Well, who would be our new allies in this war?

They'd be the Islamic forces that are responsible for their own litany of atrocities, including the massacre of Syrian Christians, the beheading of political opponents, summary executions of war prisoners and acts of barbarity too depraved to be discussed in this forum. We would be aiding and abetting those forces.

We're told that al Qaeda's not more than a fourth of our new coalition and that the rest are moderates. Well, we were told the same thing about Libya. We were told the same thing about the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt.

The problem with moderates in the Middle East is that there aren't very many of them, and they're quickly overwhelmed in any coalition they attempt.

Nor can such an attack be limited in duration or scope. The fact is, once you have attacked another country, you are at war with that country and its allies, whatever you wish to call it, and whatever you later decide to do.

And wars have a very nasty way of taking turns that no one can predict or control. World War I began with a series of obscure incidents that quickly escalated into world war. And the Middle East today is a veritable powder keg compared to the antebellum Europe of a century ago.

Finally, we're told American credibility is on the line. Well, chemical weapons are barbaric, but this isn't the first time they've been used in modern times. They were used previously in Syria, in the Yemeni civil war, by Iraq against Iran, by the Vietnamese against the Cambodians, by Libya against Chad.

The only unique thing about this incident is that it is the first time an American President has declared their use to be a "red line." Our credibility was harmed by a foolish and reckless statement by the President. Let us not further damage it with a foolish and reckless act by Congress.

Wars are not something to be taken lightly. From the podium right behind me, General MacArthur warned that, "In war there is no substitute for victory."

If you're going to start a war, you'd better be prepared to put the entire resources of the country behind it, to endure every setback along the way, to utterly annihilate every vestige of the enemy, and to install, by force, a government of our design and choosing, and to maintain that government until all opposition is ceased. If you are not willing to do that, then you have no business firing the first shot.

More than a decade of irrefutable and aimless wars in Iraq and Afghanistan should have taught us this lesson: that victory, and not stalemate, must be the objective of any war. Yet, this would be a war whose avowed objective

is stalemate. That is self-defeating. It is immoral.

The President has already made his case very clearly, and he is very clearly wrong.

THE SYRIAN CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, I'd like to thank President Obama for his considered judgment in the matter of Syria, and for not headstrong rushing the United States to military action.

I thank him for his consultations with Members of Congress in both Chambers, and for allowing the American people time to express their views. We must all weigh the consequences and repercussions of unilateral U.S. action.

As the world's greatest military power, we must employ our power wisely, and only with good measure. I have every confidence that our U.S. military can perform any task to which they are ordered successfully, and we owe them our deepest respect and gratitude.

I also want to thank and acknowledge the government of Russia for early reports we are learning about regarding discussions under way to rid Syria of weapons caches of danger both to Syria as well as our global community.

Both Russia and the United States, as the world's premier nuclear powers, hold awesome responsibilities to move our world to a more peaceful and stable posture. Surely, we must focus that effort on the very unstable set of states across the Middle East.

Russia and our country both have suffered from terrorist attacks and well understand the consequences of unresolved conflict and terrorists preying on unstable states.

My hope is that the Russian initiative gains momentum. And let all nations of goodwill on our globe find a way forward to address the tragic consequences of the Syrian civil war, starting with greater humanitarian assistance to refugees that have flowed into adjoining nations like Jordan and Lebanon and Turkey, straining some of those nations' abilities to even hold their own internal affairs together.

Surely, our world can better address the human suffering that is evident to anyone who's paying attention. Surely, surely, all reasonable world leaders can find a better way forward for Syria and for us all.

THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE PRESIDENT BEATS THE DRUMS FOR WAR

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, the drums of war are being beaten by the President who, ironically, won the Nobel Peace Prize. The "Peace Presi-

dent" wants to fire missiles into Syria because tyrant Assad is violating the rules of war by allegedly using chemical weapons. The President's goal is not to remove Assad, not to destroy the chemical weapons, but to send Assad a message.

To be clear, there is no imminent national security threat or interest for the United States by us starting this war. And make no mistake, shooting rockets into another country is an act of war.

War has consequences. What if the outlaw Assad chooses then to use chemical weapons again or chooses to shoot back? He could retaliate against the United States, one of our embassies, the Navy that fired the rockets, or other U.S. military installations, or even specific troops, or retaliate against his neighbor, Turkey, or Israel, using our aggression as an excuse. In any of these situations, this limited war escalates with more U.S. response, intervention, and involvement.

Now, who are the players in this war that is taking place already? On one side you have Syria, tyrant Assad, with the aid of Russia, with the aid of Iran that news reports say has 10,000 Iranian troops in Syria, and Hezbollah. Hezbollah, as you remember, Madam Speaker, is a terrorist group.

Then, on the other side, you have the Free Syrian Army. You have patriots. You have mercenaries, paid soldiers from other countries. You have criminals that have come in to just pillage the land and use this as an opportunity. You also have al Nusra, an al Qaeda affiliate. You also have al Qaeda from Iraq. Now, last time I recall, the United States is already at war with al Qaeda. They are the enemy of the United States.

□ 1015

And it looks like now you've got the terrorist group Hezbollah on one side and the terrorist group al Qaeda on the other side. And we want to get involved in this civil religious war to send a message not to use chemical weapons?

Of course, you not only just have these players, but you've got Turkey, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar lined up on the side of the Free Syrian Army. Turkey is a next-door neighbor to Syria. A year ago, a Turkish F-4 built by the United States was flying along the Syrian border, and it was shot down. We don't know who shot it down.

Meanwhile, the United States already has, along with its NATO parties, patriot batteries on the Syrian border facing Syria that are in Turkey. The Dutch, the Germans, and the Americans have manned those batteries. Why? To make sure that our NATO ally is protected from incoming rockets. If we escalate this regional conflict in one country, it may escalate to other regions, like Turkey. Then we've got real issues because Turkey is a NATO ally. We are obligated to help them if they get into a war with Syria.

And then about the terrorists. As I mentioned, they are really on both sides. And we hear from the administration, with all due respect, that the minority of fighters on the rebel side are al Qaeda. I respectfully disagree with the Secretary of State. What seems to be happening is the Free Syrian Army is going through Syria liberating Syrians, and al Qaeda is in the background, coming in and occupying the territory and imposing strict Islamic sharia law. We can see this play out. If the rebels eventually are successful, then we may have a second civil war between the Free Syrian Army and al Qaeda.

All of that may be down the road. And why would the United States want to get involved in this situation?

So today, Madam Speaker, I have filed a resolution stating that no U.S. funds will be used for this war with Syria. This religious civil war is not our war. So no money for the “Peace President’s” war. And if he starts a war with Syria, I suggest the President return the Nobel Peace Prize. If he really wants to send a message, he should follow Samuel Goldwyn’s advice: “try Western Union.”

And that’s just the way it is.

USDA FOOD INSECURITY FIGURES

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, last week, the United States Department of Agriculture released its annual report on food security in the United States. The report documents the levels of food security and insecurity in this country. In this report, the USDA measured the amount of food available or unavailable to households and individuals. In other words, Madam Speaker, the USDA measured the amount of hunger in the United States. It measured the ability of Americans to put food on their tables.

The good news is that hunger isn’t getting worse. The bad news is that there are still 49 million people living in our great country who are food insecure; 49 million people who don’t know where their next meal will come from; 49 million people who are forced to choose between basic needs like rent, utilities, and food; 49 million people who don’t have the resources necessary to make ends meet; 49 million people who are hungry. That’s one out of every six people living in this country who is food insecure—a figure that hasn’t changed since 2008.

While it’s a good thing that food insecurity isn’t getting worse, that’s simply not good enough. We must do more to ensure that healthy and nutritious food is available to everyone in America. We must ensure that 49 million people are not left behind when it comes to buying food.

The fact remains that millions of Americans are still struggling to make

ends meet. Millions of Americans continue to feel the effects of the worst economic recession since the Great Depression. As a result of the staggering loss of jobs and reduced wages that came from the recession, millions of Americans were forced to turn to the Federal Government’s preeminent anti-hunger program, SNAP, formerly known as food stamps, in order to put food on their tables.

SNAP participation rates skyrocketed precisely because of the recession. SNAP is a safety net. It’s designed to increase in participation in times of need. That means the cost of the program goes up as more people need help buying food while they’re either unemployed or struggling with lower wages. That’s precisely what happened during the recession. And that’s why there are so many people relying on SNAP today. These food insecurity numbers confirm that hunger is a problem in America; that there are millions of people—49 million—who don’t know where their next meals are coming from and need helping buying food for themselves and their families.

This is a sobering report, Madam Speaker, and one that would normally result in congressional hearings on the problem and possible ways to reduce hunger in America. But we’re not living in normal times. That’s because, Madam Speaker, even with the release of this report showing that rates of food insecurity are unchanged since the end of the Bush administration, this Republican-controlled House is preparing to consider a bill that would cut at least \$40 billion from the SNAP program. That’s right. The response to this report is to make hunger in America even worse than it is today.

I want to remind my colleagues there is not one single town, city, county, or congressional district in America that is hunger free. For the life of me, I can’t understand why the Republicans want to cut this program that provides food to millions of Americans. I cannot understand why the Republican leadership wants to balance the budget on the backs of the working poor.

SNAP is not only successful; it’s efficient and effective. The error rate for SNAP is among the lowest, if not the lowest, error rates of any Federal program. That’s right. Fraud, waste, and abuse in SNAP is at an all-time low, which means that SNAP dollars are going exactly where they should be going—to food-hungry Americans. On top of that, SNAP kept 4.7 million people out of poverty in 2011, including 2.1 million children. That means that cutting SNAP will also result in increased poverty in America. The irony is there are some Members of this House who are collecting millions of dollars in taxpayer-funded farm subsidies while at the same time they vote to take away food from hungry Americans.

Madam Speaker, hunger in America is real. It must be addressed. That’s why I’ve called for a White House conference on food nutrition, a conference

where we can explore hunger and nutrition and develop a plan to end this scourge once and for all. We will not end hunger by cutting the most efficient and effective anti-hunger program in the country. We will not end hunger through arbitrary, harmful, and spiteful budget cuts.

We can end hunger now if we decide to take that step. The USDA food security report provides evidence that we’re not doing enough to end hunger now. The upcoming vote to cut the anti-hunger safety net shows how truly harmful the Republican leadership is when it comes to the working poor in America. We can do more. We can do better. We can—and we must—end hunger now.

MEDICARE DME-POS MARKET PRICING PROGRAM ACT OF 2013

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, on August 22, the United States Department of Health and Human Services Inspector General, Daniel Levinson, announced his decision to initiate an investigation into the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, aka Medicare, and its handling of the Competitive Bidding Program for durable medical equipment, prosthetics, orthotics, and supplies.

I initiated a request on June 20, 2013, following disclosures that CMS awarded contracts nationwide to suppliers that lacked the proper licensure and accreditation—clear violations of the agency’s program guidelines for participation in the Competitive Bidding Program.

The so-called “competitive” bidding model is being used by the government to procure goods and services for our Nation’s seniors and those facing life-altering disease and disability. While CMS makes claims the Competitive Bidding Program will increase market competition and lower costs, in practice it’s shown to be anything but competitive. Over the past several years, we’ve seen the program negatively affect seniors and force small medical companies, many that are local and the only entity capable of providing quality goods and a high level of service, out of the market and out of business.

In 2011, more than 240 economists and market auction design experts wrote to President Obama concerning the flawed bidding model. The experts wrote:

The current program is the antithesis of science and contradicts all that is known about proper market design.

These warnings have become reality over the past several years. The licensure and accreditation abuses are just the latest among a long list of program failures.

For many of these reasons, on June 12, 2013, 227 bipartisan Members of the House—a full majority—including 82

Democrats and 145 Republicans, sent a letter to CMS outlining the flaws and abuses in the program, requesting that the agency delay further implementation until such issues are fully addressed and fixed.

Despite the growing number of reported abuses under the program and strong congressional concern about the bidding design and a long overdue need for transparency and accountability, CMS moved forward with the program in 91 new bidding areas on July 1, 2013, bringing the total to 100 areas nationwide.

While CMS has admitted to the abuses, the agency has failed to detail how these failures occurred or offer a plan for corrective action. With any hope, the Office of Inspector General's efforts will shed light on how these failures occurred and impose a new level of transparency at the Medicare agency, CMS, and among the agency's administrators. In the meantime, it will be up to the House of Representatives to take corrective action.

With this said, I respectfully request that each of my colleagues join me in cosponsoring H.R. 1717, Medicare DMEPOS Market Pricing Program Act of 2013. This commonsense measure, authored by my esteemed colleague from Georgia, Dr. PRICE, will apply real market principles to the highly flawed competitive bidding model. Madam Speaker, we owe as much to our constituents, the taxpayers, and our Nation's Medicare beneficiaries.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 27 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Reverend Dr. Harmon E. Stockdale, Mt. Vernon Missionary Baptist Church, Rochester, New York, offered the following prayer:

Heavenly Father, we acknowledge You with adoration and humble gratitude. We pray for Your presence and guidance over this distinguished body before whom we stand.

We thank You for this great land in which we live, the United States of America. And we thank You for all who share in making the policies, laws, and decisions which guide and govern our Nation.

We ask Your blessings upon all of our elected and appointed leaders as they lead us to face the challenges of our

day. Grant that we, as a Nation, may be mindful of Your providence and Your grace as we give moral and ethical leadership to the people of our world.

May justice, equality, and compassion always be the guiding principles for our way of life; and may we never forget that to whom much is given, much is required.

In Your Son's name we pray.
Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from New York (Mr. HIGGINS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. HIGGINS led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

USE OF MILITARY FORCE IN SYRIA

(Mr. GOSAR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, this week, all eyes will be upon us as we debate the use of force in Syria. This decision is not one that should be made lightly, as ultimately there are many factors to be weighed.

Make no mistake that what is happening in Syria is truly a human tragedy. That nation has been torn apart by civil war. It is without a doubt that Assad is not a friend or ally of ours. But things are very complicated. A large number of those who oppose the Assad regime are affiliated with al Qaeda. In the case of Syria, Assad, and the rebels, it cannot be said that the enemy of my enemy is my friend. In this dangerous civil war, the enemy of our enemy is still and will always be our enemy.

It is this dynamic which has led to the overwhelming response of people throughout my district and our Nation to say without an imminent threat to national security, without a plan, without a goal, without unified international support from our allies, we must stay out of Syria.

NATION-BUILDING AT HOME

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, the situation in Syria is that of a national civil war. It's a sectarian and ethnic conflict between two warring factions. This is not about democracy and freedom. There is no social contract. There is no constitution. There is no preamble. There is no unifying vision as to what Syria wants to become. This is a brutal battle between two bad sides for control. Assad is a brutal dictator, for certain; but the opposition's best fighters are al Qaeda and Islamic extremists bent on creating an Islamic state in Syria.

In the international community, 194 countries have said—but for Turkey and France—yes, the United States, go get them; just don't ask us to participate. So the American people will find themselves, once again, for the third time in a decade, in a region of the Middle East in South Asia in another civil war, essentially alone again.

The American people want nation-building. But they want it right here at home, in America.

ANOTHER SOLUTION IN SYRIA

(Mr. PITTENGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTENGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to oppose the President's action in Syria.

I just returned from the Middle East, meeting with heads of state in Qatar, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, and our ambassador to NATO. I'm firmly convinced that any action on our part will further destabilize Syria and cause a collapse of the government. What will happen then? What will happen is that country will then fall in the hands of Hezbollah, Hamas, al Qaeda, and the Muslim Brotherhood.

At the end of the day, what's important, Mr. Speaker, is who has control of those weapons of mass destruction. While what Mr. Assad has done has been barbaric and evil, we will never forgive ourselves for the havoc that will be played upon this world if those weapons fall into the hands of Islamic extremists. We need to work together collectively to address the problem of identifying and finding those weapons of mass destruction and securing those for the future.

There are many people who are living outside of their country now as refugees. There are tens of thousands of able men who could be recruited to be a part of that solution.

NATIONAL CHILDHOOD OBESITY AWARENESS MONTH

(Ms. FUDGE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FUDGE. Mr. Speaker, this week, I will reintroduce a resolution recognizing September as National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month. September marks an opportunity for Congress to raise awareness of the issue while also discussing ways we can engage our families and communities on how best to curb this unhealthy trend.

Over the past three decades, childhood obesity rates in the United States have tripled. Today, nearly one in three children are overweight or obese. These numbers are even higher in minority communities, where nearly 40 percent of African American and Hispanic children are overweight. Children today experience a different lifestyle from 30 years ago, when kids ate less and exercised more.

Many groups have stepped up to the plate to improve nutrition and physical activity for our children. Community partners like the Campaign to End Obesity, Cheer for a Healthier America, YWCA, and HealthCorps have taken the charge to achieve the healthiest lives we can give them.

Let us use the month of September to elevate the issue of childhood obesity and recognize our community partners.

VERIFICATION OF OBAMACARE SUBSIDIES

(Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, after 3½ years, the Obama administration has failed to make its hallmark legislation, ObamaCare, work. Instead, it has delayed or waived key portions, including the so-called “verification system.” This was ObamaCare’s way of ensuring folks who received Federal assistance to buy health insurance met the criteria. Buried within 600 pages of red tape, the administration said it will no longer verify the information provided by individuals, but simply rely on self-reporting.

Mr. Speaker, this opens a wide door to further fraud and abuse in our health care system. This fraud could amount to \$250 billion in taxpayer-funded payments. That’s no pocket change.

That’s why I urge my colleagues to support a commonsense bill, H.R. 2775, No Subsidies Without Verification Act, to protect taxpayer dollars and further chip away at this unworkable law. The American people want, need, and deserve better.

FIXING THE WAR POWER AUTHORITY

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, the President has come to Congress, as he should, to ask authority for a discre-

tionary military action. The sad fact is he doesn’t have to because of a defective law passed by Congress in reaction to Nixon’s bombing of Cambodia in 1973. The bill that Congress passed is a shadow of our constitutional authority regarding war and peace.

This President has come to us. That’s good. The result is not yet known. It has already resulted perhaps in a diplomatic breakthrough. That is also good. But in the future we need to make certain that each and every President comes to us when we’re not defending against immediate interests of the United States or against imminent or real attack of our troops or our citizens.

So I’ll be reintroducing legislation to fix the war power authority. In the future, in circumstances such as this, it will require that the President come to the Congress before launching a discretionary military action. We must fix this law. This is a good precedent this President has set. Let’s make it the law of the United States of America.

OPPOSE MILITARY ACTION IN SYRIA

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

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge the President and my colleagues to oppose any U.S. military action in Syria. Based on the evidence given to Congress, I have serious reservations about authorizing the use of military force in another Middle Eastern country. The President has not convinced me that we have vital national security interests at stake in Syria or a clear military objective. There are far too many unanswered questions and unclear objectives.

My constituents in the 24th District of Texas are deeply skeptical about the value of military intervention in Syria. I fully agree with their concerns. On behalf of my constituents and many concerned Americans, I respectfully urge my colleagues to weigh the evidence fully and to be realistic about what can be achieved in military intervention. Let us vote for what’s best for the United States. Keep the U.S. military out of Syria.

THE ALTERNATIVE PLAN IN SYRIA

(Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend the Obama administration for its willingness to consider a new alternative proposal for dealing with Syria. The proposal is to hand over all—and I stress all—of Syria’s chemical weapons under the oversight of the international community and to safely and verifiably destroy them. This could actually remove those weapons from the battlefield and peacefully prevent

the further use of them against the people of Syria or her neighbors. This idea has gained support from U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki Moon, as well as Russia and France.

Mr. Speaker, this proposal needs to be vigorously pursued. The Syrian regime’s attack against its own people using poisonous gas is morally reprehensible. If this plan is successful, it could produce an outcome that everyone desires: preventing the Assad regime from using chemical weapons.

□ 1215

WILL THE SENATE AND THE PRESIDENT ACT TO GET AMERICANS WORKING AGAIN?

(Mr. HULTGREN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HULTGREN. Mr. Speaker, the American people are still struggling with a shaky economy. During the August district work period, the number one question I heard from my constituents was: Where are the jobs?

Last week we saw the unemployment rate in August drop to 7.3 percent, but for all the wrong reasons. People didn’t find jobs; they stopped looking for them altogether. Between July and August, that amounted to more than 300,000 people.

A smaller percentage of Americans is working or looking for work than at any time in the past 35 years. It is so discouraging to be told the recession is over, but then you look and you look but you can’t find a job.

Employers around my district tell me the best stimulus for hiring is to reduce government regulations, cut taxes, simplify the Tax Code, and push for smaller government. Yet, what do they see ahead? More uncertainty as States race to meet the October 1 deadline to set up expensive and confusing ObamaCare exchanges. No wonder businesses aren’t hiring; the “Unaffordable Care Act” doesn’t give them the confidence that they need to be able to afford hiring new employees.

Let’s restore their confidence to hire and train new workers. The House has passed numerous jobs bills to reduce regulations on businesses. Let’s have the Senate act.

SYRIA

(Mr. VARGAS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on Syria.

The real issue is that the Assad regime gassed more than 426 children and their parents. Those who perished died a horrific, merciless, and completely unnecessary death. We must come together and act with the President to create a credible threat of force and, thereby, deter the future use of chemical weapons.

Now, I am somewhat optimistic that, as recently reported, Syria is willing to place its chemical weapons under international control. This solution could possibly bring a peaceful resolution. But we must remember that Iran is also watching. The Ayatollah is looking to see if the U.S. is willing to stand up against those who gas their own people. Will they really stand up then against the plan to build nuclear weapons?

We need to stand with the President and send a message to the world that we mean what we say: that we won't allow Assad to keep gassing his own people and that we won't allow Iran to develop a nuclear weapon.

UNIVERSAL LITTLE LEAGUE

(Mr. FARENTHOLD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to honor, today, a group of hometown heroes from Corpus Christi, Texas, the Corpus Christi Universal Little League team.

Universal made it to the Little League World Series this year in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, after they won the Southwest Regional Tournament. These young men showcased their talents on an international stage, defeating teams from Australia and Canada.

They received a grand welcome back to Corpus Christi along Shoreline Boulevard with a parade, where my district director, Bob Haueter, presented them with a flag flown over the United States Capitol and a letter of congratulations from me. They are an inspiration to young men and women throughout Texas and America.

This summer they saw and demonstrated that hard work pays off. It's a feeling I know they will carry with them for many years to come.

Way to go, Universal.

SEQUESTER

(Mr. TONKO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, it has been more than 5 weeks since the House recessed for a district work period and all of our problems that we put on hold remain right here in front of us. This long list of challenges includes repealing the sequester.

According to the nonpartisan CBO, sequestration will cost us about 750,000 jobs this year alone. Now is the time to act. Instead of messaging bills or playing procedural games in an attempt to repeal or defund the Affordable Care Act, we should be addressing unfinished business.

Americans have sent us here to do a job: help put people back to work and grow our economy. I encourage House Republicans to work with Democrats

to roll back these mindless, thoughtless sequester cuts. They are the worst way to save a bad program and the most foolish way to cut a good and vibrant one.

STOP OBAMACARE

(Mr. STUTZMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STUTZMAN. Mr. Speaker, hard-working Americans have called on Congress to stop ObamaCare. While they expect that Washington elites will deride their message and disparage their cause, they are here because they understand the consequences of ObamaCare's oppressive mandates.

Back home, over the month of August, I heard from parents who pay higher premiums only to have health coverage dropped for their spouse. I have talked with Hoosiers who make ends meet with two part-time jobs after their hours were cut. I have seen the discouragement of neighbors who hope this is finally the week they will find work.

Americans know that this isn't what a recovery looks like, but they wonder if Washington even cares. President Obama told them to trust the bureaucrats, the same bureaucrats who gave carve-outs to Big Business and kickbacks to Big Government. Republicans told them we had a different plan. We promised to stop ObamaCare and put patients ahead of politics. As ObamaCare's October 1 deadline approaches, those families wonder if we really mean it.

Mr. Speaker, now is the time to keep that promise. Now, when it really matters, we must stop ObamaCare.

HONOR SYSTEM

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, because of ObamaCare, health insurance costs could be increasing more than 80 percent for young North Carolinians. Yes, those who pay just over \$100 a month now may have to pay \$185 for ObamaCare-approved coverage.

The administration has attempted to console us with promises that the blow of such sharp cost increases will be softened for the neediest Americans through income-based taxpayer subsidies. However, there's a problem: it's not just needy Americans who will have access. Because the Obama administration has decided to rely on an "honor system" for subsidy distribution to draw money, income won't have to be verified, and neither will one's access to "affordable" employer-provided health coverage.

We are told this honor system will be temporary, but we are not satisfied. Develop a verification system now or delay the subsidies. Better yet, give every American a break and repeal this law.

"NEW NORMAL"/VERIFICATION BILL I

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

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, last week we learned even more distressing news about our economy: the labor force participation rate is the lowest since 1979, during Jimmy Carter's Presidency.

We refuse to settle for a "new normal." Americans deserve better. And how do the President and Democrats in Congress plan to make things better? Well, they still insist on the full implementation of ObamaCare, which its own authors already describe as a "train wreck."

But the House is working to dismantle this unworkable law, and we're taking another major step this week. We are introducing legislation that will prevent waste, fraud, and abuse in the distribution of ObamaCare subsidies.

House Republicans will continue to work to protect Americans from the harmful effects of this law. It's all part of our plan to foster a strong economy and a more structured and secure future for all.

"NEW NORMAL" I

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

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I've spent the last few weeks back home listening to my constituents and hearing their stories of just how tough times are in the Obama economy. And what's the latest economic news? More of the same.

Another disappointing jobs report was issued by the Labor Department last week. We learned that far too many of our fellow Americans have simply given up looking for work—the labor force participation rate is at its lowest since 1979. Is this what Americans should come to expect? Is this the "new normal"?

Americans deserve better than this mediocre economy. House Republicans remain committed to fostering a strong economy and more secure future. Our plan revolves around more jobs and expanding opportunity instead of stifling it. That's how we will get our economy back to work.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FORTENBERRY). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGISTERED AGENTS AND BROKERS REFORM ACT OF 2013

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1155) to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, as amended, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.
The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1155

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers Reform Act of 2013”.

SEC. 2. REESTABLISHMENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGISTERED AGENTS AND BROKERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle C of title III of the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act (15 U.S.C. 6751 et seq.) is amended to read as follows:

“Subtitle C—National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers

“SEC. 321. NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGISTERED AGENTS AND BROKERS.

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers (referred to in this subtitle as the ‘Association’).

“(b) STATUS.—The Association shall—

“(1) be a nonprofit corporation;

“(2) not be an agent or instrumentality of the Federal Government;

“(3) be an independent organization that may not be merged with or into any other private or public entity; and

“(4) except as otherwise provided in this subtitle, be subject to, and have all the powers conferred upon, a nonprofit corporation by the District of Columbia Nonprofit Corporation Act (D.C. Code, sec. 29–301.01 et seq.) or any successor thereto.

“SEC. 322. PURPOSE.

“The purpose of the Association shall be to provide a mechanism through which licensing, continuing education, and other nonresident insurance producer qualification requirements and conditions may be adopted and applied on a multi-state basis without affecting the laws, rules, and regulations, and preserving the rights of a State, pertaining to—

“(1) licensing, continuing education, and other qualification requirements of insurance producers that are not members of the Association;

“(2) resident or nonresident insurance producer appointment requirements;

“(3) supervising and disciplining resident and nonresident insurance producers;

“(4) establishing licensing fees for resident and nonresident insurance producers so that there is no loss of insurance producer licensing revenue to the State; and

“(5) prescribing and enforcing laws and regulations regulating the conduct of resident and nonresident insurance producers.

“SEC. 323. MEMBERSHIP.

“(a) ELIGIBILITY.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Any insurance producer licensed in its home State shall, subject to paragraphs (2) and (4), be eligible to become a member of the Association.

“(2) INELIGIBILITY FOR SUSPENSION OR REVOCATION OF LICENSE.—Subject to paragraph (3), an insurance producer is not eligible to become a member of the Association if a State insurance regulator has suspended or revoked the insurance license of the insurance producer in that State.

“(3) RESUMPTION OF ELIGIBILITY.—Paragraph (2) shall cease to apply to any insurance producer if—

“(A) the State insurance regulator reissues or renews the license of the insurance producer in the State in which the license was suspended or revoked, or otherwise terminates or vacates the suspension or revocation; or

“(B) the suspension or revocation expires or is subsequently overturned by a court of competent jurisdiction.

“(4) CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORD CHECK REQUIRED.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—An insurance producer who is an individual shall not be eligible to become a member of the Association unless the insurance producer has undergone a criminal history record check that complies with regulations prescribed by the Attorney General of the United States under subparagraph (K).

“(B) CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORD CHECK REQUESTED BY HOME STATE.—An insurance producer who is licensed in a State and who has undergone a criminal history record check during the 2-year period preceding the date of submission of an application to become a member of the Association, in compliance with a requirement to undergo such criminal history record check as a condition for such licensure in the State, shall be deemed to have undergone a criminal history record check for purposes of subparagraph (A).

“(C) CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORD CHECK REQUESTED BY ASSOCIATION.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The Association shall, upon request by an insurance producer licensed in a State, submit fingerprints or other identification information obtained from the insurance producer, and a request for a criminal history record check of the insurance producer, to the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

“(ii) PROCEDURES.—The board of directors of the Association (referred to in this subtitle as the ‘Board’) shall prescribe procedures for obtaining and utilizing fingerprints or other identification information and criminal history record information, including the establishment of reasonable fees to defray the expenses of the Association in connection with the performance of a criminal history record check and appropriate safeguards for maintaining confidentiality and security of the information. Any fees charged pursuant to this clause shall be separate and distinct from those charged by the Attorney General pursuant to subparagraph (I).

“(D) FORM OF REQUEST.—A submission under subparagraph (C)(i) shall include such fingerprints or other identification information as is required by the Attorney General concerning the person about whom the criminal history record check is requested, and a statement signed by the person authorizing the Attorney General to provide the information to the Association and for the Association to receive the information.

“(E) PROVISION OF INFORMATION BY ATTORNEY GENERAL.—Upon receiving a submission under subparagraph (C)(i) from the Association, the Attorney General shall search all criminal history records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, including records of the Criminal Justice Information Services Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, that the Attorney General determines appropriate for criminal history records corresponding to the fingerprints or other identification information provided under subparagraph (D) and provide all criminal history record information included in the request to the Association.

“(F) LIMITATION ON PERMISSIBLE USES OF INFORMATION.—Any information provided to

the Association under subparagraph (E) may only—

“(i) be used for purposes of determining compliance with membership criteria established by the Association;

“(ii) be disclosed to State insurance regulators, or Federal or State law enforcement agencies, in conformance with applicable law; or

“(iii) be disclosed, upon request, to the insurance producer to whom the criminal history record information relates.

“(G) PENALTY FOR IMPROPER USE OR DISCLOSURE.—Whoever knowingly uses any information provided under subparagraph (E) for a purpose not authorized in subparagraph (F), or discloses any such information to anyone not authorized to receive it, shall be fined not more than \$50,000 per violation as determined by a court of competent jurisdiction.

“(H) RELIANCE ON INFORMATION.—Neither the Association nor any of its Board members, officers, or employees shall be liable in any action for using information provided under subparagraph (E) as permitted under subparagraph (F) in good faith and in reasonable reliance on its accuracy.

“(I) FEES.—The Attorney General may charge a reasonable fee for conducting the search and providing the information under subparagraph (E), and any such fee shall be collected and remitted by the Association to the Attorney General.

“(J) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed as—

“(i) requiring a State insurance regulator to perform criminal history record checks under this section; or

“(ii) limiting any other authority that allows access to criminal history records.

“(K) REGULATIONS.—The Attorney General shall prescribe regulations to carry out this paragraph, which shall include—

“(i) appropriate protections for ensuring the confidentiality of information provided under subparagraph (E); and

“(ii) procedures providing a reasonable opportunity for an insurance producer to contest the accuracy of information regarding the insurance producer provided under subparagraph (E).

“(L) INELIGIBILITY FOR MEMBERSHIP.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The Association may, under reasonably consistently applied standards, deny membership to an insurance producer on the basis of criminal history record information provided under subparagraph (E), or where the insurance producer has been subject to disciplinary action, as described in paragraph (2).

“(ii) RIGHTS OF APPLICANTS DENIED MEMBERSHIP.—The Association shall notify any insurance producer who is denied membership on the basis of criminal history record information provided under subparagraph (E) of the right of the insurance producer to—

“(I) obtain a copy of all criminal history record information provided to the Association under subparagraph (E) with respect to the insurance producer; and

“(II) challenge the denial of membership based on the accuracy and completeness of the information.

“(M) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term ‘criminal history record check’ means a national background check of criminal history records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

“(b) AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA.—The Association may establish membership criteria that bear a reasonable relationship to the purposes for which the Association was established.

“(c) ESTABLISHMENT OF CLASSES AND CATEGORIES OF MEMBERSHIP.—

“(1) CLASSES OF MEMBERSHIP.—The Association may establish separate classes of

membership, with separate criteria, if the Association reasonably determines that performance of different duties requires different levels of education, training, experience, or other qualifications.

“(2) BUSINESS ENTITIES.—The Association shall establish a class of membership and membership criteria for business entities. A business entity that applies for membership shall be required to designate an individual Association member responsible for the compliance of the business entity with Association standards and the insurance laws, standards, and regulations of any State in which the business entity seeks to do business on the basis of Association membership.

“(3) CATEGORIES.—

“(A) SEPARATE CATEGORIES FOR INSURANCE PRODUCERS PERMITTED.—The Association may establish separate categories of membership for insurance producers and for other persons or entities within each class, based on the types of licensing categories that exist under State laws.

“(B) SEPARATE TREATMENT FOR DEPOSITORY INSTITUTIONS PROHIBITED.—No special categories of membership, and no distinct membership criteria, shall be established for members that are depository institutions or for employees, agents, or affiliates of depository institutions.

“(d) MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Association may establish criteria for membership which shall include standards for personal qualifications, education, training, and experience. The Association shall not establish criteria that unfairly limit the ability of a small insurance producer to become a member of the Association, including imposing discriminatory membership fees.

“(2) QUALIFICATIONS.—In establishing criteria under paragraph (1), the Association shall not adopt any qualification less protective to the public than that contained in the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (referred to in this subtitle as the ‘NAIC’) Producer Licensing Model Act in effect as of the date of enactment of the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers Reform Act of 2013, and shall consider the highest levels of insurance producer qualifications established under the licensing laws of the States.

“(3) ASSISTANCE FROM STATES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Association may request a State to provide assistance in investigating and evaluating the eligibility of a prospective member for membership in the Association.

“(B) AUTHORIZATION OF INFORMATION SHARING.—A submission under subsection (a)(4)(C)(i) made by an insurance producer licensed in a State shall include a statement signed by the person about whom the assistance is requested authorizing—

“(i) the State to share information with the Association; and

“(ii) the Association to receive the information.

“(C) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Subparagraph (A) shall not be construed as requiring or authorizing any State to adopt new or additional requirements concerning the licensing or evaluation of insurance producers.

“(4) DENIAL OF MEMBERSHIP.—The Association may, based on reasonably consistently applied standards, deny membership to any State-licensed insurance producer for failure to meet the membership criteria established by the Association.

“(e) EFFECT OF MEMBERSHIP.—

“(1) AUTHORITY OF ASSOCIATION MEMBERS.—Membership in the Association shall—

“(A) authorize an insurance producer to sell, solicit, or negotiate insurance in any State for which the member pays the licensing fee set by the State for any line or lines

of insurance specified in the home State license of the insurance producer, and exercise all such incidental powers as shall be necessary to carry out such activities, including claims adjustments and settlement to the extent permissible under the laws of the State, risk management, employee benefits advice, retirement planning, and any other insurance-related consulting activities;

“(B) be the equivalent of a nonresident insurance producer license for purposes of authorizing the insurance producer to engage in the activities described in subparagraph (A) in any State where the member pays the licensing fee; and

“(C) be the equivalent of a nonresident insurance producer license for the purpose of subjecting an insurance producer to all laws, regulations, provisions or other action of any State concerning revocation, suspension, or other enforcement action related to the ability of a member to engage in any activity within the scope of authority granted under this subsection and to all State laws, regulations, provisions, and actions preserved under paragraph (5).

“(2) VIOLENT CRIME CONTROL AND LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 1994.—Nothing in this subtitle shall be construed to alter, modify, or supercede any requirement established by section 1033 of title 18, United States Code.

“(3) AGENT FOR REMITTING FEES.—The Association shall act as an agent for any member for purposes of remitting licensing fees to any State pursuant to paragraph (1).

“(4) NOTIFICATION OF ACTION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Association shall notify the States (including State insurance regulators) and the NAIC when an insurance producer has satisfied the membership criteria of this section. The States (including State insurance regulators) shall have 10 business days after the date of the notification in order to provide the Association with evidence that the insurance producer does not satisfy the criteria for membership in the Association.

“(B) ONGOING DISCLOSURES REQUIRED.—On an ongoing basis, the Association shall disclose to the States (including State insurance regulators) and the NAIC a list of the States in which each member is authorized to operate. The Association shall immediately notify the States (including State insurance regulators) and the NAIC when a member is newly authorized to operate in one or more States, or is no longer authorized to operate in one or more States on the basis of Association membership.

“(5) PRESERVATION OF CONSUMER PROTECTION AND MARKET CONDUCT REGULATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—No provision of this section shall be construed as altering or affecting the applicability or continuing effectiveness of any law, regulation, provision, or other action of any State, including those described in subparagraph (B), to the extent that the State law, regulation, provision, or other action is not inconsistent with the provisions of this subtitle related to market entry for nonresident insurance producers, and then only to the extent of the inconsistency.

“(B) PRESERVED REGULATIONS.—The laws, regulations, provisions, or other actions of any State referred to in subparagraph (A) include laws, regulations, provisions, or other actions that—

“(i) regulate market conduct, insurance producer conduct, or unfair trade practices;

“(ii) establish consumer protections; or

“(iii) require insurance producers to be appointed by a licensed or authorized insurer.

“(f) BIENNIAL RENEWAL.—Membership in the Association shall be renewed on a biennial basis.

“(g) CONTINUING EDUCATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Association shall establish, as a condition of membership, continuing education requirements which shall be comparable to the continuing education requirements under the licensing laws of a majority of the States.

“(2) STATE CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS.—A member may not be required to satisfy continuing education requirements imposed under the laws, regulations, provisions, or actions of any State other than the home State of the member.

“(3) RECIPROcity.—The Association shall not require a member to satisfy continuing education requirements that are equivalent to any continuing education requirements of the home State of the member that have been satisfied by the member during the applicable licensing period.

“(4) LIMITATION ON THE ASSOCIATION.—The Association shall not directly or indirectly offer any continuing education courses for insurance producers.

“(h) PROBATION, SUSPENSION AND REVOCATION.—

“(1) DISCIPLINARY ACTION.—The Association may place an insurance producer that is a member of the Association on probation or suspend or revoke the membership of the insurance producer in the Association, or assess monetary fines or penalties, as the Association determines to be appropriate, if—

“(A) the insurance producer fails to meet the applicable membership criteria or other standards established by the Association;

“(B) the insurance producer has been subject to disciplinary action pursuant to a final adjudication proceeding under the jurisdiction of a State insurance regulator;

“(C) an insurance license held by the insurance producer has been suspended or revoked by a State insurance regulator; or

“(D) the insurance producer has been convicted of a crime that would have resulted in the denial of membership pursuant to subsection (a)(4)(L)(i) at the time of application, and the Association has received a copy of the final disposition from a court of competent jurisdiction.

“(2) VIOLATIONS OF ASSOCIATION STANDARDS.—The Association shall have the power to investigate alleged violations of Association standards.

“(3) REPORTING.—The Association shall immediately notify the States (including State insurance regulators) and the NAIC when the membership of an insurance producer has been placed on probation or has been suspended, revoked, or otherwise terminated, or when the Association has assessed monetary fines or penalties.

“(i) CONSUMER COMPLAINTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Association shall—

“(A) refer any complaint against a member of the Association from a consumer relating to alleged misconduct or violations of State insurance laws to the State insurance regulator where the consumer resides and, when appropriate, to any additional State insurance regulator, as determined by standards adopted by the Association; and

“(B) make any related records and information available to each State insurance regulator to whom the complaint is forwarded.

“(2) TELEPHONE AND OTHER ACCESS.—The Association shall maintain a toll-free number for purposes of this subsection and, as practicable, other alternative means of communication with consumers, such as an Internet webpage.

“(3) FINAL DISPOSITION OF INVESTIGATION.—State insurance regulators shall provide the Association with information regarding the final disposition of a complaint referred pursuant to paragraph (1)(A), but nothing shall be construed to compel a State to release confidential investigation reports or other

information protected by State law to the Association.

“(j) INFORMATION SHARING.—The Association may—

“(1) share documents, materials, or other information, including confidential and privileged documents, with a State, Federal, or international governmental entity or with the NAIC or other appropriate entity referred to paragraphs (3) and (4), provided that the recipient has the authority and agrees to maintain the confidentiality or privileged status of the document, material, or other information;

“(2) limit the sharing of information as required under this subtitle with the NAIC or any other non-governmental entity, in circumstances under which the Association determines that the sharing of such information is unnecessary to further the purposes of this subtitle;

“(3) establish a central clearinghouse, or utilize the NAIC or another appropriate entity, as determined by the Association, as a central clearinghouse, for use by the Association and the States (including State insurance regulators), through which members of the Association may disclose their intent to operate in 1 or more States and pay the licensing fees to the appropriate States; and

“(4) establish a database, or utilize the NAIC or another appropriate entity, as determined by the Association, as a database, for use by the Association and the States (including State insurance regulators) for the collection of regulatory information concerning the activities of insurance producers.

“(k) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The provisions of this section shall take effect on the later of—

“(1) the expiration of the 2-year period beginning on the date of enactment of the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers Reform Act of 2013; and

“(2) the date of incorporation of the Association.

“SEC. 324. BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established a board of directors of the Association, which shall have authority to govern and supervise all activities of the Association.

“(b) POWERS.—The Board shall have such of the powers and authority of the Association as may be specified in the bylaws of the Association.

“(c) COMPOSITION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Board shall consist of 13 members who shall be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, in accordance with the procedures established under Senate Resolution 116 of the 112th Congress, of whom—

“(A) 8 shall be State insurance commissioners appointed in the manner provided in paragraph (2), 1 of whom shall be designated by the President to serve as the chairperson of the Board until the Board elects one such State insurance commissioner Board member to serve as the chairperson of the Board;

“(B) 3 shall have demonstrated expertise and experience with property and casualty insurance producer licensing; and

“(C) 2 shall have demonstrated expertise and experience with life or health insurance producer licensing.

“(2) STATE INSURANCE REGULATOR REPRESENTATIVES.—

“(A) RECOMMENDATIONS.—Before making any appointments pursuant to paragraph (1)(A), the President shall request a list of recommended candidates from the States through the NAIC, which shall not be binding on the President. If the NAIC fails to submit a list of recommendations not later than 15 business days after the date of the request, the President may make the requisite appointments without considering the views of the NAIC.

“(B) POLITICAL AFFILIATION.—Not more than 4 Board members appointed under paragraph (1)(A) shall belong to the same political party.

“(C) FORMER STATE INSURANCE COMMISSIONERS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—If, after offering each currently serving State insurance commissioner an appointment to the Board, fewer than 8 State insurance commissioners have accepted appointment to the Board, the President may appoint the remaining State insurance commissioner Board members, as required under paragraph (1)(A), of the appropriate political party as required under subparagraph (B), from among individuals who are former State insurance commissioners.

“(ii) LIMITATION.—A former State insurance commissioner appointed as described in clause (i) may not be employed by or have any present direct or indirect financial interest in any insurer, insurance producer, or other entity in the insurance industry, other than direct or indirect ownership of, or beneficial interest in, an insurance policy or annuity contract written or sold by an insurer.

“(D) SERVICE THROUGH TERM.—If a Board member appointed under paragraph (1)(A) ceases to be a State insurance commissioner during the term of the Board member, the Board member shall cease to be a Board member.

“(3) PRIVATE SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES.—In making any appointment pursuant to subparagraph (B) or (C) of paragraph (1), the President may seek recommendations for candidates from groups representing the category of individuals described, which shall not be binding on the President.

“(4) STATE INSURANCE COMMISSIONER DEFINED.—For purposes of this subsection, the term ‘State insurance commissioner’ means a person who serves in the position in State government, or on the board, commission, or other body that is the primary insurance regulatory authority for the State.

“(d) TERMS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided under paragraph (2), the term of service for each Board member shall be 2 years.

“(2) EXCEPTIONS.—

“(A) 1-YEAR TERMS.—The term of service shall be 1 year, as designated by the President at the time of the nomination of the subject Board members for—

“(i) 4 of the State insurance commissioner Board members initially appointed under paragraph (1)(A), of whom not more than 2 shall belong to the same political party;

“(ii) 1 of the Board members initially appointed under paragraph (1)(B); and

“(iii) 1 of the Board members initially appointed under paragraph (1)(C).

“(B) EXPIRATION OF TERM.—A Board member may continue to serve after the expiration of the term to which the Board member was appointed for the earlier of 2 years or until a successor is appointed.

“(C) MID-TERM APPOINTMENTS.—A Board member appointed to fill a vacancy occurring before the expiration of the term for which the predecessor of the Board member was appointed shall be appointed only for the remainder of that term.

“(3) SUCCESSIVE TERMS.—Board members may be reappointed to successive terms.

“(e) INITIAL APPOINTMENTS.—The appointment of initial Board members shall be made no later than 90 days after the date of enactment of the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers Reform Act of 2013.

“(f) MEETINGS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Board shall meet—

“(A) at the call of the chairperson;

“(B) as requested in writing to the chairperson by not fewer than 5 Board members; or

“(C) as otherwise provided by the bylaws of the Association.

“(2) QUORUM REQUIRED.—A majority of all Board members shall constitute a quorum.

“(3) VOTING.—Decisions of the Board shall require the approval of a majority of all Board members present at a meeting, a quorum being present.

“(4) INITIAL MEETING.—The Board shall hold its first meeting not later than 45 days after the date on which all initial Board members have been appointed.

“(g) RESTRICTION ON CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.—Board members appointed pursuant to subparagraphs (B) and (C) of subsection (c)(1) shall not have access to confidential information received by the Association in connection with complaints, investigations, or disciplinary proceedings involving insurance producers.

“(h) ETHICS AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST.—The Board shall issue and enforce an ethical conduct code to address permissible and prohibited activities of Board members and Association officers, employees, agents, or consultants. The code shall, at a minimum, include provisions that prohibit any Board member or Association officer, employee, agent or consultant from—

“(1) engaging in unethical conduct in the course of performing Association duties;

“(2) participating in the making or influencing the making of any Association decision, the outcome of which the Board member, officer, employee, agent, or consultant knows or had reason to know would have a reasonably foreseeable material financial effect, distinguishable from its effect on the public generally, on the person or a member of the immediate family of the person;

“(3) accepting any gift from any person or entity other than the Association that is given because of the position held by the person in the Association;

“(4) making political contributions to any person or entity on behalf of the Association; and

“(5) lobbying or paying a person to lobby on behalf of the Association.

“(i) COMPENSATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), no Board member may receive any compensation from the Association or any other person or entity on account of Board membership.

“(2) TRAVEL EXPENSES AND PER DIEM.—Board members may be reimbursed only by the Association for travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates consistent with rates authorized for employees of Federal agencies under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, while away from home or regular places of business in performance of services for the Association.

“SEC. 325. BYLAWS, STANDARDS, AND DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS.

“(a) ADOPTION AND AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS AND STANDARDS.—

“(1) PROCEDURES.—The Association shall adopt procedures for the adoption of bylaws and standards that are similar to procedures under subchapter II of chapter 5 of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the ‘Administrative Procedure Act’).

“(2) COPY REQUIRED TO BE FILED.—The Board shall submit to the President, through the Department of the Treasury, and the States (including State insurance regulators), and shall publish on the website of the Association, all proposed bylaws and standards of the Association, or any proposed amendment to the bylaws or standards of the Association, accompanied by a concise

general statement of the basis and purpose of such proposal.

“(3) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Any proposed bylaw or standard of the Association, and any proposed amendment to the bylaws or standards of the Association, shall take effect, after notice under paragraph (2) and opportunity for public comment, on such date as the Association may designate, unless suspended under section 329(c).

“(4) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to subject the Board or the Association to the requirements of subchapter II of chapter 5 of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the ‘Administrative Procedure Act’).

“(b) DISCIPLINARY ACTION BY THE ASSOCIATION.—

“(1) SPECIFICATION OF CHARGES.—In any proceeding to determine whether membership shall be denied, suspended, revoked, or not renewed, or to determine whether a member of the Association should be placed on probation (referred to in this section as a ‘disciplinary action’) or whether to assess fines or monetary penalties, the Association shall bring specific charges, notify the member of the charges, give the member an opportunity to defend against the charges, and keep a record.

“(2) SUPPORTING STATEMENT.—A determination to take disciplinary action shall be supported by a statement setting forth—

“(A) any act or practice in which the member has been found to have been engaged;

“(B) the specific provision of this subtitle or standard of the Association that any such act or practice is deemed to violate; and

“(C) the sanction imposed and the reason for the sanction.

“(3) INELIGIBILITY OF PRIVATE SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES.—Board members appointed pursuant to section 324(c)(3) may not—

“(A) participate in any disciplinary action or be counted toward establishing a quorum during a disciplinary action; and

“(B) have access to confidential information concerning any disciplinary action.

“SEC. 326. POWERS.

“In addition to all the powers conferred upon a nonprofit corporation by the District of Columbia Nonprofit Corporation Act, the Association shall have the power to—

“(1) establish and collect such membership fees as the Association finds necessary to impose to cover the costs of its operations;

“(2) adopt, amend, and repeal bylaws, procedures, or standards governing the conduct of Association business and performance of its duties;

“(3) establish procedures for providing notice and opportunity for comment pursuant to section 325(a);

“(4) enter into and perform such agreements as necessary to carry out the duties of the Association;

“(5) hire employees, professionals, or specialists, and elect or appoint officers, and to fix their compensation, define their duties and give them appropriate authority to carry out the purposes of this subtitle, and determine their qualification;

“(6) establish personnel policies of the Association and programs relating to, among other things, conflicts of interest, rates of compensation, where applicable, and qualifications of personnel;

“(7) borrow money; and

“(8) secure funding for such amounts as the Association determines to be necessary and appropriate to organize and begin operations of the Association, which shall be treated as loans to be repaid by the Association with interest at market rate.

“SEC. 327. REPORT BY THE ASSOCIATION.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—As soon as practicable after the close of each fiscal year, the Asso-

ciation shall submit to the President, through the Department of the Treasury, and the States (including State insurance regulators), and shall publish on the website of the Association, a written report regarding the conduct of its business, and the exercise of the other rights and powers granted by this subtitle, during such fiscal year.

“(b) FINANCIAL STATEMENTS.—Each report submitted under subsection (a) with respect to any fiscal year shall include audited financial statements setting forth the financial position of the Association at the end of such fiscal year and the results of its operations (including the source and application of its funds) for such fiscal year.

“SEC. 328. LIABILITY OF THE ASSOCIATION AND THE BOARD MEMBERS, OFFICERS, AND EMPLOYEES OF THE ASSOCIATION.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Association shall not be deemed to be an insurer or insurance producer within the meaning of any State law, rule, regulation, or order regulating or taxing insurers, insurance producers, or other entities engaged in the business of insurance, including provisions imposing premium taxes, regulating insurer solvency or financial condition, establishing guaranty funds and levying assessments, or requiring claims settlement practices.

“(b) LIABILITY OF BOARD MEMBERS, OFFICERS, AND EMPLOYEES.—No Board member, officer, or employee of the Association shall be personally liable to any person for any action taken or omitted in good faith in any matter within the scope of their responsibilities in connection with the Association.

“SEC. 329. PRESIDENTIAL OVERSIGHT.

“(a) REMOVAL OF BOARD.—If the President determines that the Association is acting in a manner contrary to the interests of the public or the purposes of this subtitle or has failed to perform its duties under this subtitle, the President may remove the entire existing Board for the remainder of the term to which the Board members were appointed and appoint, in accordance with section 324 and with the advice and consent of the Senate, in accordance with the procedures established under Senate Resolution 116 of the 112th Congress, new Board members to fill the vacancies on the Board for the remainder of the terms.

“(b) REMOVAL OF BOARD MEMBER.—The President may remove a Board member only for neglect of duty or malfeasance in office.

“(c) SUSPENSION OF BYLAWS AND STANDARDS AND PROHIBITION OF ACTIONS.—Following notice to the Board, the President, or a person designated by the President for such purpose, may suspend the effectiveness of any bylaw or standard, or prohibit any action, of the Association that the President or the designee determines is contrary to the purposes of this subtitle.

“SEC. 330. RELATIONSHIP TO STATE LAW.

“(a) PREEMPTION OF STATE LAWS.—State laws, regulations, provisions, or other actions purporting to regulate insurance producers shall be preempted to the extent provided in subsection (b).

“(b) PROHIBITED ACTIONS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—No State shall—

“(A) impede the activities of, take any action against, or apply any provision of law or regulation arbitrarily or discriminatorily to, any insurance producer because that insurance producer or any affiliate plans to become, has applied to become, or is a member of the Association;

“(B) impose any requirement upon a member of the Association that it pay fees different from those required to be paid to that State were it not a member of the Association; or

“(C) impose any continuing education requirements on any nonresident insurance

producer that is a member of the Association.

“(2) STATES OTHER THAN A HOME STATE.—No State, other than the home State of a member of the Association, shall—

“(A) impose any licensing, personal or corporate qualifications, education, training, experience, residency, continuing education, or bonding requirement upon a member of the Association that is different from the criteria for membership in the Association or renewal of such membership;

“(B) impose any requirement upon a member of the Association that it be licensed, registered, or otherwise qualified to do business or remain in good standing in the State, including any requirement that the insurance producer register as a foreign company with the secretary of state or equivalent State official;

“(C) require that a member of the Association submit to a criminal history record check as a condition of doing business in the State; or

“(D) impose any licensing, registration, or appointment requirements upon a member of the Association, or require a member of the Association to be authorized to operate as an insurance producer, in order to sell, solicit, or negotiate insurance for commercial property and casualty risks to an insured with risks located in more than one State, if the member is licensed or otherwise authorized to operate in the State where the insured maintains its principal place of business and the contract of insurance insures risks located in that State.

“(3) PRESERVATION OF STATE DISCIPLINARY AUTHORITY.—Nothing in this section may be construed to prohibit a State from investigating and taking appropriate disciplinary action, including suspension or revocation of authority of an insurance producer to do business in a State, in accordance with State law and that is not inconsistent with the provisions of this section, against a member of the Association as a result of a complaint or for any alleged activity, regardless of whether the activity occurred before or after the insurance producer commenced doing business in the State pursuant to Association membership.

“SEC. 331. COORDINATION WITH FINANCIAL INDUSTRY REGULATORY AUTHORITY.

“The Association shall coordinate with the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority in order to ease any administrative burdens that fall on members of the Association that are subject to regulation by the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, consistent with the requirements of this subtitle and the Federal securities laws.

“SEC. 332. RIGHT OF ACTION.

“(a) RIGHT OF ACTION.—Any person aggrieved by a decision or action of the Association may, after reasonably exhausting available avenues for resolution within the Association, commence a civil action in an appropriate United States district court, and obtain all appropriate relief.

“(b) ASSOCIATION INTERPRETATIONS.—In any action under subsection (a), the court shall give appropriate weight to the interpretation of the Association of its bylaws and standards and this subtitle.

“SEC. 333. FEDERAL FUNDING PROHIBITED.

“The Association may not receive, accept, or borrow any amounts from the Federal Government to pay for, or reimburse, the Association for, the costs of establishing or operating the Association.

“SEC. 334. DEFINITIONS.

“For purposes of this subtitle, the following definitions shall apply:

“(1) BUSINESS ENTITY.—The term ‘business entity’ means a corporation, association,

partnership, limited liability company, limited liability partnership, or other legal entity.

“(2) DEPOSITORY INSTITUTION.—The term ‘depository institution’ has the meaning as in section 3 of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act (12 U.S.C. 1813).

“(3) HOME STATE.—The term ‘home State’ means the State in which the insurance producer maintains its principal place of residence or business and is licensed to act as an insurance producer.

“(4) INSURANCE.—The term ‘insurance’ means any product, other than title insurance or bail bonds, defined or regulated as insurance by the appropriate State insurance regulatory authority.

“(5) INSURANCE PRODUCER.—The term ‘insurance producer’ means any insurance agent or broker, excess or surplus lines broker or agent, insurance consultant, limited insurance representative, and any other individual or entity that sells, solicits, or negotiates policies of insurance or offers advice, counsel, opinions or services related to insurance.

“(6) INSURER.—The term ‘insurer’ has the meaning as in section 313(e)(2)(B) of title 31, United States Code.

“(7) PRINCIPAL PLACE OF BUSINESS.—The term ‘principal place of business’ means the State in which an insurance producer maintains the headquarters of the insurance producer and, in the case of a business entity, where high-level officers of the entity direct, control, and coordinate the business activities of the business entity.

“(8) PRINCIPAL PLACE OF RESIDENCE.—The term ‘principal place of residence’ means the State in which an insurance producer resides for the greatest number of days during a calendar year.

“(9) STATE.—The term ‘State’ includes any State, the District of Columbia, any territory of the United States, and Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, the Virgin Islands, and the Northern Mariana Islands.

“(10) STATE LAW.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘State law’ includes all laws, decisions, rules, regulations, or other State action having the effect of law, of any State.

“(B) LAWS APPLICABLE IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.—A law of the United States applicable only to or within the District of Columbia shall be treated as a State law rather than a law of the United States.”

(b) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents for the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act is amended by striking the items relating to subtitle C of title III and inserting the following new items:

“Subtitle C—National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers

“Sec. 321. National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers.

“Sec. 322. Purpose.

“Sec. 323. Membership.

“Sec. 324. Board of directors.

“Sec. 325. Bylaws, standards, and disciplinary actions.

“Sec. 326. Powers.

“Sec. 327. Report by the Association.

“Sec. 328. Liability of the Association and the Board members, officers, and employees of the Association.

“Sec. 329. Presidential oversight.

“Sec. 330. Relationship to State law.

“Sec. 331. Coordination with regulators.

“Sec. 332. Right of action.

“Sec. 333. Federal funding prohibited.

“Sec. 334. Definitions.”

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from

Texas (Mr. NEUGEBAUER) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. DAVID SCOTT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and submit extraneous materials for the RECORD on H.R. 1155, as amended, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on this important piece of insurance regulatory reform legislation today.

The most serious regulatory challenges facing insurance agents and brokers are redundant, costly, and sometimes contradictory requirements that arise when they seek licenses on a multistate basis. It has become clear that the main cause of these problems is the failure of many States to issue licenses on a truly reciprocal basis.

On average, multistate agents sell insurance in eight States. That means eight different applications, eight different procedures for admittance, eight separate background checks, and a multitude of inconsistent standards and duplicative processes. These requirements are not only costly and inefficient, but they hinder the ability of insurance agents and brokers to effectively address the needs of their consumers.

Congress recognized the need to reform the insurance industry’s licensing system back in 1999 when it incorporated the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers subtitle into the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act. The Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act did not provide for the immediate establishment of NARAB and instead included a series of provisions to encourage States to simplify the licensing process.

Unfortunately, the original NARAB that was passed in 1999 did not work. National nonresident licensing reciprocity has not been achieved, and the burden on insurance agents and brokers and the impact this burden directly has on consumers remains. Despite the best efforts of many stakeholders at making State-level improvements, it has become clear that true licensing reciprocity can be achieved only through additional congressional action.

The bill we are considering today, H.R. 1155, the NARAB Reform Act—or as it is commonly referred, NARAB II—modifies the original NARAB provisions in Gramm-Leach-Bliley and immediately establishes NARAB as a private, nonprofit entity managed by a board composed of eight insurance regulators and five marketplace rep-

resentatives. NARAB II provides for nonresident insurance agent and broker licensing while preserving the rights of States to supervise and discipline insurance agents and brokers. Overall, this legislation would benefit policyholders by increasing marketplace competition and consumer choice, and by enabling insurance producers to more quickly and responsibly serve the needs of their consumers.

I’d like to thank my colleague from Georgia (Mr. DAVID SCOTT) who introduced this piece of legislation with me earlier this year.

This bill has almost 90 bipartisan cosponsors and is supported by groups such as the Independent Insurance Agents and Brokers of America, the National Association of Insurance Commissioners, the National Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors, the Council of Insurance Agents and Brokers, and major insurance company trades. The legislation has passed this Chamber by voice vote twice before, and the Senate Banking Committee unanimously approved an identical companion legislation.

I ask that my colleagues support this practical and needed insurance regulatory reform by voting for the NARAB Reform Act.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Washington, DC, September 9, 2013.

Hon. JEB HENSARLING,

Chairman, Committee on Financial Services, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN HENSARLING, I am writing concerning H.R. 1155, the “National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers Reform Act,” which was referred to your Committee.

As you know, H.R. 1155, contains provisions within the Committee on the Judiciary’s Rule X jurisdiction. As a result of your having consulted with the Committee and in order to expedite the House’s consideration of H.R. 1155, the Committee on the Judiciary will not assert its jurisdictional claim over this bill by seeking a sequential referral. However, this is conditional on our mutual understanding and agreement that doing so will in no way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary with respect to the appointment of conferees or to any future jurisdictional claim over the subject matters contained in the bill or similar legislation.

I would appreciate your response to this letter confirming this understanding, and would request that you include a copy of this letter and your response in the Congressional Record during the floor consideration of this bill. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

BOB GOODLATTE

Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES,

Washington, DC, September 9, 2013.

Hon. BOB GOODLATTE,

Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GOODLATTE: Thank you for your letter of even date herewith regarding

H.R. 1155, the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers Reform Act.

I am most appreciative of your decision not to assert jurisdiction over H.R. 1155 so that it may be considered under suspension of the Rules this week on the House floor. I acknowledge that although you are waiving formal consideration of the bill, the Committee on the Judiciary is in no way waiving its Rule X jurisdiction over any subject matter contained in the bill. In addition, if a conference is necessary on this legislation, I will support any request that your committee be represented therein.

Finally, I shall be pleased to include your letter and this letter in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of H.R. 1155.

Sincerely,

JEB HENSARLING,
Chairman.

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, I want to just say I join many people across this Nation and around the world who are prayerful and who are hopeful that this breakthrough—this window of opportunity that we have dealing with the Syrian situation—works.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I can't tell you what a great joy this is for me. I have worked on this bill for the past 6 years. We have been dealing with many areas to fix our financial system to make it work. We have a very complex and complicated financial system. There is no industry that has the challenges that are being faced today as the insurance industry.

□ 1230

And the economy, its demands are rapidly changing because of advances in technology, mobility, the narrowing and making the world much smaller.

Essentially, what we have here is a long overdue fix to help these small business owners, because that's what our insurance agents are. H.R. 1155, the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers Reform Act, or what we affectionately call NARAB, as my distinguished colleague from Texas (Mr. NEUGEBAUER) has just stated, is very dear to us.

Many of us in the Financial Services Committee have spent years toiling on this issue. So have many in the Senate. As my colleague, Mr. NEUGEBAUER has said, we passed one House in 1999, but look what has happened. We've had terrorist strikes. We've had all kinds of things that have happened. We've had an economy almost on the verge of depression. Standing there in the middle of this storm dealing with the wants and the needs of the American people in all the areas—property damage, health, car insurance, you name it—has been our agents.

I want to just briefly take you through exactly what we are proposing here. H.R. 1155, first of all, creates a streamlined agent and broker licensing system. That's very important. That strengthens the competitive insurance market while maintaining those ever important consumer protection items.

It strengthens the business, it strengthens the competitive insurance market—it doesn't weaken it—and at the same time strengthens and protects our consumers.

NARAB will allow agents and brokers to more efficiently operate on a multistate basis. Now, that's so important. Business is no longer conducted around the corner or down the street or just in the next town; it is all over the country. And our insurance agents and brokers need the flexibility and the smoothness in our system to be able to negotiate in the best interest of not just the insurance industry but, most importantly, for the benefit of consumers who move from State to State to city to city.

Next, NARAB would allow our agents and brokers to also address the increasing concern and greater importance of our technological and mobile-connected world. As we know, we are all connected.

Next, our NARAB Reform Act will be a one-stop licensing compliance mechanism for insurance agents and brokers operating out of their home States. Each will have a home State. But NARAB will work as a one-place clearinghouse to satisfy that, while at the same time preserving the longstanding authority of States to supervise and discipline the insurance producers.

Nothing is being taken from State control in this bill. As a matter of fact, it strengthens State controls. That is why all of the State insurance commissioners support this legislation.

Through a nonprofit board for insurance agents and brokers to obtain approval to operate on a multistate basis, the NARAB Reform Act deals only with marketplace entry and will not impact the day-to-day State regulation of insurance agencies. We sat down, we brought the State insurance agencies in and the commissioners to work with us so that we could have a joint understanding on this bill.

NARAB will be governed by a board dominated by State regulators—again, dominated by State regulators—and would establish standards for the membership that exceed the existing requirements of any State. Again, exceeds the requirements of any State. A prospective NARAB member will be required to be fully licensed in his or her home State and satisfy rigorous membership criteria. An approved NARAB member could utilize the association to obtain the regulatory approval necessary to operate in any other selected jurisdiction.

This is a crucial piece of legislation, an excellently drafted piece of legislation. For those of us who are concerned about small government, it is very important to note that NARAB would not—would not—be a part of a report to any Federal agency and would not have any kind of Federal regulatory power. We are out of the business. Once we pass this bill, it is in the hands, where it belongs, of the State and local level.

The legislation is supported by nearly the entire insurance industry, including all the major agents and brokers associations, as well as the major insurers associations. Additionally, the National Association of Insurance Commissioners, NAIC, which represents all State insurance commissioners, has formally—formally—endorsed this version of the legislation.

The State-based reform benefits our consumers first, and that is at the head of the line of our concerns. It benefits our consumers through increased competition among agents and brokers and leads to greater consumer choice at lower prices. That is what the consumer is looking for.

This bill also will assist in an important sector of our economy—small businesses—by streamlining non-resident licensing regulation. The House has twice recognized the need for this commonsense reform by passing nearly this identical legislation, as I said before, subsequent to suspension rules.

Once again, we ask for your support.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. GARRETT), the chairman of our Capital Markets Subcommittee.

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for his leadership on this legislation today.

I rise in support of H.R. 1155, which is the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers Reform Act.

This bill is, as we like to say, a commonsense step that will create a clearinghouse, if you will, for insurance agents and brokers alike to obtain approval to operate on a multistate basis.

Under current law, an insurance agent who has clients in more than one State has to obtain licenses in each and every one of those States. The regulatory process, as you can imagine, varies from State to State. Obtaining and maintaining a license is both time-consuming and very expensive.

Having to complete this process over and over and over again basically compounds the difficulty and often proves daunting, quite honestly, to smaller agents who are just trying to do their job and to serve their clients and meet their needs.

What we have here is the NARAB clearinghouse. This would allow the agents to complete the process only twice—once in their home State and then once again for NARAB. Then they would be eligible to sell basically in all the States.

Here is an important point: NARAB is supported by all the stakeholders, including, as the gentleman just said, by the State insurance regulators. It does so because it brings much-needed efficiency to a multistate licensing process.

While doing this, the legislation would also preserve—and to me this is very important—State-based insurance

regulation and also consumer protections.

Finally, this legislation would not—as was just pointed out—create a brand new Federal insurance regulator in its place. By law, NARAB would not be a regulator or a part of any Federal agency. It would have no regulatory authority.

With 56—56—different approaches to life insurance, this bipartisan bill would reduce needless red tape and complexity that is out there, and it would help insurance agents better serve their clients.

I urge this House to adopt this legislation today.

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. FINCHER).

Mr. FINCHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a cosponsor in support of H.R. 1155, the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers Reform Act of 2013.

As mentioned, this important legislation strikes the appropriate balance between easing the licensing requirements for insurance agents and preserving State authority to supervise and discipline insurance producers for their actions.

Through this legislation, I hope all consumers, especially the citizens of Tennessee, will benefit from a more competitive insurance market. NARAB is supported by all insurance industry stakeholders, including State insurance regulators, regional and national insurance companies, and trade associations.

H.R. 1155 is seen as the most effective, efficient way to enable insurance agents and brokers to be licensed on a multistate basis while retaining State regulatory authority.

While today's legislation speaks to insurance agents and brokers, similar issues exist for claims adjusters. To address these issues when consumers present a claim, I have introduced the CLAIM Act, H.R. 2156, to streamline the licensing requirements for insurance adjusters operating outside their home States.

My bill would preserve State authority to supervise and discipline adjusters for their actions, while streamlining State licensing regulations.

As we join together today to support H.R. 1155, I call upon my colleagues to similarly support and enact the CLAIM Act to ensure consumers receive the same excellent service when they need their insurance.

I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. NEUGEBAUER) for his hard work on this very well-thought-out legislation. I hope it will help the citizens of this country receive excellent insurance products and services.

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. RADEL).

Mr. RADEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bill introduced by my colleague Representative NEUGEBAUER.

This bill reduces costs for homeowners and renters not only in my home State of Florida, but for everyone throughout the entire country.

Today, insurance brokers and agents face hurdles when they try to work across State lines. What this bill does is make it easier and less expensive for them to get licensed in multiple States. The best part about this is ultimately it saves you, the consumer, money.

This legislation streamlines the Federal role in real estate licensing while allowing States to continue setting standards for the work that best fits their States because, after all, we know what's best for our States and our communities.

Lowering costs for insurance agents and brokers means more options and lower prices for consumers. I am glad to support this bipartisan legislation.

I encourage all of my colleagues to vote for the NARAB Reform Act.

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. If the gentleman has no more speakers, I will close and then yield back the balance of my time.

I just want to say what a distinguished pleasure it has been to work with the gentleman from Texas, my good friend on both the Financial Services Committee and the Ag Committee. We do a lot of great work together. It is a great pleasure.

I commend this bill to the full House of Representatives and hope we have a unanimous vote.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1245

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. I yield myself the balance of my time.

I also want to thank the gentleman from Georgia. He has worked tirelessly on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, what I think is nice about this issue is that it's bipartisan. It's a good piece of legislation in that it doesn't expand government, and it doesn't cost the taxpayers any money. Ultimately, I think it's going to bring better choices for consumers and, I hope, for our small business people across the country. For example, in my congressional district, it is closer to three or four other States than it is to some of the cities that are within my State, for example, from Walipp to within a hundred miles of Colorado and within 100 miles of Oklahoma and Colorado and these other States. Basically, we have a lot of insurance agencies and agents who now will have the ability to do business in multiple States in a less cumbersome way, so I encourage all of my colleagues to support this bill.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. NEUGEBAUER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1155, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

STREAMLINING CLAIMS PROCESSING FOR FEDERAL CONTRACTOR EMPLOYEES ACT

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2747) to amend title 40, United States Code, to transfer certain functions from the Government Accountability Office to the Department of Labor relating to the processing of claims for the payment of workers who were not paid appropriate wages under certain provisions of such title.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2747

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Streamlining Claims Processing for Federal Contractor Employees Act".

SEC. 2. TRANSFER OF ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITY TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR.

(a) AUTHORITY OF COMPTROLLER GENERAL TO PAY WAGES AND LIST CONTRACTORS VIOLATING CONTRACTS.—Section 3144 of title 40, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in the section heading, by striking "of Comptroller General"; and

(2) in subsection (a)(1), by striking "Comptroller General" and inserting "Secretary of Labor".

(b) REPORT OF VIOLATIONS AND WITHHOLDING OF AMOUNTS FOR UNPAID CONTRACTS AND LIQUIDATED DAMAGES.—Section 3703(b)(3) of title 40, United States Code, is amended by striking "Comptroller General" both places it appears and inserting "Secretary of Labor".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. WALBERG) and the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 2747.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 2747,

and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

With our Nation facing difficult challenges at home and abroad, it is important we continue the work the American people sent us here to do. That includes pursuing commonsense reforms that will make the Federal Government more efficient and a better steward of taxpayer dollars. The legislation we are considering today is a small, yet important, part of that effort.

Approximately one out of every five workers is employed by a Federal contractor. Drawing on the strength and expertise of the private sector workforce to complete Federal projects has helped deliver better results at a more competitive price for taxpayers.

A number of laws govern the wages workers on Federal projects receive. For example, the Davis-Bacon Act requires Federal contractors to pay workers the local prevailing wage. Additionally, the Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act ensures these workers receive 1½ times their basic rate of pay for hours worked in excess of 40 hours a week. Both laws have played a central role in Federal contracting for decades. However, both are plagued by inefficiencies. The Department is responsible for enforcing these laws; yet the Government Accountability Office has long been a middleman in an overly bureaucratic claims process.

Here is how the current process works:

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Labor first determines whether workers have failed to receive their proper wages, and it calculates the amount of pay they are due. Next, the Department forwards to GAO a report that states the names of underpaid employees and the amounts they are each owed. Funds from the relevant contracting agencies are delivered to GAO, which then deposits the money into an account at the Treasury Department. Based upon claims forms submitted by affected workers, GAO transmits payment requests to Treasury, which disburses directly to workers their unpaid wages. It should be noted that GAO has no authority to overturn or to even challenge the Department's judgment in this area.

As a result of this lengthy back and forth between numerous Federal entities, workers can experience delays in receiving their correct wages, and taxpayers are forced to support an unnecessarily complex process. I think we can all agree we can do better.

H.R. 2747 is commonsense and bipartisan legislation that would transfer GAO's administrative duties under these two laws to the proper Federal agency, which is the Department of Labor. GAO has requested this relief and believes it will encourage more efficiency within the Federal Government. Furthermore, it will free up time and resources at GAO that can be better spent fulfilling its central mission of investigating waste and abuse in the Federal Government.

By moving wage claims adjustments for federally contracted workers to the Department of Labor, we can ensure workers receive their pay in a timelier manner while providing greater efficiency. Quite simply, Mr. Speaker, this legislation is a win for workers and for taxpayers.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2747, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise in support of the pending legislation, H.R. 2747, the Streamlining Claims Processing for Federal Contractor Employees Act, which will transfer the authority for processing claims under the Davis-Bacon Act from the Government Accountability Office to the Department of Labor. As the Department of Labor is already responsible for many aspects of Davis-Bacon, this change will help streamline the process and ensure that workers receive their hard-earned pay in a timelier and more efficient manner.

I would like to thank the gentleman from Michigan for introducing this commonsense fix, which I am pleased to cosponsor. It is time that we transfer this administrative responsibility to the agency that enforces the law, and I hope that this bill will be the first step in a larger effort to allow the Department of Labor to engage in further enforcement actions under the Davis-Bacon Act, including the GAO's current debarment authority.

As a strong supporter of Davis-Bacon and of the protections it provides our contracted workers, I am pleased to see that this bill will help streamline the process and allow our workers access to the prevailing wages they have rightly earned. That's why I rise in support of H.R. 2747, and I thank the gentleman from Michigan for introducing the bill.

I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense proposal, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time on this issue, and I would be glad to close.

I want to thank the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY) as well, not only for his support of the legislation, but for his leadership on this issue. As members of the House Subcommittee on Workforce Protections, we are privileged to oversee a number of Federal laws and agencies that directly affect the lives of workers and their families—the basis for this country's greatness.

The Davis-Bacon Act is one law in particular that I believe is in need of additional reform. Independent reports have highlighted administrative challenges facing the law that result in workers being shortchanged and taxpayers being overcharged on Federal construction projects.

I know there are sharp differences over what, if any, Davis-Bacon reform would look like, but I believe we've demonstrated today, Mr. Speaker, how

incremental, yet important, change can occur when we work together in good faith on behalf of the American people. At the very least, I hope we can continue to discuss these issues with one another, thereby bringing us closer to the common ground that is necessary to move this country forward.

I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on H.R. 2747, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. WALBERG) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2747.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

□ 1300

POWELL SHOOTING RANGE LAND CONVEYANCE ACT

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 130) to require the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain Federal land to the Powell Recreation District in the State of Wyoming.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 130

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Powell Shooting Range Land Conveyance Act".

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) DISTRICT.—The term "District" means the Powell Recreation District in the State of Wyoming.

(2) MAP.—The term "map" means the map entitled "Powell, Wyoming Land Conveyance Act" and dated May 12, 2011.

SEC. 3. CONVEYANCE OF LAND TO THE POWELL RECREATION DISTRICT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, subject to valid existing rights, the Secretary shall convey to the District, without consideration, all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the land described in subsection (b).

(b) DESCRIPTION OF LAND.—The land referred to in subsection (a) consists of approximately 322 acres of land managed by the Bureau of Land Management, Wind River District, Wyoming, as generally depicted on the map as "Powell Gun Club".

(c) MAP AND LEGAL DESCRIPTION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall finalize the legal description of the parcel to be conveyed under this section.

(2) MINOR ERRORS.—The Secretary may correct any minor error in—

- (A) the map; or
- (B) the legal description.

(3) AVAILABILITY.—The map and legal description shall be on file and available for

public inspection in the appropriate offices of the Bureau of Land Management.

(d) USE OF CONVEYED LAND.—The land conveyed under this section shall be used only—

(1) as a shooting range; or

(2) for any other public purpose consistent with uses allowed under the Act of June 14, 1926 (commonly known as the “Recreation and Public Purposes Act”) (43 U.S.C. 869 et seq.).

(e) ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—The Secretary shall require the District to pay all survey costs and other administrative costs necessary for the preparation and completion of any patents for, and transfers of title to, the land described in subsection (b).

(f) REVERSION.—If the land conveyed under this section ceases to be used for a public purpose in accordance with subsection (d), the land shall, at the discretion of the Secretary, revert to the United States.

(g) CONDITIONS.—As a condition of the conveyance under subsection (a), the District shall agree in writing—

(1) to pay any administrative costs associated with the conveyance including the costs of any environmental, wildlife, cultural, or historical resources studies; and

(2) to release and indemnify the United States from any claims or liabilities that may arise from uses carried out on the land described in subsection (b) on or before the date of enactment of this Act by the United States or any person.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) and the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands (Mr. SABLAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, S. 130 directs the Secretary of the Interior to convey to the Powell Recreation District approximately 322 acres of land located in Park County, Wyoming.

The Powell Recreation District will continue to use the land for a public recreational shooting complex, as it has since 1980.

The bill will have no cost to the taxpayer since the Powell Recreation District is required to pay for any administrative costs associated with the conveyance.

This is a noncontroversial bill, Mr. Speaker, and I urge its adoption.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, the Powell Shooting Range Land Conveyance Act would transfer 322 acres of Bureau of Land Management lands to the Powell, Wyoming, Recreation District. Currently, the Powell Recreation District manages a shooting range on these lands.

We have no objections to this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time and I urge adoption.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 130.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

DENALI NATIONAL PARK IMPROVEMENT ACT

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 157) to provide for certain improvements to the Denali National Park and Preserve in the State of Alaska, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 157

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Denali National Park Improvement Act”.

SEC. 2. KANTISHNA HILLS MICROHYDRO PROJECT; LAND EXCHANGE.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPURTENANCE.—The term “appurtenance” includes—

(A) transmission lines;

(B) distribution lines;

(C) signs;

(D) buried communication lines;

(E) necessary access routes for microhydro project construction, operation, and maintenance; and

(F) electric cables.

(2) KANTISHNA HILLS AREA.—The term “Kantishna Hills area” means the area of the Park located within 2 miles of Moose Creek, as depicted on the map.

(3) MAP.—The term “map” means the map entitled “Kantishna Hills Micro-Hydro Area”, numbered 184/80,276, and dated August 27, 2010.

(4) MICROHYDRO PROJECT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term “microhydro project” means a hydroelectric power generating facility with a maximum power generation capability of 100 kilowatts.

(B) INCLUSIONS.—The term “microhydro project” includes—

(i) intake pipelines, including the intake pipeline located on Eureka Creek, approximately ½ mile upstream from the Park Road, as depicted on the map;

(ii) each system appurtenance of the microhydro projects; and

(iii) any distribution or transmission lines required to serve the Kantishna Hills area.

(5) PARK.—The term “Park” means the Denali National Park and Preserve.

(6) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior.

(b) PERMITS FOR MICROHYDRO PROJECTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may issue permits for microhydro projects in the Kantishna Hills area.

(2) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—Each permit under paragraph (1) shall be—

(A) issued in accordance with such terms and conditions as are generally applicable to rights-of-way within units of the National Park System; and

(B) subject to such other terms and conditions as the Secretary determines to be necessary.

(3) COMPLETION OF ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS.—Not later than 180 days after the date on which an applicant submits an application for the issuance of a permit under this subsection, the Secretary shall complete any analysis required by the National Environment Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) of any proposed or existing microhydro projects located in the Kantishna Hills area.

(c) LAND EXCHANGE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—For the purpose of consolidating ownership of Park and Doyon Tourism, Inc. lands, including those lands affected solely by the Doyon Tourism microhydro project, and subject to paragraph (4), the Secretary may exchange Park land near or adjacent to land owned by Doyon Tourism, Inc., located at the mouth of Eureka Creek in sec. 13, T.16 S., R. 18 W., Fairbanks Meridian, for approximately 18 acres of land owned by Doyon Tourism, Inc., within the Galena patented mining claim.

(2) MAP AVAILABILITY.—The map shall be on file and available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the National Park Service.

(3) TIMING.—The Secretary shall seek to complete the exchange under this subsection by not later than February 1, 2015.

(4) APPLICABLE LAWS; TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—The exchange under this subsection shall be subject to—

(A) the laws (including regulations) and policies applicable to exchanges of land administered by the National Park Service, including the laws and policies concerning land appraisals, equalization of values, and environmental compliance; and

(B) such terms and conditions as the Secretary determines to be necessary.

(5) EQUALIZATION OF VALUES.—If the tracts proposed for exchange under this subsection are determined not to be equal in value, an equalization of values may be achieved by adjusting the quantity of acres described in paragraph (1).

(6) ADMINISTRATION.—The land acquired by the Secretary pursuant to the exchange under this subsection shall be administered as part of the Park.

SEC. 3. DENALI NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE NATURAL GAS PIPELINE.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPURTENANCE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term “appurtenance” includes cathodic protection or test stations, valves, signage, and buried communication and electric cables relating to the operation of high-pressure natural gas transmission.

(B) EXCLUSIONS.—The term “appurtenance” does not include compressor stations.

(2) PARK.—The term “Park” means the Denali National Park and Preserve in the State of Alaska.

(3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior.

(b) PERMIT.—The Secretary may issue right-of-way permits for—

(1) a high-pressure natural gas transmission pipeline (including appurtenances) in nonwilderness areas within the boundary of Denali National Park within, along, or near the approximately 7-mile segment of

the George Parks Highway that runs through the Park; and

(2) any distribution and transmission pipelines and appurtenances that the Secretary determines to be necessary to provide natural gas supply to the Park.

(c) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—A permit authorized under subsection (b)—

(1) may be issued only—

(A) if the permit is consistent with the laws (including regulations) generally applicable to utility rights-of-way within units of the National Park System;

(B) in accordance with section 1106(a) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 3166(a)); and

(C) if, following an appropriate analysis prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), the route of the right-of-way is the route through the Park with the least adverse environmental effects for the Park; and

(2) shall be subject to such terms and conditions as the Secretary determines to be necessary.

SEC. 4. DESIGNATION OF THE WALTER HARPER TALKEETNA RANGER STATION.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The Talkeetna Ranger Station located on B Street in Talkeetna, Alaska, approximately 100 miles south of the entrance to Denali National Park, shall be known and designated as the “Walter Harper Talkeetna Ranger Station”.

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the Talkeetna Ranger Station referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the “Walter Harper Talkeetna Ranger Station”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) and the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands (Mr. SABLAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, S. 157 would authorize the Secretary of the Interior to issue permits for a natural gas pipeline and a microhydroelectric project within the boundary of Denali National Park in Alaska.

Additionally, S. 157 authorizes a land exchange between Denali National Park and Doyon Tourism, Inc., to facilitate the water project and renames a nearby ranger station in honor of Walter Harper. One hundred years ago, Harper became the first man to reach the summit of Mt. McKinley.

Congressman DON YOUNG, our colleague from Alaska, has sponsored a companion measure to this bill in the House, but to allow this bill to become public law more quickly, I urge adoption of this Senate bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, the Denali National Park Improvement Act allows the Secretary of the Interior to issue permits for specified small hydroelectric power facilities within the park boundaries. The legislation allows the park service to exchange approximately 18 acres of park land. Finally, the bill provides for right-of-ways for a natural gas pipeline and other natural gas distribution infrastructure.

We have no objections to this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I urge adoption of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 157.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NATCHEZ TRACE PARKWAY LAND CONVEYANCE ACT OF 2013

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 304) to direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey to the State of Mississippi 2 parcels of surplus land within the boundary of the Natchez Trace Parkway, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 304

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Natchez Trace Parkway Land Conveyance Act of 2013”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) MAP.—The term “map” means the map entitled “Natchez Trace Parkway, Proposed Boundary Change”, numbered 604/105392, and dated November 2010.

(2) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior.

(3) STATE.—The term “State” means the State of Mississippi.

SEC. 3. LAND CONVEYANCE.

(a) CONVEYANCE AUTHORITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), the Secretary shall convey to the State, by quitclaim deed and without consideration, all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the parcels of land described in subsection (b).

(2) COMPATIBLE USE.—The deed of conveyance to the parcel of land that is located southeast of U.S. Route 61/84 and which is commonly known as the “bean field property” shall reserve an easement to the United States restricting the use of the parcel to only those uses which are compatible with the Natchez Trace Parkway.

(b) DESCRIPTION OF LAND.—The parcels of land referred to in subsection (a) are the 2 parcels totaling approximately 67 acres generally depicted as “Proposed Conveyance” on the map.

(c) AVAILABILITY OF MAP.—The map shall be on file and available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the National Park Service.

SEC. 4. BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENTS.

(a) EXCLUSION OF CONVEYED LAND.—On completion of the conveyance to the State of the land described in section 3(b), the boundary of the Natchez Trace Parkway shall be adjusted to exclude the conveyed land.

(b) INCLUSION OF ADDITIONAL LAND.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Effective on the date of enactment of this Act, the boundary of the Natchez Trace Parkway is adjusted to include the approximately 10 acres of land that is generally depicted as “Proposed Addition” on the map.

(2) ADMINISTRATION.—The land added under paragraph (1) shall be administered by the Secretary as part of the Natchez Trace Parkway.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) and the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands (Mr. SABLAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, S. 304 directs the Secretary of the Interior to convey 67 acres of Natchez, Mississippi, to the State of Mississippi and to adjust the boundary of the Natchez Trace Parkway.

This property was originally donated to the National Park Service by the State to construct the parkway, but was ultimately unneeded. Rather than lease the property back to Mississippi, this would transfer the title back to the original owner.

This is a commonsense measure, and I urge its adoption.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, the Natchez Trace Parkway Land Conveyance Act of 2013 conveys 67 acres of National Park Service property to the State of Mississippi. We have no objections to this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time. Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I urge adoption and yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 304.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

AMENDMENT TO PUBLIC LAW 93-435 WITH RESPECT TO NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 256) to amend Public Law 93-435 with respect to the Northern Mariana Islands, providing parity with Guam, the Virgin Islands, and American Samoa.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 256

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The first section and section 2 of Public Law 93-435 (48 U.S.C. 1705, 1706) are amended by inserting “the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands,” after “Guam,” each place it appears.

(b) REFERENCES TO DATE OF ENACTMENT.—For the purposes of the amendment made by subsection (a), each reference in Public Law 93-435 to the “date of enactment” shall be considered to be a reference to the date of the enactment of this section.

SEC. 2. ADJUSTMENT OF SCHEDULED WAGE INCREASES IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS.

Section 8103(b)(1)(B) of the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2007 (29 U.S.C. 206 note; Public Law 110-28) is amended by striking “2011” and inserting “2011, 2013, and 2015”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) and the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands (Mr. SABLAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, S. 256 would amend the 1974 law to convey certain submerged lands in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Under this bill, the territory would have the administrative authority over lands covered by tidal waters out to 3 nautical

miles, giving it parity with the other United States territories of Guam, the Virgin Islands, and American Samoa. Comparable control of the seabed has been also granted to coastal States under the Submerged Lands Act. On May 15, the House passed similar legislation by a voice vote.

S. 256 also contains an amendment to delay in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands an annual minimum wage increase of 50 cents. Under the new formula in this bill, a 50-cent minimum wage bump would still occur in 2014, with annual increases starting in 2016, until the Federal minimum wage is reached. The territory has asked for a deferral on this because its economy cannot currently sustain the minimum wage increases that are current law at this time.

I want to thank Chairman KLINE of the Committee on Education and the Workforce and his able staff for their assistance in scheduling this bill for consideration today as the minimum wage matter is under that committee’s jurisdiction.

Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of the measure, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise in support of S. 256. The bill conveys to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands 3 miles of surrounding submerged lands, providing parity with America’s other coastal States and territories.

S. 256 also provides for a hiatus in 2013 and 2015 of the annual 50-cent increase in minimum wage in the Northern Marianas, while retaining the mandate to reach the Federal level.

I want to thank the chairman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, RON WYDEN, and Ranking Member LISA MURKOWSKI for introducing S. 256 at my request. Its companion, H.R. 573, passed the House unanimously in May of this year, as did predecessor bills in the 111th and the 112th Congresses.

Thanks also to leaders and staff from both sides of the aisle: Chairman DOC HASTINGS of the House Natural Resources Committee and Ranking Member PETER DEFAZIO; Chairman JOHN FLEMING on the Fisheries, Wildlife, Oceans, and Insular Affairs Subcommittee; and the chairman on the Education and the Workforce Committee, JOHN KLINE, and Ranking Member GEORGE MILLER. Their assistance reflects a longstanding tradition of treating territorial issues as essentially nonpartisan.

To summarize briefly, the Northern Mariana Islands is the only U.S. coastal jurisdiction that does not have ownership of the submerged lands off its coast. S. 256 corrects that irregularity and provides the same ownership rights over the submerged lands surrounding the Northern Marianas as are provided by Federal law to Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and American Samoa.

Additionally, S. 256 reschedules the rate of increase of the minimum wage in the Northern Mariana Islands, but it retains the mandate to reach the Federal minimum wage level, which will occur in 2018. The wage has risen 82 percent since 2007—16.5 percent each year.

The Government Accountability Office has reported uncertainty over how this rapid change affects the local economy, especially given the negative GDP in most of those years. Congress previously provided for the scheduled 2011 increase to be skipped. In light of continuing unpredictability of the impact of annual increases on an economy where as much as 80 percent of the hourly paid workforce will be affected, similar deferrals of the 2013 and 2015 increases are advisable.

I ask for Members to support S. 256 today as the House has supported these same proposals in the past.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I’m pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. HARPER).

Mr. HARPER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 256, and would like to speak also in support of the bill just considered, S. 304, a bill sponsored by a senior Senator of Mississippi, THAD COCHRAN.

This legislation authorized the transfer of approximately 67 acres of unused Federal land originally envisioned to be part of the Natchez Trace Parkway to the State of Mississippi.

The city of Natchez plans to use 37 acres for recreational purposes. It will improve the quality of life for the city’s residents.

□ 1315

Without this legislation, this tract will continue to set idle.

I would like to thank Chairman HASTINGS for his work in bringing this commonsense and worthy legislation to the House floor. I also would like to thank our senior Senator, THAD COCHRAN, for his tireless leadership for the State of Mississippi. There are numerous individuals behind the scenes that have worked tirelessly for the city of Natchez to gain access to and the right to utilize this land over the years, and S. 304 will show that their hard work has finally paid off.

I urge my colleagues to continue to support this legislation.

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to yield such time as he may consume to my friend, the distinguished gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA).

(Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I would first like to thank and commend the chairman of our Natural Resources Committee, DOC HASTINGS, for his leadership and for his support of this piece of legislation, and especially

also my good friend, the gentleman representing the Northern Mariana Islands.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 256, a bill to amend Public Law 93-435 with respect to the Northern Mariana Islands, providing parity with Guam, the Virgin Islands, and American Samoa. I want to thank Chairman WYDEN and Ranking Member MURKOWSKI of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources for their work on this bipartisan piece of legislation. I also want to thank the Senate for finally taking action on this issue and passing S. 256 via unanimous consent last month.

As I said earlier, I would be remiss if I did not commend my good friend, Congressman SABLAN, for his tireless efforts on this issue and all other matters affecting the Northern Mariana Islands since he took office in 2009.

Mr. Speaker, this piece of legislation will appropriately convey 3 miles of offshore submerged lands to the Northern Mariana Islands. As you may know, submerged lands qualify as lands permanently or periodically covered by tidal waves up to but not above the line of high tide. The territories of American Samoa, Guam, and the Virgin Islands were granted ownership over our own respective submerged lands when the Congress passed the Territorial Submerged Lands Act in 1974. This was before CNMI became a territory of the United States.

S. 256 is in response to an unfortunate decision by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in 2005 that ruled that the submerged lands off the coast of CNMI did not belong to the Commonwealth but belonged to the Federal Government. The language guarantees that the Federal Government maintains the same rights over navigation, international affairs and commerce. Furthermore, it does not circumvent any actions that may have been taken or regulations that have been put forward by U.S. naval authorities regarding these submerged lands.

This issue is not new to us. The House has passed similar legislation since the 111th Congress. The citizens and officials of CNMI, instead of officials residing thousands of miles away, should be implementing and enforcing laws that apply to their population. We should move forward and allow CNMI to utilize these resources that are rightfully theirs and allow them to engage and promote economic activities in these areas. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I would advise my friend from the Northern Marianas that I have no more requests for time, and I am prepared to yield back if the gentleman is prepared to yield back.

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, but I would like to thank DOC HASTINGS for a wonderful way of managing bills. This is probably at the fastest pace, and we should do this more often.

I yield back the balance of my time. Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I thank the gentleman for his compliment, and I urge adoption of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time. Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 256.

This legislation includes provisions adjusting the minimum wage schedule for the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands in a way that I think is appropriate and fair for both workers and businesses there.

Current law requires CNMI to increase its minimum wage 50 cents a year until it reaches the Mainland's federal minimum wage level of \$7.25. Current law also requires the GAO to regularly report to Congress on economic conditions in Commonwealth over the course of these minimum wage adjustments.

These GAO reports are intended to give the public information so that, based on sound economic analysis, Congress can adjust the minimum wage schedule for the territories if warranted.

The next GAO report is due in April of 2014.

Since 2007 the Commonwealth's minimum wage has increased from \$3.05 an hour to \$5.55 an hour, an 82% increase in the past 5 years. This has brought new purchasing power and a higher standard of living for many workers than they could have negotiated on their own.

This bill would skip an increase in the minimum wage in CNMI for 2013 and 2015, while still requiring increases in 2014, 2016 and subsequent years.

This approach was recommended by the Saipan Chamber of Commerce.

The Chamber stated in a May 8th letter that given the fragile economy in CNMI "spreading the wage jumps over a two-year period seems prudent."

This legislation is also recommended by Congressman SABLAN, a tireless advocate for workers and for improving the Commonwealth's economy.

Because CNMI's wages had been depressed for so long, it is a long march of nearly a decade to more than double their minimum wage. In a territory like CNMI, we have recognized that we would need to be flexible with the wage rate schedule over that time frame, as conditions warranted.

Today's bill reflects that need for flexibility. It allows us to review the next GAO economic analysis for CNMI before another wage increase takes effect.

Because of CNMI's unique economic circumstances and relatively undiversified economy, it is appropriate for Congress to adjust the minimum wage schedule in response to changing economic conditions, while keeping our long-term commitment to reaching parity with the federal minimum wage.

I urge my colleagues to support S. 256.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 256.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

MINUTEMAN MISSILE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE BOUNDARY MODIFICATION ACT

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 459) to modify the boundary of the Minuteman Missile National Historic Site in the State of South Dakota, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 459

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Minuteman Missile National Historic Site Boundary Modification Act".

SEC. 2. BOUNDARY MODIFICATION.

Section 3(a) of the Minuteman Missile National Historic Site Establishment Act of 1999 (16 U.S.C. 461 note; Public Law 106-115) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (3) and (4) as paragraphs (4) and (5), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

“(3) VISITOR FACILITY AND ADMINISTRATIVE SITE.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—In addition to the components described in paragraph (2), the historic site shall include a visitor facility and administrative site located on the parcel of land described in subparagraph (B).

“(B) DESCRIPTION OF LAND.—The land referred to in subparagraph (A) consists of—

“(i) approximately 25 acres of land within the Buffalo Gap National Grassland, located north of exit 131 on Interstate 90 in Jackson County, South Dakota, as generally depicted on the map entitled ‘Minuteman Missile National Historic Site Boundary Modification’, numbered 406/80,011A, and dated January 14, 2011; and

“(ii) approximately 3.65 acres of land located at the Delta 1 Launch Control Facility for the construction and use of a parking lot and for other administrative uses.

“(C) AVAILABILITY OF MAP.—The map described in subparagraph (B) shall be kept on file and available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the National Park Service.

“(D) TRANSFER OF ADMINISTRATIVE JURISDICTION.—Administrative jurisdiction over the land described in subparagraph (B) is transferred from the Secretary of Agriculture to the Secretary, to be administered as part of the historic site.

“(E) BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT.—The boundaries of the Buffalo Gap National Grassland are modified to exclude the land transferred under subparagraph (D).”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) and the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands (Mr. SABLAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative

days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, S. 459 would authorize an agency-to-agency conveyance of Federal lands to allow for the expansion of the Minuteman Missile National Historic Site in South Dakota.

The U.S. Air Force administered over 1,000 Minuteman intercontinental ballistic missiles in silos throughout the Central States. These sites played a critical national security role until they were deactivated following the end of the Cold War.

The Minuteman Missile National Historic Site was established by Congress in 1999 to recognize the importance of the Minuteman ICBM program. S. 459 would convey just under 30 acres of the Buffalo Gap National Grassland to allow for the establishment of a visitor facility, administrative site, and a parking lot. This is good legislation, Mr. Speaker, and I urge its adoption.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, S. 459 transfers administrative jurisdiction of Forest Service lands in South Dakota to the National Park Service. These lands will be used by the Park Service to provide a visitor facility and administrative site for the Minuteman Missile National Historic Site in Philip, South Dakota.

We support S. 459 and urge its passage by the House today.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and so in record time, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I, too, have no more speakers, and so I urge its adoption.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 459.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess for a period of less than 15 minutes.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 22 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1338

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. FORTENBERRY) at 1 o'clock and 38 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H.R. 1155, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 2747, by the yeas and nays;

S. 130, by the yeas and nays.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGISTERED AGENTS AND BROKERS REFORM ACT OF 2013

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1155) to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. NEUGEBAUER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 397, nays 6, not voting 29, as follows:

[Roll No. 450]

YEAS—397

Aderholt	Butterfield	Crawford
Alexander	Calvert	Crenshaw
Amodei	Camp	Crowley
Andrews	Campbell	Cuellar
Bachmann	Cantor	Culberson
Bachus	Capito	Cummings
Barber	Capps	Daines
Barletta	Capuano	Davis (CA)
Barr	Cardenas	Davis, Rodney
Barrow (GA)	Carney	DeFazio
Barton	Carson (IN)	DeGette
Bass	Carter	Delaney
Beatty	Cartwright	DeLauro
Becerra	Cassidy	DelBene
Benishek	Castor (FL)	Denham
Bentivolio	Castro (TX)	Dent
Bilirakis	Chabot	DeSantis
Bishop (GA)	Chaffetz	DesJarlais
Bishop (NY)	Chu	Deutch
Black	Ciциlline	Diaz-Balart
Blackburn	Clay	Dingell
Blumenauer	Cleaver	Doggett
Bonamici	Clyburn	Doyle
Boustany	Coble	Duckworth
Brady (PA)	Coffman	Duffy
Brady (TX)	Cole	Duncan (SC)
Braley (IA)	Collins (GA)	Duncan (TN)
Brooks (AL)	Collins (NY)	Edwards
Brooks (IN)	Conaway	Ellison
Broun (GA)	Connolly	Ellmers
Brown (FL)	Cook	Engel
Brownley (CA)	Cooper	Enyart
Buchanan	Costa	Eshoo
Bucshon	Cotton	Farenthold
Burgess	Courtney	Farr
Bustos	Cramer	Fattah

Fincher	Lipinski	Rohrabacher
Fitzpatrick	LoBiondo	Rokita
Fleischmann	Loeb	Rooney
Fleming	Lofgren	Ros-Lehtinen
Flores	Long	Roskam
Forbes	Lowenthal	Ross
Fortenberry	Lowe	Rothfus
Foster	Lucas	Roybal-Allard
Fox	Luetkemeyer	Royce
Franks (AZ)	Lujan Grisham (NM)	Runyan
Frelinghuysen	Lujan, Ben Ray (NM)	Ruppersberger
Fudge	Lummis	Rush
Gabbard	Lynch	Ryan (WI)
Gallego	Maloney,	Salmon
Garamendi	Carolyn	Sanchez, Linda T.
Garcia	Marchant	Sanchez, Loretta
Gardner	Marino	Sarbanes
Garrett	Matheson	Scalise
Gerlach	Matsui	Schakowsky
Gibbs	McCarthy (CA)	Schiff
Gibson	McCaul	Schneider
Gingrey (GA)	McClintock	Schock
Goodlatte	McDermott	Schrader
Gosar	McGovern	Schwartz
Gowdy	McHenry	Schweikert
Granger	McIntyre	Scott (VA)
Graves (GA)	McKeon	Scott, Austin
Graves (MO)	McKinley	Scott, David
Grayson	McMorris	Sensenbrenner
Green, Al	Rodgers	Serrano
Green, Gene	McNerney	Sessions
Griffin (AR)	Meadows	Sewell (AL)
Grijalva	Meehan	Shea-Porter
Grimm	Mica	Sherman
Guthrie	Michaud	Shimkus
Gutiérrez	Miller (FL)	Shuster
Hahn	Miller (MI)	Simpson
Hall	Miller, Gary	Sinema
Hanabusa	Miller, George	Sires
Hanna	Moore	Slaughter
Harper	Moran	Smith (MO)
Harris	Mullin	Smith (NJ)
Hartzler	Mulvaney	Smith (TX)
Hastings (FL)	Murphy (PA)	Smith (WA)
Hastings (WA)	Nadler	Southerland
Heck (NV)	Napolitano	Speier
Hensarling	Neal	Stewart
Higgins	Negrete McLeod	Stivers
Himes	Neugebauer	Stockman
Hinojosa	Noem	Stutzman
Holding	Nolan	Swalwell (CA)
Holt	Nugent	Takano
Honda	Nunes	Terry
Horsford	Nunnelee	Thompson (CA)
Hoyer	O'Rourke	Thompson (MS)
Hudson	Olson	Thompson (PA)
Huelskamp	Owens	Thornberry
Huffman	Palazzo	Tiberi
Huizenga (MI)	Pallone	Tierney
Hultgren	Pascrell	Tipton
Hunter	Pastor (AZ)	Titus
Hurt	Paulsen	Tonko
Israel	Payne	Tsongas
Issa	Pearce	Turner
Jackson Lee	Pelosi	Upton
Jeffries	Perlmutter	Valadao
Jenkins	Perry	Van Hollen
Johnson (GA)	Peters (CA)	Vargas
Johnson (OH)	Peters (MI)	Veasey
Johnson, E. B.	Peterson	Vela
Johnson, Sam	Petri	Visclosky
Jones	Pingree (ME)	Wagner
Jordan	Pittenger	Walberg
Joyce	Pitts	Walden
Kaptur	Pocan	Walorski
Keating	Poe (TX)	Wasserman
Kelly (IL)	Polis	Schultz
Kelly (PA)	Pompeo	Waters
Kennedy	Posey	Watt
Kildee	Price (GA)	Waxman
Kilmer	Price (NC)	Weber (TX)
King (IA)	Quigley	Webster (FL)
King (NY)	Radel	Wenstrup
Kingston	Rahall	Westmoreland
Kinzinger (IL)	Rangel	Whitfield
Kline	Reed	Williams
Kuster	Reichert	Wilson (FL)
Labrador	Renacci	Wilson (SC)
LaMalfa	Ribble	Wittman
Lamborn	Rice (SC)	Wolf
Lance	Richmond	Womack
Langevin	Rigell	Woodall
Lankford	Roe (TN)	Yoder
Larsen (WA)	Rogers (AL)	Yoho
Latham	Rogers (KY)	Young (AK)
Latta	Rogers (MI)	Young (IN)
Lee (CA)		
Levin		
Lewis		

NAYS—6

Amash Griffith (VA) Sanford
Bridenstine Massie Smith (NE)

NOT VOTING—29

Bera (CA) Herrera Beutler Messer
Bishop (UT) Kind Murphy (FL)
Clarke Kirkpatrick Ruiz
Cohen Larson (CT) Ryan (OH)
Conyers Maffei Velázquez
Davis, Danny Maloney, Sean Walz
Esty McCarthy (NY) Welch
Frankel (FL) McCollum Yarmuth
Gohmert Meeks Yarmuth
Heck (WA) Meng Young (FL)

□ 1404

Mr. BRIDENSTINE changed his vote from “yea” to “nay.”

Messrs. DUNCAN of South Carolina and ELLISON changed their vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

STREAMLINING CLAIMS PROCESSING FOR FEDERAL CONTRACTOR EMPLOYEES ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2747) to amend title 40, United States Code, to transfer certain functions from the Government Accountability Office to the Department of Labor relating to the processing of claims for the payment of workers who were not paid appropriate wages under certain provisions of such title, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. WALBERG) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 396, nays 10, not voting 26, as follows:

[Roll No. 451]

YEAS—396

Aderholt Braley (IA) Cicilline
Alexander Brooks (AL) Clay
Amash Brooks (IN) Cleaver
Amodei Brown (FL) Clyburn
Andrews Brownley (CA) Coble
Bachmann Buchanan Coffman
Bachus Bucshon Cole
Barber Burgess Collins (GA)
Barletta Bustos Collins (NY)
Barr Butterfield Conaway
Barrow (GA) Calvert Connolly
Barton Camp Conyers
Bass Cantor Cook
Beatty Capito Cooper
Becerra Capps Costa
Benishek Capuano Cotton
Bentivolio Cárdenas Courtney
Bilirakis Carney Cramer
Bishop (GA) Carson (IN) Crawford
Bishop (NY) Carter Crenshaw
Black Cartwright Crowley
Blackburn Cassidy Cuellar
Blumenauer Castor (FL) Culberson
Bonamici Castro (TX) Cummings
Boustany Chabot Daines
Brady (PA) Chaffetz Davis (CA)
Brady (TX) Chu Davis, Rodney

DeFazio Kaptur Pittenger
DeGette Keating Pitts
Delaney Kelly (IL) Pocan
DeLauro Kelly (PA) Polis
DeBene Kennedy Pompeo
Denham Kildee Posey
Dent Kilmer Price (GA)
DeSantis King (IA) Price (NC)
DesJarlais King (NY) Quigley
Deutch Kingston Radel
Diaz-Balart Kinzinger (IL) Rahall
Dingell Kline Rangel
Doggett Kuster Reed
Doyle Labrador Reichert
Duckworth Lamborn Renacci
Duffy Lance Ribble
Duncan (SC) Langevin Rice (SC)
Duncan (TN) Lankford Richmond
Edwards Larsen (WA) Rigell
Ellison Latham Roby
Ellmers Latta Roe (TN)
Engel Lee (CA) Rogers (AL)
Enyart Levin Rogers (KY)
Eshoo Lewis Rogers (MI)
Farenthold Lippinski Rohrabacher
Farr LoBiondo Rokita
Fattah Loebsock Rooney
Fincher Lofgren Ros-Lehtinen
Fitzpatrick Long Roskam
Fleischmann Lowenthal Ross
Fleming Lowey Rothfus
Flores Lucas Roybal-Allard
Forbes Luetkemeyer Royce
Fortenberry Lujan Grisham Runyan
Foster (NM) Ruppertsberger
Foxy Luján, Ben Ray Rush
Franks (AZ) (NM) Ryan (OH)
Frelinghuysen Lummis Ryan (WI)
Fudge Lynch Salmon
Gabbard Maloney, Sánchez, Linda
Gallego Carolyn T.
Garamendi Marchant Sanchez, Loretta
Gardner Marino Sanford
Garrett Massie Sarbanes
Gerlach Matheson Scalise
Gibbs Matsui Schakowsky
Gibson McCarthy (CA) Schiff
Gingrey (GA) McCaul Schneider
Goodlatte McCollum Schock
Gosar McDermott Schrader
Gowdy McGovern Schwartz
Granger McHenry Schweikert
Graves (GA) McIntyre Scott (VA)
Graves (MO) McKinley Scott, Austin
Grayson McMorrison Scott, David
Green, Al Rodgers Sensenbrenner
Green, Gene McNeerney Serrano
Griffin (AR) Meadows Sessions
Griffith (VA) Meehan Sewell (AL)
Grijalva Messer Shea-Porter
Grimm Mica Sherman
Guthrie Michaud Shimkus
Hahn Miller (FL) Shuster
Hall Miller (MI) Simpson
Hanabusa Miller, Gary Sinema
Hanna Moore Sires
Harper Moran Slaughter
Harris Moran Smith (MO)
Hartzler Mullin Smith (NE)
Hastings (FL) Mulvaney Smith (NJ)
Hastings (WA) Murphy (PA) Smith (TX)
Heck (NV) Nadler Smith (WA)
Hensarling Napolitano Southerland
Higgins Neal Speier
Himes Negrete McLeod Stewart
Hinojosa Neugebauer Stivers
Holding Noem Stutzman
Holt Nolan Swalwell (CA)
Honda Nugent Takano
Horsford Nunes Terry
Hoyer Nunnelee Thompson (CA)
Hudson O'Rourke Thompson (MS)
Huffman Olson Thompson (PA)
Huizenga (MI) Owens Thornberry
Hultgren Palazzo Tiberi
Hunter Pallone Tierney
Hurt Pascrell Tipton
Issa Pastor (AZ) Titus
Issa Paulsen Tonko
Jackson Lee Payne Tsongas
Jeffries Pearce Turner
Jenkins Pelosi Upton
Johnson (GA) Perlmutter Valadao
Johnson (OH) Perry Van Hollen
Johnson, E. B. Peters (CA) Vargas
Johnson, Sam Peters (MI) Veasey
Jones Peterson Vela
Jordan Petri Visclosky
Joyce Pingree (ME) Wagner

Walberg Waxman Wittman
Walden Webster (FL) Wolf
Walorski Wenstrup Womack
Walz Westmoreland Woodall
Wasserman Whitfield Yoder
Schultz Williams Yoho
Waters Wilson (FL) Young (AK)
Watt Wilson (SC) Young (IN)

NAYS—10

Bridenstine Huelskamp Stockman
Broun (GA) LaMalfa Weber (TX)
Campbell McClintock
Gohmert Poe (TX)

NOT VOTING—26

Bera (CA) Heck (WA) Meeks
Bishop (UT) Herrera Beutler Meng
Clarke Kind Murphy (FL)
Cohen Kirkpatrick Ruiz
Davis, Danny Larson (CT) Velázquez
Esty Maffei Welch
Frankel (FL) Maloney, Sean Yarmuth
Garcia McCarthy (NY) Young (FL)
Gutiérrez McKeon

Messrs. POE of Texas and LAMALFA changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

□ 1415

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 450—H.R. 1155, and 451—H.R. 2747, I was at meetings on Syria with the Vice President at the White House. Had I been present, I would have voted “yea.”

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, due to my attendance at a White House briefing with Vice President BIDEN on the Syria Resolution, I missed the afternoon series of votes on September 10, 2013. Had I been present, I would have voted the following way on these suspension votes:

H.R. 1155—NARAB Reform Act—I would have voted “yea.”

H.R. 2747—Streamlining Claims Processing for Federal Contractor Employees—I would have voted “yea.”

MOMENT OF SILENCE IN REMEMBRANCE OF MEMBERS OF ARMED FORCES AND THEIR FAMILIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of Georgia). The Chair would ask all present to rise for the purpose of a moment of silence.

The Chair asks that the House now observe a moment of silence in remembrance of our brave men and women in uniform who have given their lives in the service of our Nation in Iraq and Afghanistan and their families, and of all who serve in our Armed Forces and their families.

POWELL SHOOTING RANGE LAND CONVEYANCE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FORTENBERRY). Without objection, 5-minute voting will continue.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 130) to require the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain Federal land to the Powell Recreation District in the State of Wyoming, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 408, nays 1, not voting 23, as follows:

[Roll No. 452]

YEAS—408

Aderholt
Alexander
Amash
Amodel
Andrews
Bachus
Barber
Barletta
Barr
Barrow (GA)
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Benishek
Bentivolio
Bera (CA)
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boustany
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Bralley (IA)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter
Cartwright
Cassidy
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu
Cicilline
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Connolly
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Costa

Cotton
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Daines
Davis (CA)
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Ellmers
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Fox
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garcia
Gardner
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)

Grijalva
Grimm
Guthrie
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hall
Hanabusa
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Holding
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huffman
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Israel
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jenkins
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Kuster
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Lankford
Larsen (WA)
Latham
Latta
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Lowenthal
Lowe

Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Lujan, Ben Ray (NM)
Lummis
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
McNerney
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Negrete McLeod
Neugebauer
Noem
Nolan
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
O'Rourke
Olson
Owens
Palazzo
Pallone
Pascarell
Pastor (AZ)
Paulsen
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry

Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Peterson
Petri
Pingree (ME)
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Quigley
Radel
Rahall
Rangel
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Runyan
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schock
Schrader
Schwartz
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter

Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Southerland
Speier
Stewart
Stivers
Stockman
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tierney
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters
Watt
Waxman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

NAYS—1

Sanford
NOT VOTING—23

Bachmann
Clarke
Cohen
Davis, Danny
Frankel (FL)
Garrett
Hartzler
Heck (WA)

Herrera Beutler
Jeffries
Kind
Larson (CT)
Maffei
Maloney, Sean
McCarthy (NY)
Meeks

Meng
Murphy (FL)
Ruiz
Velázquez
Welch
Yarmuth
Young (FL)

□ 1424

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, on September 10, 2013—I was not present for rollcall votes 450–452 due to a meeting at the White House with Vice President JOE BIDEN. If I had been present for these votes, I would have voted “yea” on rollcall vote 450, “yea” on rollcall vote 451, “yea” on rollcall vote 452.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. HECK of Nevada. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained in a classified security briefing on Syria and missed rollcall votes No. 450, No. 451, and No. 452.

Had I been present for H.R. 1155, a bill to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, I would have voted “aye.”

On H.R. 2747, a bill to amend title 40, United States Code, to transfer certain functions from the Government Accountability Office to the Department of Labor relating to the processing of claims for the payment of workers who were not paid appropriate wages under certain provisions of such title, I would have voted “aye.”

On S. 130, a bill to require the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain Federal land to the Powell Recreation District in the State of Wyoming, I would have voted “aye.”

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. MAFFEI. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 450 on H.R. 1155, I am not recorded because I was unavoidably detained at a White House briefing on Syria. Had I been present, I would have voted “aye.”

Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 451 on H.R. 2747, I am not recorded because I was unavoidably detained at a White House briefing on Syria. Had I been present, I would have voted “aye.”

Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 452 on S. 130, I am not recorded because I was unavoidably detained at a White House briefing on Syria. Had I been present, I would have voted “aye.”

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I was at the White House meeting with the Vice President and was unable to vote on rollcall votes 450, 451, and 452.

If present, I would have voted “aye” on H.R. 1155, H.R. 2747, and S. 130.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 25 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1630

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WOODALL) at 4 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

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

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

S. 304, by the yeas and nays;
S. 256, by the yeas and nays;
S. 459, by the yeas and nays.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

NATCHEZ TRACE PARKWAY LAND CONVEYANCE ACT OF 2013

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 304) to direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey to the State of Mississippi 2 parcels of surplus land within the boundary of the Natchez Trace Parkway, and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 419, nays 1, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 453]
YEAS—419

Aderholt	Chiu	Fattah
Alexander	Cicilline	Fincher
Amodei	Clarke	Fitzpatrick
Andrews	Clay	Fleischmann
Bachmann	Cleaver	Fleming
Bachus	Clyburn	Flores
Barber	Coble	Forbes
Barletta	Coffman	Fortenberry
Barr	Cohen	Foster
Barrow (GA)	Cole	Fox
Barton	Collins (GA)	Frankel (FL)
Bass	Collins (NY)	Franks (AZ)
Beatty	Conaway	Frelinghuysen
Becerra	Connolly	Fudge
Benishek	Conyers	Gabbard
Bentivolio	Cook	Gallego
Bera (CA)	Cooper	Garamendi
Bilirakis	Costa	Garcia
Bishop (GA)	Cotton	Gardner
Bishop (NY)	Courtney	Garrett
Bishop (UT)	Cramer	Gerlach
Black	Crawford	Gibbs
Blackburn	Crenshaw	Gibson
Blumenauer	Crowley	Gingrey (GA)
Bonamici	Cuellar	Gohmert
Boustany	Cummings	Goodlatte
Brady (PA)	Daines	Gosar
Brady (TX)	Davis (CA)	Gowdy
Braley (IA)	Davis, Danny	Granger
Bridenstine	Davis, Rodney	Graves (GA)
Brooks (AL)	DeFazio	Graves (MO)
Brooks (IN)	DeGette	Grayson
Broun (GA)	Delaney	Green, Al
Brown (FL)	DeLauro	Green, Gene
Brownley (CA)	DelBene	Griffin (AR)
Buchanan	Denham	Griffith (VA)
Bucshon	Dent	Grijalva
Burgess	DeSantis	Guthrie
Bustos	DesJarlais	Gutiérrez
Butterfield	Deutch	Hahn
Calvert	Diaz-Balart	Hall
Camp	Dingell	Hanabusa
Campbell	Doggett	Hanna
Cantor	Doyle	Harper
Capito	Duckworth	Harris
Capps	Duffy	Hartzler
Capuano	Duncan (SC)	Hastings (FL)
Cárdenas	Duncan (TN)	Hastings (WA)
Carney	Edwards	Heck (NV)
Carson (IN)	Ellison	Heck (WA)
Carter	Ellmers	Hensarling
Cartwright	Engel	Higgins
Cassidy	Enyart	Himes
Castor (FL)	Eshoo	Hinojosa
Castro (TX)	Esty	Holding
Chabot	Farenthold	Holt
Chaffetz	Farr	Honda

Horsford	Meehan	Sarbanes
Hoyer	Messer	Scalise
Hudson	Mica	Schakowsky
Huelskamp	Michaud	Schiff
Huffman	Miller (FL)	Schneider
Huizenga (MI)	Miller (MI)	Schock
Hultgren	Miller, Gary	Schrader
Hunter	Miller, George	Schwartz
Israel	Moore	Schweikert
Issa	Moran	Scott (VA)
Jackson Lee	Mullin	Scott, Austin
Jenkins	Mulvaney	Scott, David
Johnson (GA)	Murphy (FL)	Sensenbrenner
Johnson (OH)	Murphy (PA)	Serrano
Johnson, E. B.	Napolitano	Sessions
Johnson, Sam	Neal	Sewell (AL)
Jones	Negrete McLeod	Shea-Porter
Jordan	Neugebauer	Sherman
Joyce	Noem	Shimkus
Kaptur	Nolan	Shuster
Keating	Nugent	Simpson
Kelly (IL)	Nunes	Sinema
Kelly (PA)	Nunnelee	Sires
Kennedy	O'Rourke	Slaughter
Kildee	Olson	Smith (MO)
Kilmer	Owens	Smith (NE)
Kind	Palazzo	Smith (NJ)
King (IA)	Pallone	Smith (TX)
King (NY)	Pascarell	Smith (WA)
Kingston	Pastor (AZ)	Southerland
Kinzinger (IL)	Paulsen	Speier
Kirkpatrick	Payne	Stewart
Kline	Pearce	Stivers
Kuster	Pelosi	Stockman
Labrador	Perlmutter	Stutzman
LaMalfa	Perry	Swalwell (CA)
Lamborn	Peters (CA)	Takano
Lance	Peters (MD)	Terry
Langevin	Peterson	Thompson (CA)
Lankford	Petri	Thompson (MS)
Larsen (WA)	Pittenger	Thompson (PA)
Larson (CT)	Pitts	Thornberry
Latham	Pocan	Tiberi
Latta	Poe (TX)	Tierney
Lee (CA)	Polis	Tipton
Levin	Pompeo	Titus
Lewis	Posey	Tonko
Lipinski	Price (GA)	Tsongas
LoBiondo	Price (NC)	Turner
Loeb	Quigley	Upton
Loeb	Radel	Valadao
Lofgren	Rahall	Van Hollen
Long	Rangel	Vargas
Lowey	Reed	Veasey
Lucas	Reichert	Vela
Luetkemeyer	Renacci	Visclosky
Lujan Grisham	Ribble	Wagner
(NM)	Rice (SC)	Walberg
Luján, Ben Ray	Richmond	Walden
(NM)	Rigell	Walorski
Lummis	Roby	Walz
Lynch	Roe (TN)	Wasserman
Maffei	Rogers (AL)	Schultz
Maloney	Rogers (KY)	Waters
Carolyn	Rogers (MI)	Watt
Maloney, Sean	Rohrabacher	Waxman
Marchant	Rokita	Weber (TX)
Marino	Rooney	Webster (FL)
Massie	Ros-Lehtinen	Welch
Matheson	Roskam	Wenstrup
Matsui	Ross	Westmoreland
McCarthy (CA)	Rothfus	Whitfield
McCaul	Roybal-Allard	Williams
McClintock	Royce	Wilson (FL)
McCollum	Ruiz	Wilson (SC)
McDermott	Runyan	Witman
McGovern	Ruppersberger	Wolf
McHenry	Rush	Womack
McIntyre	Ryan (OH)	Woodall
McKeon	Ryan (WI)	Yarmuth
McKinley	Salmon	Yoder
McMorris	Sánchez, Linda	Yoho
T. Rodgers	T. Sánchez, Loretta	Young (AK)
McNerney	Sanford	Young (IN)
Meadows		

NAYS—1

Amash
NOT VOTING—12

Culberson	Jeffries	Nadler
Grimm	McCarthy (NY)	Pingree (ME)
Herrera Beutler	Meeks	Velázquez
Hurt	Meng	Young (FL)

□ 1656

Mr. MEEHAN changed his vote from "nay" to "yea."

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. HURT. Mr. Speaker, I was not present for rollcall vote No. 453. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

AMENDMENT TO PUBLIC LAW 93-435 WITH RESPECT TO NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 256) to amend Public Law 93-435 with respect to the Northern Mariana Islands, providing parity with Guam, the Virgin Islands, and American Samoa, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 415, nays 0, not voting 17, as follows:

[Roll No. 454]
YEAS—415

Aderholt	Carter	Duffy
Alexander	Cartwright	Duncan (SC)
Amash	Cassidy	Duncan (TN)
Amodei	Castor (FL)	Edwards
Andrews	Castro (TX)	Ellison
Bachmann	Chabot	Ellmers
Bachus	Chaffetz	Engel
Barber	Chu	Enyart
Barletta	Cicilline	Eshoo
Barr	Clarke	Esty
Barrow (GA)	Clay	Farenthold
Barton	Cleaver	Farr
Bass	Clyburn	Fattah
Beatty	Coble	Fincher
Becerra	Coffman	Fitzpatrick
Benishek	Cohen	Fleischmann
Bentivolio	Cole	Flores
Bera (CA)	Collins (GA)	Forbes
Bilirakis	Collins (NY)	Fortenberry
Bishop (GA)	Conaway	Foster
Bishop (NY)	Connolly	Fox
Bishop (UT)	Conyers	Frankel (FL)
Black	Cook	Franks (AZ)
Blackburn	Cooper	Frelinghuysen
Blumenauer	Costa	Fudge
Bonamici	Cotton	Gabbard
Boustany	Courtney	Gallego
Brady (PA)	Cramer	Garcia
Brady (TX)	Crawford	Gardner
Braley (IA)	Crenshaw	Garrett
Bridenstine	Crowley	Gerlach
Brooks (AL)	Cuellar	Gibbs
Brooks (IN)	Daines	Gibson
Broun (GA)	Davis (CA)	Gingrey (GA)
Brown (FL)	Davis, Danny	Gohmert
Brownley (CA)	Davis, Rodney	Goodlatte
Buchanan	DeFazio	Gosar
Bucshon	DeGette	Gowdy
Burgess	Delaney	Granger
Bustos	DeLauro	Graves (GA)
Butterfield	DelBene	Graves (MO)
Calvert	Denham	Grayson
Camp	Dent	Green, Al
Campbell	DeSantis	Green, Gene
Cantor	DesJarlais	Griffin (AR)
Capito	Deutch	Griffith (VA)
Capps	Diaz-Balart	Grijalva
Capuano	Dingell	Guthrie
Cárdenas	Doggett	Gutiérrez
Carney	Doyle	Hahn
Carson (IN)	Duckworth	Hall

Hanabusa
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Higgins
Hinojosa
Holding
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huffman
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Israel
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jenkins
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Kuster
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Lankford
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
Latta
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loeb sack
Lofgren
Long
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lummis
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney,
Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock

NOT VOTING—17

Culberson
Cummings
Fleming
Garamendi
Grimm
Herrera Beutler

McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
McNerney
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Napolitano
Neal
Negrete McLeod
Neugebauer
Noem
Nolan
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
O'Rourke
Olson
Owens
Palazzo
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Paulsen
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters (MI)
Peterson
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Quigley
Veasey
Rahall
Rangel
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Runyan
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)

Himes
Jeffries
McCarthy (NY)
Meeks
Meng
Nadler
Peters (CA)
Pingree (ME)
Velázquez
Wilson (FL)
Young (FL)

□ 1707
So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.
The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.
A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.
Stated for:
Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, on September 10, 2013, I was unable to be present for rollcall vote 454 on S. 256. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

MINUTEMAN MISSILE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE BOUNDARY MODIFICATION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 459) to modify the boundary of the Minuteman Missile National Historic Site in the State of South Dakota, and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.
The Clerk read the title of the bill.
The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.
This is a 5-minute vote.
The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 414, nays 5, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 455]
YEAS—414

Alexander
Amodei
Andrews
Bachmann
Bachus
Barber
Barletta
Chu
Ciilline
Clarke
Barr
Barrow (GA)
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bentivolio
Bera (CA)
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boustany
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter

Guthrie
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hall
Hanabusa
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Holding
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huffman
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Israel
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jenkins
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Kuster
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Lankford
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
Latta
Lee (CA)
Lewis
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loeb sack
Lofgren
Long
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lummis
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney,
Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matheson

NAYS—5
Griffith (VA)
Weber (TX)

NOT VOTING—13

Aderholt
Culberson
Garamendi
Grimm
Herrera Beutler
Jeffries

McCarthy (NY)
Meeks
Meng

Nadler
Pingree (ME)
Velázquez

Young (FL)

□ 1714

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. CLARKE. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and missed the first series of votes today.

Had I been present, Mr. Speaker, I would have voted "yes" on rollcall No. 450, H.R. 1155, the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers Reform Act of 2013. I would have voted "yes" on rollcall No. 451, H.R. 2747, Streamlining Claims Processing for Federal Contractor Employees Act. I would have voted "yes" on rollcall No. 452, S. 130, Powell Shooting Range Land Conveyance Act.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2775, NO SUBSIDIES WITHOUT VERIFICATION ACT

Mr. BURGESS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 113-206) on the resolution (H. Res. 339) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2775) to condition the provision of premium and cost-sharing subsidies under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act upon a certification that a program to verify household income and other qualifications for such subsidies is operational, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO CERTAIN TERRORIST ATTACKS—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 113-59)

THE SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ROTHFUS) laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1622(d), provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. Consistent with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* the enclosed notice, stating that the emergency declared in Proclamation 7463 with respect to the terrorist attacks on the United States

of September 11, 2001, is to continue in effect for an additional year.

The terrorist threat that led to the declaration on September 14, 2001, of a national emergency continues. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to continue in effect after September 14, 2013, the national emergency with respect to the terrorist threat.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, September 10, 2013.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 2109

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw my name as a cosponsor of H.R. 2019.

THE SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

END SCHOOL VIOLENCE NOW

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, just last week, the beginning of the school year, in Houston, Texas, we experienced an enormous tragedy in the loss of a young man due to school violence inside one of Houston's Harris County high schools.

I rise today to extend sympathy to the family of Joshua Broussard and his friends, teachers, parents, and administrators, for it is an unspeakable act to have an incident that causes children to fear the very place where they should be safe and secure. I and all of our elected officials and law enforcement have already offered their commitment and time to work with the young people to restore their faith in the sanctity and security of schools, but, more importantly, to speak to the issue of bullying, to speak to the issue of violence, and to work with the parents to be able to say that violence in America's schools must end. We must also end it in terms of knives and guns. Children must feel loved.

And so to Spring ISD, we look forward to coming to your school district and standing with the children to ensure that they know that there are those in the United States Congress like my good friend, Mr. HOYER, and others that have stood against school violence and will stand together to ensure that our children can learn and are safe.

SAFE CLIMATE CAUCUS

(Mr. MORAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the "Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change" report indicated that there are now dire new estimates for

the rate of warming around the planet in the next century. The report represents the latest finding from the international scientific community that not only is the planet warming, but there is a 95 percent certainty that that warming is being caused by human activity.

We've known for over 100 years how greenhouse gases work in the atmosphere to trap heat. It's basic physics. We also know that atmospheric concentrations of heat-trapping gases have been rising, based on decades of direct measurements. As we directly track and measure the human activities that release heat-trapping gases, such as burning fossil fuels, we understand we are responsible.

Unfortunately, there are some politicians in this body that are content to ignore the overwhelming scientific consensus. That's being done at the bidding of the oil and gas lobby. The House of Representatives has to listen to these experts and take action on climate change.

CONCERNS OVER FOREST FIRES IN THE WESTERN UNITED STATES

THE SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, as we come back after our August district work period, there have been several major events that have happened and generally do happen in late summer in the western part of the United States. Those events generally revolve around forest fires.

I'm joined on the floor tonight by a number of my colleagues from the western part of the United States in whose districts we've experienced some of these forest fires. But the reason we wanted to have this time, Mr. Speaker, is because this issue about forest management that I'm going to get into and my colleagues will be getting into has been building up for some time.

I have the privilege to chair the House Natural Resources Committee. We have broad jurisdiction over all Federal lands, and that certainly includes our forested lands. And what I have observed in the time that I've had the privilege to be in this body is that our national forests are being badly mismanaged, particularly on Federal lands. They're being badly mismanaged generally because of events and regulations coming from the Federal Government. We'll talk about that a bit tonight. But there is a solution to what we will be discussing tonight for the problems we've had in the western part of the United States with these forest fires—and that's the Healthy Forest Act that we'll have on the floor, hopefully, later on this month.

As the chairman of the Natural Resources Committee, I have always felt

that all Federal lands, unless otherwise designated, should be for multiple purposes. That includes recreation, that includes commercial activity, and that includes whatever activity would be allowed unless Congress otherwise designates. And those designations could be national parks, they could be wilderness areas, they could be national monuments. But unless Congress otherwise designates, these areas should be for multiple purposes. In many respects, that goes to the crux of the problem that we'll be talking about tonight: the high incidence of forest fires on our Federal lands.

What we propose in the Healthy Forest Act that I hope will be on the floor here later this month and has passed out of committee by a voice vote is that on Federal lands where there is multiple purpose, there should be target dates for harvesting timber. If one looks at timber like any other commercial crop, the only difference is timber harvests happen in a longer period of time—generally, 30 to 40 years. But you should still manage that crop. That means thinning and doing all the things you do with any other commercial crop. This hasn't been done. As a result, this has led to these catastrophic forest fires that we've had.

I know there will be a chart on the floor later on that shows when you reduce harvests, the incidence of wildfires goes up dramatically. But it's gotten to the point where it's getting into the taxpayers' pocket. It's getting into the taxpayers' pocket because when we were properly managing land some 30 years or more ago, for every dollar that the Federal Government spent on managing our forest lands, \$2 would come back in return, generally from the revenue that was realized because of harvesting. But now, Mr. Speaker, that ratio is exactly reversed. For every \$2 spend, we only get \$1 back.

□ 1730

As a result, it is getting into the pocket of the taxpayer when we're running these trillion-dollar deficits. Where we could have a positive cash flow, we don't have a positive cash flow.

So the response to that is to set target dates in various forests for how much timber should be harvested. Now, Mr. Speaker, this is not just on the Federal level where there would be a benefit. There is a benefit also to local communities within various counties that are heavily timbered on Federal forest lands.

Back some 100 years ago, when we were looking at using these forests as national assets, there was a promise by the Federal Government to give local counties 25 percent of the revenue that they got for timber. This was their source of income, and it worked well for some 80 years. But because of the regulations that I mentioned in my brief opening remarks, and particularly in the Northwest, and particu-

larly in Washington, Oregon, and in northern California, because of the Endangered Species Act—and specifically within the Endangered Species Act, the spotted owl—timber harvests have dropped off dramatically. That means these counties have lost their revenue. In fact, in Washington, Oregon, and California, in the last 20 years, timber harvest has fallen by 90 percent on Federal lands; and so, as a result, those counties that relied on the revenue from forest activity simply don't have any other means of income.

Unfortunately, that's one of those issues that needs to be addressed. We do address that in the Healthy Forests Act by allowing counties to manage these Federal forests and get a return as they did—it started some 100 years ago—of 25 percent of the harvest.

So these are issues that we will be discussing tonight, some in more detail, how they affect individual districts. And we hope to have this bill on the floor, as I mentioned, later on this month. It did pass out of committee, by the way, on a voice vote. I think that is significant. I think more and more people are understanding the need to properly manage our forests.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize first a gentleman whose district was heavily impacted. We all heard about the forest fires surrounding Yosemite National Park. So, Mr. Speaker, I want to yield back my time but recognize the gentleman from California (Mr. McCLINTOCK).

Mr. McCLINTOCK. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman HASTINGS for organizing this discussion and for his work on H.R. 1526, the Restoring Healthy Forests for Healthy Communities Act. This act takes on a poignant and crucial importance to my district in the Sierra Nevada Mountains of California where the Yosemite rim fire continues to burn through nearly 400 square miles of forestland.

For years foresters have warned us that the excess timber will come out of the forest one way or another. It will either be carried out or it will be burned out, but it will come out. For generations we carried the excess timber out of our forests through sound forest management practices, leaving room for the remaining trees to grow healthy and strong. We had far less frequent and less intense forest fires, healthy trees that were disease resistant and pest resistant, and a healthier watershed as well as a thriving economy.

But today, extremist environmental regulations have driven that harvest down by more than 80 percent in the Sierras in the past 30 years. We now consign the forests to a policy of benign neglect. And rather than harvesting a small percentage of the trees to keep our forests healthy and fire resistant, we are watching more than 400 square miles of Sierra Nevada incinerated. If we had just harvested a small

fraction of those trees, it's quite possible that we could have spared the Sierras from the conflagrations that are now feeding on excessive fuels. It is also likely we could have snuffed out those fires almost immediately after they started.

A generation ago, small harvesting crews operated throughout the mountains and they moved along well-maintained timber roads. When a fire first broke out, it took no time for a crew with a bulldozer to get to that fire and stop it before it got out of control. Today, those crews are gone, the roads are in disrepair, and so fires that a generation ago consumed just a few acres now consume hundreds of thousands of acres.

The result of these misguided policies is now clear and undeniable: economically devastated communities, closed timber mills, unemployed families, overgrown forests, overdrawn watersheds, jeopardized transmission lines, rampant disease and pestilence, and increasingly intense and frequent forest fires. That is the story of the towns throughout the Sierra Nevada—once thriving and prosperous communities that have been devastated by these policies. This is not environmentalism. True environmentalists recognize the damage done by overgrowth and overpopulation and they recognize the role of sound, sustainable forest management practices in maintaining healthy forests.

If there is any doubt of the connection between the reduction of timber harvesting and the increase in acreage incinerated by forest fires, I ask you to look at this chart. It shows the board feet of timber harvested from our public lands since 1983 and the forest acreage destroyed by fire. There is nothing subtle about these numbers. As the timber harvest has declined, the acreage destroyed by fire has increased contemporaneously and proportionally. It is either carried out or burned out, and at the moment it's being burned out.

They say there isn't enough money for forest thinning. And yet we used to have no problem keeping our forests thinned and healthy when we sold commercially viable timber. The problem is that if they take place at all, timber harvests are restricted to small diameter trees with no commercial value. I mean, can you imagine a fishery or a wildlife policy limited to taking only the smallest juveniles of the species? Thus, the U.S. Forest Service, which once produced revenues through timber sales, now consumes revenues, and even that isn't enough to maintain the acreage the government owns and controls. The mountain communities that once thrived economically are now economically prostrate, with unemployment levels that rival those of Detroit.

This act is long overdue. By streamlining regulations and refocusing the Forest Service's mission on sound forest management practices, H.R. 1526 will mean environmentally healthy

forests and economically healthier communities.

Ironically, just 2 weeks before the Yosemite rim fire broke out, Congressman NUNES and I hosted a public meeting on a proposal by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that would add more restrictions on nearly 2 million acres of the Sierras. Our expert witnesses warned urgently of the fire dangers these policies have created, yet these warnings were actually ridiculed by leftist newspapers like the Sacramento Bee. How sad. Two weeks later, the Yosemite rim fire was burning out of control.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the people of my district, I want to thank the gentleman from Washington for this important reform. I only wish it had come in time to prevent the environmental devastation we are now suffering this summer in the Sierras.

I thank the gentleman for yielding.

SECURE RURAL SCHOOLS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) is recognized for 48 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be able to control this next 48 minutes as we explain how significant this Secure Rural Schools fix is and how important it is that we do something on a program that, quite frankly, is not sustainable.

So at this time I would like to recognize, if not the father, the godfather of Secure Rural Schools, the gentleman from Oregon. His State is impacted significantly by this program. It is a significant issue to the school kids of Oregon. Mr. WALDEN of Oregon is someone who has talked about this for many years and knows the significance and the importance of this particular issue. So I gladly yield to the gentleman from Oregon to explain his take on the Secure Rural Schools issue.

Mr. WALDEN. Well, I thank the gentleman from Utah, the chairman of the Forestry Subcommittee, a subcommittee that a number of years ago I had the great privilege and honor to chair when we passed legislation, as we're going to do in this House once again, to not only make America's great forests healthy, but also then to stop the devastation that we heard from the gentleman from California. We have so much work to do to continue the legacy of real environmentalism, which is healthy forests and healthy communities.

When President Theodore Roosevelt created the great forest reserves back in 1905, thereabouts, he said they have to be in partnership with the communities and the communities have to be supportive of this. The great purpose of this creation of forest reserves, in a speech he gave in your home State, as a matter of fact, in Utah, I believe, was wood for woodmaking, for home-

building, water for agriculture, which means the preservation of healthy forests, in the real term preservation—which is what I want—not what we're seeing in Yosemite National Park and the surrounding areas, the focus of 400 square miles of devastation, not what we saw in Oregon this summer where the smoke was so thick in the Rogue Valley that they had to cancel performances at the Shakespeare Theater. The restaurants literally shut down. The people had to wear masks. I called into the call center of one of the phone companies and the attendant there said to me, he said, It's smoky in here inside the building.

This is not what we want out of our forests. It's not what our taxpayers want. It's not what the schoolchildren want. Because, you see, we've lost the jobs; we've lost the revenue from the jobs. We've got sheriffs in counties in my district that now have maybe one deputy. We had situations of violence, 911 calls. A woman was being attacked and basically told by the 911 folks, We don't have anybody to send. Can you tell him to go away?

You can't make this stuff up.

I thank Chairman HASTINGS, Chairman BISHOP, and others for bringing this bill forward. Let me tell you what it means in a State like mine.

In 2012, the Oregon Department of Forestry, in collaboration with other State and Federal agencies, issued a report to Oregon Governor John Kitzhaber stating that, over the 20-year period from 1980 to 2000, wildfires in eastern Oregon burned approximately 553,000 acres, with an average fire size of 26,000 acres. Over the last 10 years, in that same area, it has burned 1 million acres, averaging 93,000 acres in size. That means wildfires have tripled in size in the last 30 years. Not all of those are in forests. Some of them are grasslands. But the point is it's out of control and it's very, very deadly and expensive. And it's unacceptable.

The Oregon Forest Resources Institute reported that, since 1990, the timber harvest from Federal forestlands in the great State of Oregon has dropped by more than 90 percent—90 percent reduction since 1990 in harvested timber off Federal lands. In fact, 60 percent of Oregon's forestland is owned/controlled—but not really managed—by the Federal Government. It now contributes less than 12 percent of the State's total timber harvest. Sixty percent owned by and controlled by the Federal Government, 12 percent of timber harvest.

What does that mean for timber dependent communities? Counties that have like 50, 60, 70 percent Federal ownership, my friend who taught school knows you don't have a tax base, and now you don't have jobs because now you're not doing harvest. You can't turn and entice some big company to come in. This is a forested, rural area, a long way from freeways in most cases but not all.

So what does that mean? Nine out of 20 counties I represent face double-

digit unemployment today. Sixteen of the 20 counties I represent have more than 14 percent of their populations living in poverty in America.

Here's a chart that shows what's happening. It shows mill closures in Oregon over the last 30 years. We've lost three-fourths of our mills and 30,000 mill jobs. Just recently, we lost another in. One Josephine County, the Rough & Ready mill closed after nearly 100 years. The owners were ready to invest \$2 million in upgrades, and they said, We can't count on a timber supply off the Federal ground that surrounds them. There went 87 jobs.

I want to show you another picture. I have used it before over the years. It is indicative of what happens in a fire. This is Kaleb and Ashley after the Egley fire, which burned 140,000 acres in Harney County, 2007. It just shows the devastation, these young children out there.

And what does it mean for our kids? The chairman asked about that. The Oregon Department of Education says 60 percent of the schoolchildren in the county where this fire occurred are eligible for free and reduced lunch. There's poverty all over the West, and there's a way to end that and produce jobs and revenue and have healthy forests rather than what we see today.

The chairman's bill would require foresters to look at the sustainable yield a forest could produce and then only seek to harvest half of that, of the sustainable yield, and only on land that is suitable for timber harvest. It says, if you're going to appeal a plan, you had to at least be involved in the process. We put that in the Healthy Forests Restoration Act that passed this body overwhelmingly and I think passed the Senate—huge support—signed by then-President Bush into law. It had great effect, but limited in terms of what we need to do. But it had that provision in there. It strikes a balance. You need to participate in the process in order to have a right to appeal.

□ 1745

It includes a 1-year bridge payment. This gets your schools issue for the counties who currently have lost or will lose their funding for emergency services, for roads, and for schools in the Secure Rural Schools side. This is a bridge to put people back to work in the woods when coupled with active management. This is balance—this is balance.

The bill also has an Oregon-specific provision. Not everything I would necessarily do if I could write it on my own, but do you know what? You don't get that process here. We've put together a good plan with Representatives DEFAZIO and SCHRADER. We've worked through our differences. We forged a balanced plan that would create thousands of new jobs. Creators saved up to 3,000 jobs in Oregon in these very unique lands called the O&C Lands. It ensures the health of these

lands for future generations. It provides long-term management and certainty of funding for our local services and schools and roads and law enforcement that lie within these counties.

According to Governor Kitzhaber's O&C Lands Report, it would generate \$120 million per year in county revenue. We don't come back here to the Federal taxpayer and say, Give us another check, give us another handout. We say, Let us manage our own lands and do it under the Oregon State Forest Practices Act, which is one of the leading environmental laws in the country for balance, for sustainable forest health and management. Do it under that and we'll create the jobs and save them, we'll create the revenue for our schools.

Let me tell you about the protections that you will get. It provides:

Activities near streams, lakes, and wetlands must include water quality protection. Something we all agree on.

Wildlife trees and down logs have to be left in most large clear-cut areas. Clear-cut sizes are limited to 120 acres. Now, some will say, Oh, my gosh, 120 acres. Let me tell you that the Douglas Complex fire that burned this summer burned 48,000 acres. If there isn't a more destructive clear-cut than that, I don't know what it is. And do you know what? After it burns, there's no requirement they go in and replant. If you harvest 128 acres, you're required to go in and replant, and those trees have to survive, and you go in right away.

Let me show you what happens after a fire to the environment. There's no stream setback here. Fire knows no bounds. Our legislation says you can't harvest near that, near a stream, you have to have setbacks. We believe in the environment. This is what you get when you don't manage.

You see, lack of action has an impact in a dynamic forest environment. Doing nothing doesn't mean the forest gets better. It means it gets overcrowded, overstocked, and when you get fire—and we'll always have it—it just won't burn naturally anymore. It will blow up, like my friend and colleague from California has experienced in the Yosemite fire and like we've experienced all over the West this summer and will every summer thereafter.

The Forest Service now spends more fighting fire than anything else. They ought to change their name to the U.S. Fire Service.

We've got to get back to managing these lands, and this legislation does that. I thank the committee for its incredible work. I thank you for bringing this to the floor. I look forward to voting for it when it comes to the floor. Together we'll get back to proper, thoughtful, constructive management of our Federal forests. We'll take care of that trust the people put in us to take care of their lands, and we'll take care of the people as well.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I thank the gentleman for his comments here.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard now from three Members from the west coast—one from California, one from Oregon and one from Washington—who have explained the situation and how this particular act is, indeed, a solution to the problems that those west coast States are finding in their forestry efforts.

But this also impacts the interior of this country, so I would like to yield a few minutes to the representative from the State of Montana, who represents the entire State of Montana, to explain how this has an impact on interior State forests, as well as the coastal State forests.

I yield to the gentleman from Montana (Mr. DAINES) to explain what's happening in his State.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Utah, and I thank the chairman for reserving this hour for this very important issue, saving our national forests and our forested communities, which is very important to my home State of Montana.

H.R. 1526, the Restoring Healthy Forests and Healthy Communities Act is important to Montana because many of our counties in Montana rely on the forest economy or at least the relics of what used to be one. Several decades ago, Montana forests supported local timber jobs and provided a steady revenue stream for our counties and schools.

In fact, I remember growing up when I was riding in the back seat, mom and dad in front in the station wagon and I would be in back with my sisters, we would watch logging trucks drive up and down our highways. Our counties enjoyed the benefits of the receipts from timber sales. It used to help support our schools.

But today, as I now drive around the State representing the State of Montana, most of our forest counties struggle with unemployment. In fact, Lincoln County, the most northwest county of my State, which is comprised mostly of national forest land, it used to generate timber jobs. They now face double digit unemployment.

The Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest faces a very high mortality rate due to beetle kill. The tragedy here as we drive all over the State this time of year, we are seeing forest fires on one hand and then standing dead timber on the other that has died because of beetle kill. We can't even go in and harvest the dead trees, which we have a couple years to do so, because of the onerous process here on our national forest.

Inflexible and outdated Federal laws like the National Environmental Policy Act and the Endangered Species Act have imposed a huge administrative burden on Federal agencies, which limits our timber industry's access to wood and ultimately resulted in the mismanagement of our forests, allowing places where we love to recreate instead to burn up in smoke. And when they burn up in smoke, as the gen-

tleman from Oregon mentioned, it threatens our watersheds as well.

In fact, so far over 100,000 acres in Montana have burned this year. The number of large fires—large fires—has been as high as five just this week. My son last year played high school football his senior year. We had "Friday Night Lights" high school football games in Montana canceled because of air quality, because of forest fires.

Laws like NEPA and the Endangered Species Act are often the basis of lawsuits. These aren't filed by the rank and file Montanans who are working to collaborate to improve access to our national forests, but they're filed by fringe extreme groups to halt healthy timber management projects that could help prevent these fires and, importantly, create hundreds of jobs.

In fact, in one of our hearings in our committee, a top national forest official, Deputy Chief Jim Hubbard, said litigation has played a huge role in blocking responsible timber sales in Montana and other region 1 States, including projects supported by collaborative groups consisting of timber as well as conservation leaders. To quote Mr. Hubbard, he said this: "It has virtually shut things down on the national forest."

As the gentleman from Oregon mentioned, the numbers in Montana are the same. Timber harvests are down 90 percent on our Federal lands from where they were when I was growing up.

Mr. Chairman, something must be done, and I'm glad to join you in introducing this very important bill. H.R. 1526 will help revitalize the timber industry throughout Montana and create thousands of good, high-paying jobs. It also tackles beetle kill, protecting our environment for future generations and reducing the threat of catastrophic wildfires in Montana.

The Restoring Healthy Forests and Healthy Communities Act will cut the red tape that has held up responsible forest management in timber production. It also includes comprehensive reforms to discourage and limit the flood of frivolous appeals and litigation. It requires the Forest Service to increase timber harvest on non-wilderness lands now that it will have much needed latitude to do the work it knows how to do.

This improved management will protect the health of our forests, the health of our watersheds, the safety of our communities, and allow jobs to return to the timber industry. In addition, the legislation restores the Federal Government's commitment to provide 25 percent of timber sales receipts to timber counties. It extends the Secure Rural Schools program pending the full operation of the new timber program.

SRS has provided crucial stopgap funding to timber counties after timber sales, and the corresponding receipts, after they plunged in recent decades. It is the taxpayer now who is funding

that gap when instead we could have the timber industry cutting down trees and supplying jobs and supplying revenue to support our schools.

Recently, we welcomed Chuck Roady, the vice president and general manager of F. H. Stoltze Land and Lumber in Columbia Falls, Montana. He came back to Washington, D.C., as a witness for a House Natural Resources hearing on forest and fire management.

During the hearing, Chuck perfectly summed up the challenges we face. He said:

This is a nonpartisan, nonregional issue. It's simply the case of doing the right thing to manage our public forest. If we don't, Mother Nature is going to do it for us, and when she does it, it's uncontrollable and catastrophic.

Mr. Speaker, I could not have conveyed our challenges any better than that. We all know too well how devastating wildfires can be to our communities and our local economies.

I urge passing the Restoring Healthy Forests and Healthy Communities Act.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the remarks of the gentleman from Montana.

Very few people realize the Federal Government actually owns 1 out of every 3 acres in this country, but it is disproportionate. So, of the 13 Western States, 54 percent of the land mass is actually owned by the Federal Government. The 33 States east of the Western States only have 4 percent of their land. Which simply means no one actually east of Denver quite understands how this relationship necessarily works. It also means that the unfortunate truth is, as we've already heard, that private and State forests are today healthier than the Federal forest system. But those of us in the West realize this firsthand because those are our neighbors, those are the areas that surround our communities.

I'm glad to hear from the next two speakers who will be talking—they are from Colorado. The first one is the gentleman from Colorado Springs, who is on the Natural Resources Committee, and he's going to explain the significant situation that they find in Colorado with our forest health situation.

I yield to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN).

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Utah. It's great to serve on the committee as a subcommittee chairman with him. And we serve with Chairman DOC HASTINGS, who is doing a great job on these issues.

The bill, H.R. 1526, the Restoring Healthy Forests for Healthy Communities Act, is a long-term solution to help put hardworking Americans back to work and ensure that these rural counties have a stable source of revenue to help pay for schools and teachers. It was introduced by my friend and colleague, Representative SCOTT TIPTON, of Colorado, and I am a cosponsor.

Over a century ago, the Federal Government made a promise to actively

manage our forests and share 25 percent of the revenues generated from timber sales with counties containing national forest land. This is funding that rural counties depend on to help fund vital services, such as education and roads. But the Federal Government has failed to uphold this commitment and has cut back on active management of our national forests.

This lack of active forest management not only deprives counties of revenue to help fund schools and roads but also inhibits job creation and makes our national forests increasingly susceptible to wildfires and invasive species. Currently, there are over 21 active large wildfires burning right now in eight States. Over 406,000 acres are burning, with only 2 of the 21 fires contained.

This year, to date there have been over 35,000 fires with almost 4 million acres burned. Last year, the tragic Waldo Canyon fire occurred on Federal land in my Colorado district, claiming two lives and destroying almost 500 homes.

H.R. 1526 will help improve forest health and prevent catastrophic wildfires by allowing greater State and local involvement in wildfire prevention on Federal lands. It will help improve local forest management by allowing counties to actively manage portions of national forest land.

Restoring active management of our national forests would ensure a stable, predictable revenue stream for counties and schools. Active management would also promote healthier forests, reduce the risk of wildfires, and decrease our reliance on foreign countries for timber and paper goods.

I want to thank the gentleman for his leadership on this issue.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, since Mr. LAMBORN has already introduced the concept of what's taking place in Colorado and the bill for Mr. TIPTON, let's turn now to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON) to also explain the significance of why he actually did that particular bill.

Mr. TIPTON. Thank you, Chairman BISHOP. I certainly appreciate your leadership on this issue, along with Chairman HASTINGS.

Mr. Speaker, my colleague had just described some of the challenges that we've been facing in Colorado. I would like to be able to expand upon that.

Not long ago, I was at the incident command centers in Monte Vista, Colorado, on the east side of the Rockies, and also in Pagosa Springs, on the west side of the Rockies, to be able to visit the incident command centers trying to deal with the West Fork Complex fire.

□ 1800

How big is the fire? It's 170 square miles and counting. We are not talking 170 acres. We are talking 170 square miles of forests in my district.

The challenges that this is going to bring in terms of being able to deal

with endangered species, in terms of water quality, in terms of tourism and the economy in western Colorado can probably not yet be numbered. That is why the Restoring Healthy Forests Act is a bill whose time has come.

The National Interagency Fire Center reported this week that there have been 35,000-plus fires in the United States in 2013 alone. Devastating bark beetle infestation, prolonged drought conditions, and unnaturally dense forests—these have all combined with ineffective forest management for a devastating fire season. These factors have led to a significant increase in the magnitude and in the number of wildfires in the country over the past decade.

So far this year, 3.9 million acres have already burned, and these figures continue to grow with 21 active, large wildfires. The property damage and costs associated with these wildfires is tremendous; and to date, the Forest Service has already spent over a billion dollars in fire suppression alone. In 2012, the Forest Service spent only \$296 million on hazardous fuels reduction; whereas, they spent \$1.77 billion on wildfire suppression at that same time.

Part of this is a planning process. We have dealt with leadership in the Forest Service. They've talked about computer models which their own folks are telling us simply don't work. We have to be able to get in and effectively manage these forests, to be able to treat them in a responsible way, to be able to build for our communities, and to be able to make sure that our children are able to see the same forests that we grew up living in.

The cost of proactive healthy forest management is, indeed, far less than the cost of wildfire suppression. When it comes to our forests, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure; but instead of ramping up forest management efforts and addressing hazardous conditions in the West, the Interior Department has proposed to cut the budget by 48 percent for hazardous fuels reduction in 2014, and the Forest Service has proposed reducing this proactive management by a further 24 percent. Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle have expressed outrage at this approach of further reducing funding for hazardous fuels.

Under the current management system, a cumbersome regulatory framework has further inhibited active forest management while excessive litigation has obstructed projects that would prevent devastating wildfires and protect our vital water supplies and precious species habitats. The status quo is not working, and immediate action is needed to be able to fix this broken system.

Our forest management package, H.R. 1526, would allow greater State and local involvement in wildfire prevention on Federal lands in order to expedite hazardous fuels reduction projects and reduce litigation. In doing so, it would help restore sustainable

timber harvesting, create jobs, and provide reliable sources of revenue for rural education and infrastructure.

H.R. 1526 also addresses the shortfall in county revenue for schools and critical services caused by a lack of timber harvest by requiring the Forest Service to produce at least half of the sustainable annual yield of timber required under the 1908 law and to share 25 percent of those receipts with our rural counties.

In order to meet this goal while providing for healthy forests, the bill includes the local management framework by directing the Forest Service to prioritize hazardous fuels reduction projects proposed by Governors and affected counties and tribes. To expedite locally based healthy forest projects, this package builds on the positive streamlining procedures implemented under the bipartisan Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003.

I am pleased to have been able to work with Chairman BISHOP and Chairman HASTINGS on this bill. It's time that we stand together to be able to return health to our forests in a proactive, responsible, and positive way. H.R. 1526 accomplishes that goal.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I thank the last two speakers from Colorado for explaining the situation they are facing within their State on Federal forest land.

Before we turn to somebody from the East who gets what we're talking about here, let's continue with the backbone of the Rocky Mountains by turning some time over to the Representative from the State of Wyoming (Mrs. LUMMIS) in order for her to explain how this impacts her State.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I also thank Chairman HASTINGS of the Natural Resources Committee for bringing this important legislation to the attention of the American people, especially after this tremendous fire season that we've had in the West for the past 3 or 4 years, in which we have lost valuable natural resources, jobs, wildlife, livestock, people, houses. It is an unnecessary devastation that always amazes me as we would bring about legislation to address regional haze, which has no environmental impact other than to reduce the viewsheds or the damage to the viewshed, when the damage to the viewshed is being caused by our inattentiveness in managing our national forests.

I want to talk, Mr. Chairman, about forest health and about the benefits of logging to have healthy forests, vibrant wildlife, and clean water and air.

The air is cleaner when the West is not on fire. The water is cleaner when protected from the ash that goes down the hills, into the streams, choking the oxygen out of our streams, which then, in turn, kills our fish. That reduces fishing opportunities, and it reduces a vibrant fish population.

In addition to providing clean air by lack of fire, clean water due to lack of

fire, by logging, we can actually have more vibrant, widespread wildlife habitat and water for that habitat. When we log and do it in a manner that preserves the natural contours in our forests, we can have high mountain meadows with forages that will keep elk, deer, and other species on those high mountain meadows longer in the year, thereby providing habitat for a vibrant, healthy, diverse, ungulate population and for the species that share that ecosystem habitat. So it's good for wildlife.

Furthermore, it's good for the health of the forests, themselves, because, if you would look, for example, at the Medicine Bow National Forest and the Routt National Forest across the border in Colorado, these two forests have been absolutely denuded of lodgepole pine by the bark beetle with the exception of the young trees in the areas that have previously been logged. The healthy areas of the Medicine Bow National Forest in Wyoming and the Routt National Forest in Colorado are the areas that were previously logged, because there is a diversity of the age of the trees, thereby having a young, more resilient, healthy tree intermingled with stands of medium-maturity and high-maturity trees. The combination of the old growth, the medium-maturity trees, and the young trees makes for a more vibrant, healthy forest that can better withstand an onslaught like the bark beetle epidemic that has devastated so much of the Intermountain West.

So we have addressed clean air, clean water, wildlife habitat through the opportunity for high mountain meadows, and we have addressed the health of the trees, themselves. All this can happen while we have jobs in logging, while we have opportunities for revenues for schools.

The point here is we are all part of this ecosystem—the people, the animals, the air, the water, the trees. All can benefit by this bill. This is a commonsense solution that has taken Americans decades to understand and appreciate the importance of, but that has never been more apparent than it was this summer.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for this important dialogue.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I appreciate the gentleness from Wyoming for being with us and talking about the concepts that are going on and what we can do for our future.

If I could, Mr. Speaker, at the turn of the 20th century, the so-called "progressive era," there was a paradigm shift that took place in the United States in which the government decided to basically keep all of the land. It was based on three premises:

The first is that the West had to be protected from itself. The second is that only somebody in Washington, D.C., would have the vision to make decisions that could impact the rest of the Nation, and if there were ever a conflict between what local leaders or

local officials wanted and what D.C. wanted, D.C. obviously had the better advantage.

The result of that is, as you have heard from the people here today, that our forest system is not as healthy as it used to be or ought to be. The communities that relied upon the timber industry to survive and the school systems in those areas that relied upon the timber industry to survive have been decimated, and our solution as a Congress and as an administration is simply to find a temporary payment to these solutions with actually no revenue source to make them permanent.

What we have now done since 2000, when the Secure Rural School Program started, is spend \$6 billion, which has come from the pockets of those who live in the East, to fund a temporary program when what we actually need is a long-term solution that works—that puts people to work, that finds a real source of funding for education services and provides a real solution for what we need, a solution that will provide for healthy forests, a solution that will provide for vibrant communities and for the support of our public school system. That is, indeed, what this proposal for the Secure Rural School Program attempts to do.

Mr. Speaker, about 20 years ago, a former Democrat Member of this House, who is now part of the Senate leadership—I realize that's an oxymoron, "Senate leadership"—but he was here, and he gave an impassioned speech upon this floor that dealt with the controversial decision of Major League Baseball's potentially switching to aluminum bats. As that Representative from Illinois, who is now a Senator, rose, he said:

Mr. Speaker, I rise to condemn the desecration of a great American symbol. No, I am not referring to flag burning; I am referring to the baseball bat.

Several experts tell us that the wooden baseball bat is doomed to extinction . . . Please, do not tell me that wooden bats are too expensive . . . Please, do not try to sell me on the notion that these metal clubs will make better hitters . . . If we forsake the great Americana of broken-bat singles and pine tar, we will have certainly lost our way as a Nation.

His conclusion was simply this:

I do not want to hear about saving trees. Any tree in America would gladly give its life for the glory of a day at home plate.

As much as I agree with his statements, I'd like to take his comment one step further and say that, not only would any tree in America gladly give its life for the glory of a day at bat at home plate, but any tree in America would gladly be overjoyed to give its life to help fund the education of our kids.

The solution is that we don't need all trees to provide the bats or the education funding—just some of the trees. In fact, by not cutting them all, you actually save and improve the health of the forests; but if you don't do it, we lose these trees to fire, and every burned tree is a burned baseball bat,

and that is not good for the psyche of this particular country.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time in order to turn the management time of this Special Order over to Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania so that he may speak and also introduce a couple of more speakers whom we have still to talk about this vital issue of Secure Rural Schools and how this House has finally come up with a solution—a long-term, lasting solution—to this particular problem.

SECURE RURAL SCHOOLS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) is recognized for 12 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Chairman BISHOP and Chairman HASTINGS.

As an individual from Pennsylvania, from the eastern portion of the United States, I do get it. This is a problem that obviously—as you've heard from my colleagues from the western part of the country—is devastating there. It's devastating in communities in Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District. We have the Allegheny National Forest there. I have four counties—schools, municipalities—which struggle because of a failed policy in terms of forest management. They struggle economically.

□ 1815

When we do not have healthy forests, we do not have healthy communities. So I stand here very appreciative to Chairman HASTINGS' work and certainly supportive of H.R. 1526.

As chairman of the Agriculture Committee's Forestry Subcommittee, I continually point out that the Forest Service is housed within the USDA—rather than the Interior—and was done so for very specific purposes.

This decision was made long ago because our national forests were intended for multiple use. The most important function of that mission is to properly manage these forests and grasslands in order to retain the ecological health of those resources for sustained economic and recreational use.

You can't adequately manage a forest without harvesting timber. Just look to our private and State forests to see how to manage a forest cost effectively and environmentally responsibly. National forestlands, when managed correctly, will be more ecologically healthy and economically beneficial to the local communities.

Representing a forested district and as an outdoorsman, I've been very alarmed at how precipitously our annual harvests have dropped off in the past 20 years. Between 1960 and 1989, the Forest Service was harvesting roughly 10 billion to 12 billion board

feet per year. Since the early nineties, the annual harvest across Forest Service lands fell below 2 billion board feet and hit its bottom in 2002 at 1.7 billion feet. This is about one-fifth of what they've been harvesting in an average year.

We have seen firsthand the economic impacts of reducing our harvesting levels in national forests. Under longtime Federal law, 25 percent of the timber receipts generated on national forests are required to be returned to the county of origin. The purpose of this is that since there is no tax base there for the local government, timber receipts were to provide a consistent source of revenue to the counties to be used for schools, police, and local expenses.

In 2000, this lack of timber dollars plummeted so low that Congress created the now expired Secure Rural Schools program to make up for the loss of the county revenues in the national forestlands. This program simply would not have been needed if the Federal Government was keeping its promise to these rural areas by managing and harvesting the appropriate amount of timber.

In the Allegheny National Forest located in my district, we have slightly inched up in meeting the recommended level of harvest, but we are still nowhere near where we need to be. This is especially true across almost every other national forest around the country where they typically are generating only a few percent of the recommended level.

Too little harvesting will have a significant impact on overall forest health. Decreased timber harvesting means more dead trees and more highly flammable biomaterials that do little more than serve as fuel for wildfires. According to the Forest Service, the instances of wildfires each year have actually decreased in recent years. However, fires that we've been seeing recently are much more intense than they have been in past years. Why? The reason is because of increased flammability in the forests as a result of materials that have been accumulated and not removed through management activities.

According to the U.S. Forest Service, 65 million to 82 million acres of forestland are at high risk of wildfires. Last year, wildfires burned 9.3 million acres while the U.S. Forest Service only harvested approximately 200,000 acres. This means that 44 times as many acres burned as were responsibly managed and harvested.

As an original cosponsor of H.R. 1526, I want to applaud Chairman HASTINGS for his leadership and introduction of the bill. This legislation will provide responsible timber production on forestlands and does so in areas specifically identified by the agency.

Access and retaining the multiple-use mission of the Forest Service is paramount to ensuring that our rural forest communities continue to flourish and be viable.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to recognize my good friend, a Western Caucus colleague, Mr. PEARCE.

Mr. PEARCE. I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for yielding and for his work on behalf of H.R. 1526.

New Mexico is a home to multiple national forests. We see firsthand the effect of our national Forest Service policy. Last year, in the middle of the year, a fire broke out. It was about 4 acres for 2 or 3 days. The Forest Service's policy was basically "let it burn."

They let it burn for 3 or 4 days, had enough people to swat it out with whisk brooms, when suddenly the winds got up, as they do in New Mexico always, and blew that fire into 10,000 acres. It almost immediately started burning down homes, 255 homes. It's at that point we began to speak publicly about the Forest Service policies that would create infernos in our western forests.

Formerly, we had a policy in the Forest Service of the 10 a.m. rule. It was, if you get a fire, you put it out by 10 a.m. tomorrow. If you're not successful by 10 a.m. tomorrow, then it's 10 a.m. the next day. You dedicate all the resources you can to putting out the fire.

Those policies have been amended by current Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell into saying, We're going to let them burn. We're watching right now wondering if the sequoias will survive this Forest Service policy.

Many of the forests in New Mexico and the West are not surviving. Hundreds of millions of acres are at risk every year. It's not a matter of if they will burn, but when.

As we talked publicly about Forest Service management policies during that fire, then we started getting calls from individuals around the country who had retired out of the Forest Service saying, Yes, keep talking. We, as retired professionals, disagree with the current philosophies in the Forest Service.

We invited one of those 30-year employees—Bill Derr—into our district to run a congressional study and to come up with recommendations. He basically had two, after months of study. He said we should be mechanically thinning our forests—that is, logging in our forests—and, secondly, returning to the 10 a.m. policy.

What are the downstream effects of bad Forest Service management?

First of all, we're losing the habitat for millions of species; we're burning millions of species in the fire. These are endangered species sometimes, but otherwise we're just killing lots of animals.

Also, we're destroying a watershed. In New Mexico, in the Whitewater-Baldy fire, the forest around one of the lakes there that provides drinking water for Alamogordo was at risk. The Forest Service said they should clean it, and instead lawsuits were filed to stop that. The fire burned right up to the edge of the lake, and the lake now has 50 feet of fill in it. All the fish are

dead, starved for oxygen, exactly like the gentlelady from Wyoming said. The streams are now filling with silt.

Forest Service personnel tell us we will be having to empty that lake for the next 15 years. That's 15 years of dead fish; 15 years downstream facing flooding; 15 years without the drinking water that sustains a community of about 30,000. These are what we face.

Also, the West is starved for jobs because of Forest Service policy. The original Organic Act, the act that created the U.S. Forest Service, said that they should be logging to create local commerce and jobs and they should be protecting the watershed. The U.S. Forest Service is negligent on both of the underlying reasons for their existence. We in the West are suffering lost education opportunities, destroyed habitat, and destroyed forests. Those forests will not grow back for 100 years according to the Forest Service personnel.

It's time for us to pass H.R. 1526. I support it.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. I would like to recognize the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA).

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, every year, rural America, especially the western States and areas like mine in northern California, are in the news. It's not for something good, but for something like we see going on with so many of the wildfires around the country. There's no reason for this. That's why I support this bill here today that would actually make our forests perform for us, instead of being a detriment to us and our health in California and the western States.

We can have either the type of air quality problems that are happening—like in the central valley of California, for example, one of my colleagues was talking about, although we've had challenges there in recent years, they've actually improved things. The air quality right now is much worse because of these fires than anything going on by people or after the improvements that have gone on with other air quality issues. In my own part of the State back in 2008, the whole summer and into the fall, brown, dirty—including the areas close to the fire—kids couldn't go outside because the quality was 10 times above health levels for them to be safe.

We see our small communities that are devastated by an economy that has shifted away due to forest management and Forest Service policies that don't work for them. This legislation would allow our forests to perform for us and help these economies, help the health of the forest, the health of the people, and the health of the local economies to be strong once again, and, as was mentioned earlier, our rural schools.

So let's do commonsense legislation instead of watching our forests burn. I urge you to support this.

POTENTIAL U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN SYRIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY) for 30 minutes.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, this is an extraordinarily busy week in Washington as we have all returned from a district work period. There are many issues to discuss, including how we're going to fund the Federal budget, get the fiscal house in order, potentially have the right type of tax reform, and deal with a whole host of other issues, but I felt like it would be very inadequate if the evening went by but did not delve into a little bit deeper of a discussion as to the nature of the Syrian conflict and the potential for United States military involvement.

Mr. Speaker, I wrote my constituents last week as they expressed tremendous concern about the potential for U.S. entanglement in the situation in Syria. In fact, it's overwhelming the number of people who have shared deep, heartfelt concerns. It is overwhelming. I'm hearing that from my colleagues, as well.

This is not some sort of populous reaction to the elites of this institution in government. It is an intuition of the American people who are suggesting to us in leadership that we have poured ourselves out as a country, sacrificed tremendously, extraordinarily, to give other people a chance for stability, for human rights, for the right forms of development, for political outcomes that uphold just governing structures.

Where have we gotten for our investment? Basically since World War II, the United States has been cast into the role of the superpower being the proprietor of international stability and we've accepted that arrangement, but there are tremendous pressures upon us as we continue to move forward in the 21st century as we've empowered other people and other economies through appropriate development to take responsibilities for themselves.

The United States has not always done this perfectly, but we've fought multiple wars and we've engaged in many areas of the world in order to try to give other people a chance and to stop aggressive ideologies that are inconsistent with basic and fundamental human rights. I've responded to the people of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to share that with you this evening:

Life in Syria today is, as the philosopher Thomas Hobbes once wrote, "nasty, brutish, and short." An ongoing civil war ravishes the country. The oppressive regime of President Bashar al-Assad wages battle against a nebulous, undefined mix of rebels, who have regularly employed the same brutal violence that the government has. The result is that there are more than 100,000 persons dead, including many innocent civilians—mothers, fathers, and children.

In response to the suspected use of chemical weapons by Assad, President Obama is now advocating U.S. military intervention, although, of course, the situation is now fluid. In the past, he has stated that the use of chemical weapons is a "red line" that Assad could not cross without a serious rethinking of American involvement in the conflict, which to this point has included a significant amount of humanitarian aid—and properly so—targeted to those caught in the middle of this violence. The President, to his credit, has rightly asked for a vote of Congress prior to taking military action, and some in Congress are signaling their support.

In recent days, however, I have clearly stated my opposition to this idea. I oppose this action of unilateral military strikes. The United States should not bomb Syria in the name of stopping violence in Syria. While quick, unilateral military strikes might satisfy the President's "red line" rhetoric, the collateral damage and further risk of destabilization is very high.

□ 1830

Now, as Congress has returned to Washington this week, there are hard questions that are in the process of being asked: What will be the consequences of this bombing? Who's on the other side of this? And how much do we really know of this rebel movement that we will be implicitly aiding if we attack Assad's government? What happens following the military strike? Why not expend the energy of this debate over military involvement on solidifying international outrage and holding particularly Russia, a longtime ally of Syria who's entangled in this situation, holding them accountable?

The international community must work together creatively to stop the savagery of Assad, but it cannot hide behind the United States military might. No longer can it be assumed that the United States is responsible for fixing all aspects of global conflicts, and no longer should the United States accept that framework. For the sake of global stability, a new construct must instead take its place, one in which the responsible Nations of the world are serious about their own defense and stabilization of conflicts within their regions.

In light of the increasing brutality in Syria, the United States should continue to advance its support for the innocent victims of this civil war. Meanwhile, we should also aggressively use this opportunity to facilitate new international partnerships that seek lasting solutions to complicated situations of mass violence.

Until such a united front is achieved, unilateral military action may only introduce further chaos to an already disastrous problem and, as I have said, implicitly put us on the side of a rebel movement who has also shown willingness to murder innocent civilians. And it is not clear whether or not the more

moderate elements of that very movement have any capacity to implement governing structures that are just and lasting. So then what happens? Syria, this area degrades into a vast, ungovernable space, ripe for jihadists with no protections for innocent persons or the ancient peoples who call that place home.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of other aspects of this that I have written about that I would like to share momentarily, but I would like to turn to my good friend, Congressman CHARLIE DENT from Pennsylvania, as he wishes to share a few concepts and perspectives on this conflict.

Mr. DENT. I thank the gentleman from Nebraska for organizing this Special Order this evening to discuss the crisis in Syria. In my view, it is really indisputable that Bashar al-Assad is a villain who has committed heinous, mortal crimes with the use of chemical weapons against his own people.

What is debatable, however, is America's policy on Syria and the broader Middle East. I have raised the issue of Syria with this administration at numerous hearings as a member of the Appropriations Committee. I have also worked with Syrians in my own community, and I have the largest population of Syrian Americans of any Member of Congress in the United States. I have met with them. They have brought to my attention issues of abducted Christian archbishops who have been abducted in Syrian and whose whereabouts, unfortunately, are unknown. There is a lot of work going on to try to secure their release, but that said, you can understand their concern for that part of the world.

I have spent time, too, in meetings with America's wonderful friend, King Abdullah of Jordan, who has also shared his perspective on the plight of the Syrian people. But what I have observed most of all is a very sad observation, and that is the friends of the Syrian regime—Iran, Russia and Hezbollah—are far more committed to President Assad than the friends of the Syrian people—and that would be the West and the Arab League—are to these moderate opposition forces.

I had asked Secretary Hillary Clinton—former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton—back in February, 2012, if the administration was prepared to provide some type of material support to moderate secular opposition groups given that it looked like Assad's government was very weak, there was a popular uprising, and it seemed there might be a better outcome. She was pretty clear with me at the time that she thought providing light arms would be of little help to the opposition in the face of Assad's substantial military, with all his air assets, artillery and armor. To put it bluntly and short, she really didn't want to get too involved at that time. We really didn't have much of a discussion about the benefits to America, its friends and allies and their interests, if Iran's influence in the region

were substantially weakened through the overthrow of Bashar al-Assad.

I thought at the time that the President was maybe more concerned about maintaining his reputation as a Nobel Peace Prize winner antiwar candidate than actually developing what I thought would be a more practical response for Syria. It just seemed that inaction and indecision were, and frankly today, remain the order of the day.

In the meantime, let's fast forward from a year and a half, 2 years ago to today: al-Nusra and other radical Islamist terrorist organizations have rushed into this vacuum and filled the void, so to speak. So really today there aren't any good public policy outcomes for the United States. The time for the United States to more constructively intervene and to reach a more efficacious resolution, the time for that has long passed.

So here we are, over these last 2½ years, this Syrian civil war has descended into both a sectarian and proxy conflict, and these events have moved well beyond the United States ability to control with Iran, Hezbollah, and Russia fully committed to the Assad government.

I think we all know, as Mr. FORTENBERRY knows, we know we have a very war-weary population which is not going to support a half-hearted, poorly thought out military strike which will only expose the United States and its friends to greater risks, including the possibility of a broader regional conflagration. This could include more chemical weapons attacks against the Syrian people and possibly Israel, potential cyber attacks on American critical infrastructure in both the financial services and energy sectors, an unleashed Hezbollah, and other unforeseen, asymmetrical responses.

I am deeply concerned about this, as we all should be. But we can't just look at Syria in isolation; we have to look at it in the much broader context of the Middle East. Unfortunately, and I'm going to have to be a bit critical of the President at this time, witness how President Obama turned his back on Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in 2011 after 2 weeks of uprisings. Whatever his faults, whatever his shortcomings, Hosni Mubarak was a loyal, 30-year friend of the United States—a lesson learned by our friends and our allies throughout the region and throughout the world.

Of course, prior to that incident there was the Green Revolution in Iran where we saw a lot of very brave people in Iran stand up to the Ahmadinejad regime in Iran. We witnessed that, and it seemed this administration could barely utter words of support to these very brave people who stood up to a tyrant, Ahmadinejad, who made all sorts of reckless and inflammatory and hateful statements against the West and particularly Israel, and so I was just astounded that the administration could barely utter words of support.

Then, of course, we learned about leading from behind in Libya. Actually, leading from behind the French and the British in Libya, to be precise. I was one of only a handful of Republicans in the House to support the authorization for force in Libya—after the fact, but I supported it. So I'm not an isolationist. I believe that we have an important role internationally with the United States, and we have to be constructively engaged.

But let's move forward to 2013. Bashar al-Assad's government launches chemical attacks against his own people. I believe the intelligence is clear that he did it, or his government did it, so I'm not debating those facts, what appear to be facts. But we witnessed these chemical attacks in both the late spring and again just a few weeks ago in August, these chemical attacks. We witnessed the trampling of the red line set down by the President not once but twice, maybe more than that for all I know. And now over 100,000 Syrians have been killed. What is the President's strategy for Syria? I couldn't explain it to anybody if they asked. He talked about pinpricks or his administration has talked about pinpricks, shots across the bow, a military action of days not weeks, and no intention to topple Assad or to degrade his military capacity to make war on his own people, for that matter. I'm learning a lot about what we will not do, but I'm not really sure what we're trying to do or trying to accomplish. So a very limited air strike to punish Mr. Assad is not going to alter the outcome of the Syrian civil war. What is the point or purpose? What is the clarity of mission?

In my view, America's national interest is really twofold in Syria. One, we want to limit Iranian influence in the region, and, two, the other issue deals with securing those chemical weapons, frankly, from both the Assad government and the radical elements of that opposition who would probably be just as inclined to use them. So much so that King Abdullah of Jordan came to Members of Congress to express his real concern about al-Nusra forces getting too close, dangerously close to a chemical site in southern Syria, and that was just a few months ago.

So now we also witnessed, too, there really is not a coalition of the willing to tackle Mr. Assad's crimes. It seems more a coalition of the unwilling. The United Nations really doesn't seem anywhere to be found, although in recent days, in the last 24 hours we're hearing there might be some discussion with the Russians about some kind of a resolution on securing those sites, but the U.N. is really nowhere to be found. NATO does not seem to be fully engaged at all, although maybe some members are supportive. And, of course, we've witnessed what the British Parliament did to Prime Minister Cameron in rebuking him. And so the British, our beloved friends and allies, are not going to be engaged in this one,

and so we're pretty much on our own. Again, I've called this a coalition of the unwilling. And so I think it would behoove the United States not to move in what appears to be almost a unilateral manner.

I have read, too, recently, that some of the Arab governments, Saudi Arabia and others, would be willing to help pay for some of this mission should we strike. You know, on the one hand, I appreciate that. On the other, the United States military is really not a mercenary force for anyone. A lot of folks may be encouraging us or cheering us on, but it doesn't seem they are willing to put people in harm's way. So I think we have to keep that in mind as we talk about this.

I'm going to conclude in a moment, but I was one of the folks who said it is always important for the President to consult with Congress prior to taking any kind of military action. It's important in our system, although I don't believe the President necessarily needs a congressional authorization for what he has called a very limited airstrike. But now that he has asked me to engage in this debate, I owe the President fair consideration of his policy in Syria, whatever it may be.

Again, I said call me skeptical; now you can call me outright opposed. I have said from day one that the President didn't seem to have his heart in this impending military action. He was looking for a way out after the U.N., the U.K., and NATO, a lot of our friends were just not willing to go along, and then the President turned to Congress as a last resort for an authorization where he has, of course, run into very, very heavy skepticism. I just did see any Churchillian resolve in our Commander in Chief. Our men and women in uniform deserve a Commander in Chief who is full-throated in support of what is likely to become a very dangerous military operation and could possibly spiral out of control. But more importantly, we have to be cognizant of the potential consequences and ramifications for that action.

I think the President of the United States owes that to the American people, to make it clear what his policy is, what his mission is, not what he's not going to do, but what he intends to do. After the President really threw this issue to Congress, we witnessed President Assad's jubilant supporters celebrating in the Syrian streets, and I'm sure the corridors of power in Tehran and Moscow, and it seems now that America's friends and allies watched this mystifying failure of Presidential leadership unfold with dismay.

So have our constituents. We have all received these calls. In my view, and I am really sad to say this, Barack Obama may have diminished his own Presidency in the process, but more problematically, diminished America's standing in the world among both friend and foe alike, and that's a real tragedy.

□ 1845

You know, in this upcoming vote in Congress, if it's to come at all at this point, it is really not so much a vote on authorizing a military strike or military intervention in Syria. The stakes have grown beyond that. It's much more a vote of confidence on the President's Syrian and broader Middle East policy. On that score, I have no confidence.

And I just wanted to say one last thing. I mentioned I have a very large Syrian population in my community, Syrian Americans. They're great Americans. They've been part of my community for a long time, largely Christian, Antioch Orthodox, Greek Orthodox, Presbyterian and other denominations.

They are scared. I think they know what Bashar Assad is, and many are very uncomfortable with what he is. And on the other hand, they have seen al-Nusra and al Qaeda, and are absolutely terrified of that operation.

And so they're caught in this sectarian crossfire. They don't want to be there. They're worried about atrocities, grievous atrocities being committed against the Christian people of Syria.

We just witnessed the other day, there was a story of a small village, I believe not too far from Damascus, where the language of Aramaic is spoken; I guess one of the few places in the world where it is still spoken.

Why is that significant?

Well, if you're a Christian, you know that Aramaic was the language that Jesus Christ spoke. And to know that this ancient community—and of course much of Syria's an ancient civilization—to know that these people could be under attack when you find out that al-Nusra forces had entered and intervened, and I hope they've been cleared out.

But that said, you think about this, and we worry about the history of mankind and the history of the Christian tradition is at risk here, and potentially a great risk of extermination.

And we've witnessed this in Egypt too. I mean, there are lessons to be learned from Egypt. When Mubarak fell, the Christian population, the Coptic Christian population of Egypt, became very vulnerable. We know that—extremely vulnerable. Atrocities committed against Christians, desecration of the churches, burning, other terrible things have happened, and I fear that we might see similar, if not worse, things happen in Syria.

So whatever this country chooses, whatever course of action this country chooses to pursue, I don't believe that a military intervention right now by the United States would advance America's policy objectives; and frankly, I don't think it would change the trajectory of the Syrian civil war.

People have said, well, doing nothing at all is the worst of all possibilities, the worst of all options. Well, I would argue that if we're not certain what

this limited, so-called limited military intervention will bring, if we're very unclear about that, then I would argue that no action is better than a limited action which may not do much of anything to alter the course of this civil war. So I think we have to be very cautious and very restrained.

I do appreciate the gentleman from Nebraska allowing me this opportunity to speak on this issue, and for his leadership, and for allowing me this time.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Let me thank you, as well, the gentleman from Pennsylvania, my good friend. I've heard you speak behind the scenes in this body, particularly today, with great passion, particularly for the people who are directly impacted by this, people who you represent and are directly connected to the conflict, the ancient Christian community, as you said.

I appreciate your clarity and your resolve on this issue because I know you, as I do, have great respect for the institution of the Presidency. He is our Commander in Chief.

But we also have a responsibility to render to him our judgment in this case; and so my judgment is no, that a unilateral military strike is not going to accomplish an objective of potentially stabilizing, punishing, preventing Assad from doing further harm and stabilizing that situation, versus pulling the United States, as a coalition of one, into a conflict where we are very unclear as to what the collateral damage and destabilization outcome could actually be.

In addition to that, the American people are intuiting that there is a serious, serious problem here with us being drawn into another conflict where the options are all bad, where our hearts are with the innocent victims, and we will continue to provide humanitarian aid.

But we must not allow the international community to simply hide behind our military might; and I think that that is what the people are sensing, that we are being drawn into something that has much broader implications for the entire international community to respond in a constructive, creative way.

And if we would have expended this energy, as I said earlier, on trying to get underneath the problem and perhaps point the finger and lay it at the footsteps of the Russians, who are completely entangled in this situation, maybe we would have had better movement on this question prior to now.

Now, we'll see what the President says tonight. We'll listen with an open mind. I don't know whether he is going to pull back from his intention to potentially strike Syria or not. But I think it is prudent to allow some diplomatic actions to potentially take their course, even though that might be a bit farfetched at the moment.

But, hopefully, that new diplomatic momentum has some good creative elements and stops the situation, pressures Assad, brings about a collective

international response that stabilizes the situation and protects innocent people. I think that's the best outcome that we could potentially hope for here.

Mr. DENT. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FORTENBERRY. I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. DENT. It seems that the policy of the United States and Syria, since the beginning of the uprising in Syria, has largely been one of inaction and detachment. And, in many respects, we outsourced the arming of the opposition forces to many of our good friends: the Turks, the Qataris, the Saudis, and others. And whether we like it or not—and we don't like it in many respects—many of the folks who were armed were people who don't share our interests and values, the al-Nusra forces in particular.

But there are moderate forces, and if the United States had demonstrated some leadership early in this, during that conflict, to help identify moderate secular opposition forces, there probably could have been multi-ethnic again and secular, it could have been Kurdish and Christian and moderate Sunni, that might have helped bring about a more legitimate or a better opposition force that the international community would be rallying around.

But that, unfortunately, has not happened, and now you read about large swaths of territory in Syria dominated by some opposition forces that have been rather radicalized; and that's unfortunate because there are many elements of the Free Syrian Army, of course, who really do want to try to bring about more representative government and, I think, would embrace the values that you and I hold dear.

But, you know, time has passed. Time has passed, and I just don't see a good outcome, as I stated earlier, at this point. And I just wish—I think the American people understand this intuitively.

And it also speaks to NATO. What's happening with NATO?

It's a great organization. I believe in NATO. It's a collective defense organization. I believe in its military value and its political value. But it seems, since the end of the Cold War, maybe it's gone a little bit adrift.

And Turkey has been a loyal friend and NATO ally for decades. They are directly affected by this conflict in Syria. They may make demands of us and NATO at some point, and we're going to have to think that through, as policymakers, what we would do if our good friends, the Turks, make a request of us, and certainly our good friends in Jordan.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Reclaiming my time, it's a good question you raised, and one that I pointed to earlier, new international constructs that might be using templates of old international constructs, but that are revitalized so that we can have collective operations, if necessary, to engage in this type of stopping mass violence.

The NATO allocations for many countries, they don't meet them year after year. In other words, the money they're supposed to contribute, they just don't do it.

So who has to pick up the pieces?

We do. There's a "free rider problem" as we call it here. And you deal in a lot of international diplomatic circles and you constantly hear it. Oh, the United States is the only one who has the ability. You're the only superpower. You must act, and it is your—you must be compelled morally, based upon who you are, to do something here.

All of those are fine points. But in the 21st century, you have a shift of the global framework for international stability occurring. We have expended ourselves, as a country, for nearly 70 years, providing that framework for global stability, economically and politically protecting human rights, as I said earlier, not always perfectly.

But the United States cannot single-handedly lift this burden for the entire world, particularly for countries that benefited from our past sacrifice, who have the economic wherewithal, and should have the moral compass to be thinking constructively about regional organizations that stop this type of conflict before it starts and demanding just outcomes of sovereign territories.

That is the long-term strategy. I recognize we're in a difficult moment because we're being pressured to decide unilateral military action or not, but this is the type of long-term thinking that I think will help bring about new models of international, multilateral cooperation to prevent this from happening, or when it does happen, to have the right response in place.

Mr. DENT. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FORTENBERRY. I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. DENT. I just want to say one more thing. You know, the President has said that this red line that was crossed was not his red line, but the international community's red line. Ninety-eight percent of the world has opposed chemical weapons use and has agreed to the various conventions on chemical weapons.

Unfortunately, 98 percent of the world isn't prepared to help us in this intervention. We're on our own, and I just wanted to point that out.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Well, our time has expired, and I do thank you for the good constructive conversation. I appreciate your insights and clarity on the situation. It's complex, it's difficult; but, again, unilateral military action allows the international community to hide behind our might, and it's simply not the right response at this time.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

THE SYRIAN CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SMITH of Missouri). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3,

2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) for 30 minutes.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the privilege to be recognized to address you here on the floor of the House of Representatives. And I appreciate the presentation that's come forward from my colleagues from Pennsylvania and Nebraska with regard to the Syrian situation and the international issue that's in front of all of us.

I don't always find myself in complete agreement with the wisdom that emerges here from this microphone; but, generally speaking, that's where I stand this evening on the Syrian issue.

And I think that it would be of interest to the gentleman from Pennsylvania that I and a couple of other Members, yesterday morning, perhaps the day before yesterday, in the morning—my days blend together—we sat down with Syrian Christians who were expatriates who had escaped from Syria and are very interested in the cause there. And I understand that the gentleman from Pennsylvania has a good number of constituents that would be representative of the same cause.

It was a very interesting conversation that we had at breakfast day before yesterday at Brussels. And the concern that they expressed essentially came back to it's hard to choose a good side in Syria, in that Assad, of course, he's an evil dictator. We've known that for a long time.

We have the Free Syrian Army that emerged as a force for good that seems to now be taken over by forces that are not so good. So it appears to them, and it appears to me, that whether it would be the Assad forces that prevail in the end, or whether it would be the forces that are taking over the Free Syrian Army, it's not going to be good for Christians in Syria.

And I'm concerned that, for us to find a way forward, the best hope for Christians in Syria is likely to be the moderate groups that began the Free Syrian Army in the first place, those groups that want to have a secular Syria that respects everyone's right to freedom of religion and freedom to associate, and respects the rights of humanity that we all defend here.

So I reiterate the statements that the gentleman from Pennsylvania has made. And we stand, certainly, with the Christians in Syria, but also the secular forces in Syria, however they've been marginalized by the forces of the Muslim Brotherhood, the forces that are Assad, and the anti-freedom forces that seem to want to take Syria over and use it for their own evil aims.

So having traveled, Mr. Speaker, over into that part of the world, not into Syria specifically, but into the Middle East—and we just came back last night from a trip that was to Tokyo. We spent several days there dealing with the top leadership in Japan, including Prime Minister Abe,

and then from there to the United Arab Emirates, where we had a meeting set up with a number of officials.

The first meeting was at 11:00 in the morning. We were scheduled to meet with the Crown Prince about 1 or 1:30 in the afternoon. Instead, he gave us a very pleasant surprise and arrived at our 11:00 meeting. And we were able to have a long, engaging conversation, doors closed, which gave us a very good perspective on the Middle East and on Syria.

So I appreciate my colleagues' focus and interest on this, and mine is also focused the same.

Mr. DENT. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. KING of Iowa. I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. DENT. I want to thank the gentleman from Iowa for his kind comments about his experiences with various folks who are in Syria.

I just wanted to say one other thing too. This past Sunday I attended a church service at my own church that has a large Syrian community; and a woman made a presentation at the church who represents the Presbyterian Church of Lebanon and Syria, and spoke in my church in very moderate, secular tones about why she thought it was not in anyone's interest for the United States to intervene at this point in the Syrian civil war.

□ 1900

It was a very compelling statement. Then, after that church service, I stopped by another at St. George Antioch Orthodox Church after their services had ended and met with some of the parishioners whose family members are over there, in many cases, and some told me their family members had been killed. And there was a lot of crying and wailing and deep sadness. It's quite emotional for them, as you can well imagine. They feel so strongly that this intervention is only going to make the plight of the Christians that much more dire and difficult in Syria and that it could lead to their ultimate extermination in many cases. This was their term, not mine.

That's how serious this is to them in a country, that I believe, the last I checked, is somewhere between 15 to 20 percent Christian, although the numbers are diminishing, given this turmoil. We've seen that in many Middle Eastern countries. The Christian communities are just not able to endure in this type of environment.

So I appreciate your interest in this issue, Mr. KING, and thank you for allowing me to speak. Keep up the good work.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Reclaiming my time, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. DENT).

I would add that there was some dialogue in that breakfast meeting with the Syrian Christians that took place the day before yesterday, in the morning, about how there was a concerted effort to push and eradicate Christians out of all the areas in the Middle East.

That seems to be something that they have embarked upon. And I know that there's a long history of it of over a thousand years. But it's been accelerated here, I believe, Mr. Speaker, within the last few years. In fact, the date of this meeting goes back to 1982 when that began.

We're hearing similar narratives about Christians that are being persecuted by both sides in this. The population percentage in Syria of around 15 to 20 percent fits with what I'm told. I added up the data that they gave me from different sections of the Syrian Christians and my number came to about 2.6 million Syrian Christians.

There are also about 2 million Syrians that are refugees that have left Syria and that are now housed in refugee camps in the surrounding country. There's about 2 million refugees. There are about 2.6 million Christians in or around Syria altogether. I see that as almost the equivalent of the population of the State of Iowa.

So we've watched as Assad has persecuted his people—the people that were not his. Anybody but his political allies were persecuted by him over the years. I remember that he was identified by the Bush administration as, I believe, an evildoer. I remember some communications being opened up with Bashar al-Assad that took place sometime in 2007 or 2008. I remember some pictures that came back from there. This individual now has been identified as head of the regime that has launched chemical weapons against his own people.

The evidence that we see doesn't necessarily confirm that it would be Assad himself that gave the order, but it does appear that there were chemical attacks. It also appears that there were conventional artillery assaults into the same neighborhood that brought about many casualties. To sort out whether they were chemical casualties or whether they were kinetic action casualties is a question that's not been answered yet.

I'm hesitant to get very far into this from a factual standpoint because of what's classified and what isn't, Mr. Speaker. I want to make this point. It doesn't get brought out in this Congress enough, if at all. The forces are lined up on the side of either Sunni or Shia. Of course, the Alawite sect of the Shia is the sect that is Assad himself. And he's supported by them. When you look at his allies—Hezbollah and Iran—they are Shia. If you look at his enemies, generally speaking, his enemies are al Qaeda and the Muslim Brotherhood. There's a list of those Sunni interests that have poured into Syria.

At the beginning, this was a conflict that was formed by the Free Syrian Army that wanted to unseat Assad and establish a government that would be of, by, and for the people of Syria and consistent with American ideals and American principles of a government that's empowered by the will of the people instead of by the will of a dictator or a king.

So as the Free Syrian Army began, their forces were growing and they were strong and they were taking over territory. Since that period of time, we've watched as the sometimes-labeled "rebel effect" has diminished. And it's almost been in direct proportion to the influence of the Muslim Brotherhood, al Qaeda, and other radical interests stepping in to take over and pick up some of the resources that are being used to support the opposition to Assad.

As I've watched this and from what I know and from the information that's come to me, continually the Free Syrian Army is more representative of the Muslim Brotherhood than it is of the free Syrian people. And not by a majority of the population of the army itself, but by the leadership, by who commands the resources, by who's being trained. This is now ever more clear that there's not a side that's easy to get on in this conflict and be confident that the forces are the forces of good. In other words, to identify the good guys has gotten ever more difficult month by month. It's more difficult today than it was a month ago or 2 or 3 or 4 or 6 months ago.

But it doesn't mean that there aren't good influences, that there aren't good cores of people that we should be identifying with and that we should be strengthening and empowering. But from my view, anybody that supports al Qaeda or is of al Qaeda is our enemy. Anybody that is Muslim Brotherhood or supports Muslim Brotherhood turns out to be our enemy. The difference between the Muslim Brotherhood and al Qaeda is they both have the same military wing. The Muslim Brotherhood has got a lot broader political approach to this. But in the end, they're looking to establish the Islamic caliphate everywhere in the world they can and establish sharia law everywhere in the world they can. And they don't view individual rights, human rights, or this God-given liberty and freedom here that our Founding Fathers claimed for us here over 200 years ago. They don't have respect for that. They reject it. And their approach is not compatible with human rights.

So we see the sectarian interests in Syria taking over the secular initiates in Syria. I believe that there's an ability—if we can identify the good guys—to empower them, to train them, to fund them, to supply them. But there's a way to bring this around and bring it to a good conclusion. But the people that need to be empowered in Syria are a long way from power. The people that don't need to be in power, whether it's the Muslim Brotherhood side of this and the Sunni radical Islamists or whether it be the Shia interests and Assad, they are competing with each other now for dominance. They fought each other for centuries as well.

There's no good result that can come easy in Syria. There is a good result that could come over a long period of time if our administration identified

the people that we should be allying ourselves with and if they could emerge as the strong force. But while that's going on, we've been offered something from Putin and the Russians that I don't think anyone expected, a little more than 24 hours ago, and that is a way to avoid a military conflict in engaging U.S. forces in Syria.

I will say, Mr. Speaker, that the mail that I'm getting and the phone calls that I'm getting are almost universally in opposition to going into any kind of military action whatsoever in Syria. Almost universal. All of my calls today were against going into Syria. Almost every call the last week were against going into Syria.

It's not that I make decisions exclusively off of constituent input or American communications input. I have an obligation and I owe my constituents and I owe Iowans and the people in this country my best effort and my best judgment. And that includes the input that comes from them, weighed more heavily than if it were not directly from my constituents. And I owe them my best effort and best judgment—and that is to go out and gather information. I have probably the best access to the broadest amount of information, including myself, among my constituents.

So I owe them my best effort. Part of that is to go and see with my own eyes and get into those parts of the world so that I can be fully informed, because this Congress is being called upon to make decisions that redirect the destiny of the United States of America. We should not do that in an uninformed way. We should not do it in a willfully ignorant way.

There are many things going on in the world that you cannot learn by listening to just briefings here or reading the paper. We should know from long history that you've got to drill into these things. You've got to look the right people in the eye and you've got to verify the information that they give you. I've done that. I've done that over the last week. I kept my powder dry on Syria throughout that period of time because I wanted to gather all the information that I could.

I didn't want to take a public position until I had seen as much as I can with my own eyes and hear as much as I can with my own ears. And even though we've done a trip into Cairo and the United Arab Emirates and the Middle East and we had briefings in countries beyond that and briefings from our State Department, we met with, as I said, Syrian Christians and we also met with refugees from Libya. We met with Special Forces interests and different perspectives on the Middle East entirely and different perspectives on the Syrian operation.

You put that altogether, from the State Department's position on, I came back with stacks of notes on it, Mr. Speaker. But I didn't want to speak on my Syrian position until such time as

I had sat through the classified briefing that I knew over a week ago was scheduled for five o'clock yesterday. And that went on from five o'clock until about a quarter to seven last night.

That briefing was useful. The people that were there to brief us were Susan Rice and Director Clapper and Secretary Kerry. We also had Secretary of Defense Hagel and General Martin Dempsey, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Five people of the highest level you could ask for assured the President of the United States. He gave us a briefing with the data that they have and what they know. And they told us what was classified and what wasn't. They told us the conclusions they had drawn and some method about how they arrived at those conclusions.

But my independent assessment doesn't agree with the course of action that seems to be the direction from the President of the United States. It doesn't mean that I disagree with the data that they have, but the conclusion and how to move forward, I do disagree with. And I have taken a position today that if there were a vote on the floor today to authorize military force in Syria, I would not support that. Mr. Speaker, I would vote "no."

I want to make it clear that I believe the President has constitutional authority to order action in Syria or anywhere else. The President of the United States has to have that authority to order our military into action in an instant. Our Continental Congress was not very functional when it came to fighting a war by consensus. When they finally got through the Revolutionary War and put a country together and built a Constitution that could be ratified by the majority of the States—the 13 original colonies—they concluded that we needed to have a President of the United States who was also the Commander in Chief of the United States military who was in full control of the military. And subsequent to that, there was a piece of legislation passed within the 20th century that was the War Powers Act that was designed to restrain the activities of the Commander in Chief, the President of the United States.

Those two conditions were, one, the constitutional authority of the Commander in Chief to order our military into battle in an instant without consulting Congress. And the other, the War Powers Act, requires the President to come back after a period of time and consult with Congress. Those two, the Constitution and the War Powers Act, are compatible as long as they are respected by the Congress and by the President of the United States.

Anytime we're engaged in a long military engagement, I think the President should come consult with Congress. If it's a short operation and it's over before it can be consulted, that's consistent with the Constitution.

I would point out when President Reagan ordered our military into Gre-

nada, that was an operation that took place quickly. He came before the American people and let us know after it was launched that he had ordered military action in Grenada. It was a successful operation, and we pulled out of there when the objective was achieved. That was Ronald Reagan.

When George Herbert Walker Bush—Bush 41—ordered our military into action in Panama to put an end to dictator and drug smuggler Noriega, that order was issued and our military took to the field. And as that operation was unfolding, then we found out about the order of our Commander in Chief.

This operation that's proposed in Syria is an operation that the President of the United States has the authority to order. He has the constitutional authority to do so. And if he had identified targets in Syria, and was determined that was the right course for America, the President should have then issued the order to engage our military in the fashion that his best judgment said he should.

□ 1915

But what has happened instead is there has been a vacillation that has taken place. He has sought to sell this to the American people while the message and the warning is going out to Assad. The red line that was drawn in the sand back during the Presidential campaign, it appears that the administration thinks that line has been crossed multiple times. And if you cross a red line in the sand enough times, it gets pretty blurry after awhile. Now they've decided that August 21 was the bright red line that was crossed by Assad. And here we are on the eve of the anniversary of the Benghazi attack—tomorrow is September 11—and on the anniversary of course of the September 11, 2001, attack; now we're negotiating with Congress to get support to go into military action in Syria.

My position, Mr. Speaker, is if the President thought it was a good idea, in a very limited way, as Secretary of State Kerry said, he should have done that. He should have issued the order, gotten it over with. If they're right and it's a very narrow operation, he could have pulled back and we would be done by now. But he watched as David Cameron and the United Kingdom took the issue before the British Parliament. The British Parliament voted down the initiative to strike Syria over the chemical weapons, and that put the brakes on the United Kingdom supporting us or any other entity in an operation in Syria. I think when the President saw that, maybe he concluded, Well, I'll ask Congress. If Congress says no, then I'll have this responsibility, this cup taken from him, so to speak—the one that he asked for when he put out the red line statement during the campaign in a debate with Mitt Romney.

So we're now in this situation where we've had a protracted national and

global debate. And each stop around the world where we have gone into—into Tokyo, into the UAE, into Cairo, into Brussels—and met with multiple entities along the way, Syria is the discussion matter. But they look to the United States to lead.

Some of the countries don't think it's a very good idea to go in there, but they say they will support us anyway because they want America to succeed. They understand that if we're not strong in the world, if we don't lead in the world, then this becomes a very precarious place.

I had it expressed to me a number of times: We don't think it's a very good idea, but if you do this, we'll support you; or, We think it's a bad idea; we have to support you anyway. But I didn't find anybody that said that they were really happy about the idea that America might strike someplace inside Syria to send a message to Assad. Some said don't pave the road to Damascus for the Muslim Brotherhood, that the devil we know may not be as bad as the devil we don't know. And we're starting to learn that.

So as this has unfolded—and I heard the gentleman from Pennsylvania, I believe it was, mention NATO and a NATO operation. We aren't going to have the support of NATO in an operation in Syria. NATO operates off of a consensus. The 28 nations or so that are NATO now have a lot of trouble getting to a consensus. If some of those countries decide they don't want to participate, they will just simply not commit their forces. In the end, it comes down to what will the U.S. do, what won't the U.S. do.

We're not going to have the support of the United Nations. There has already been that effort to bring it before the United Nations, and we've got opposition from Russia and opposition from China. Now, maybe they would reconsider. Maybe China would reconsider; maybe Russia would reconsider. But the United Nations is not going to be there behind us, Mr. Speaker. NATO is not going to be there behind us. We will have perhaps a coalition—not of the willing, but a coalition of the unwilling, those unwilling to allow the United States to, let's say, be embarrassed by this policy.

So the best course forward appears to be the lifeline that was tossed to us within the last 24 hours by Putin from Russia. He said, Let's take you up on your offer, Secretary Kerry, and see if we can gather up these chemical weapons and eradicate them from Syria. If doing so will prevent a military strike, then let's give it a go. That's a British expression, by the way, Mr. Speaker, "give it a go."

Well, I'm for giving it a go. I think that is the best alternative we have. I think the military strike is a mistake because it runs the risk of paving the road to Damascus for Muslim Brotherhood and other radical Islamist entities that are part of that constellation that have been systematically

marginalizing the true free Syrian Army and empowering themselves, and some of them with resources that we would see as sourced back to the U.S. taxpayers.

Well, the best course forward now is to work with the Russians and see if we can get the chemical weapons gathered together. I would want Americans involved in any kind of a mission to gather those chemical weapons. I think the United Nations showed an ability to go into Iraq before 2003 and do the nuclear inspection that was there. I was uneasy with their conclusions—in fact, I didn't agree with their conclusions, but they're the force on the planet that has an opportunity to have the global credibility. If they get to that point where they say we've got all these weapons picked up, or they will qualify their answer, that's the kind of thing that should be going on, Mr. Speaker. But in any case, any kind of inspection team, any kind of chemical weapon collection team, under the auspices perhaps of the United Nations so that it isn't directly under, say, Russia or the United States, but with Americans there on the ground to verify the actions that are taking place and give us a sense of credibility and confidence.

Mr. Speaker, I point out that it won't work to go there and just get the job done to eradicate the chemical weapons. We must do so in a way that has credibility so that especially the American people will accept a conclusion and we can perhaps move on. But picking up chemical weapons and gathering up that entire inventory, which is tons and tons of that inventory, if it's done so in a precision way, perhaps doesn't change the balance of the regime versus the forces for good and those evil forces that align themselves with the forces for good, perhaps doesn't change that balance, or changes it in a more minimal way than a military strike would, and it would send the message that we will put an end to the abuse of chemical weapons.

It is also curious to me, Mr. Speaker, that this level of concern and outrage didn't seem to exist when chemical weapons were being used between Iraq and Iran during the Iraq and Iran war in the eighties. It doesn't mean it's all right. I think it's a good position to take against the abuse and the use of chemical weapons, but the red line itself, as far as a reason for America to put ourselves into a military conflict in a nation that we don't have much strategic interest in is, I think, a mistake and I would oppose that. We should remember, again, who are the forces there, the messages they send to the world.

What have we seen happen in the Arab Spring? An Arab Spring that has emerged now—we are a couple years into that. It looks to me like the forces that have emerged on top have invariably been the Muslim Brotherhood. So it isn't always good to see a change within a regime or administration.

We saw President Carter support the return of the Shah in Iran and support ousting the current power, the power that was in Iran and put the Shah in, thinking that there would be a representation that was a religious movement—excuse me, the opposition to the Shah in Iran. In any case, the Ayatollah was viewed by President Carter as being a religious movement that was a voice for the people. What we ended up with the Ayatollah instead of the Shah was the beginnings of radical Islam within Iran, and the flow that came from 1979 until today might have been different had we taken a different position in Iran. Where we had friends in Iran, now we have enemies in Iran. As we have developed friends in Iraq, we are watching that friendship diminish. As we developed the foundational support in Afghanistan, we are watching that diminish.

As we see, we have strong friends and a military alliance with Egypt. We supported Mubarak and he was our friend. We built military operations going on in the Sinai Desert. That took place with—a good number of Iowans served there and people from probably every State served in the Sinai in operations with the Egyptians. Then Mubarak was essentially pushed out. And the message that came from our administration was he needs to leave yesterday. Well, the Morsi forces were able to push Mubarak out. They held one election. 5.8 million of the 83 million Egyptians voted for Morsi. Morsi came in as an incompetent Muslim Brotherhood, and the Muslim Brotherhood came out of that on top again like every other situation in the Arab Spring that has unfolded in the last couple of years, Mr. Speaker.

Now the best break we've seen in Egypt is that 30 to 33 million Egyptians took to the streets. Their peak day was the 3rd of July. They took their country back; and, yes, they had the support of the military. And some call it a coup, but there is no constitutional provision for them to impeach the incompetent Morsi. The Egyptian people had had enough. You can't mobilize that kind of support unless there are many good reasons—the economic shambles that they allowed to take place and the injustices that were taking place under the Morsi regime.

So now we have a new leadership that has taken hold in Egypt. I have met with the interim President of Egypt, President Mansour. He makes it clear he is the interim President, that they are going to hand the country of Egypt over to an elective representative government. They're going to pass a constitution that they're busy writing now. And the military will let go of their control over the country and submit to the civilian leadership that emerges in a constitutional fashion. They have laid out a timetable and a roadmap, Mr. Speaker. So this is the best future that Egypt can hope for.

Morsi was a mistake. He is Muslim Brotherhood. These forces are anti-

Muslim Brotherhood. They are pro-Egyptian people. I'm supporting the forces that are in place in Egypt now, and I would, face to face, encourage them, move forward with the timetable that you have. It appears to be aggressive and it has some risk. But writing a constitution, ratifying a constitution, having elections and establishing a civilian government in Egypt and then handing the control of the military over to that civilian government is the right thing to do. It sets the right destiny for Egypt. And I think that the United States needs to do a 180 on the support of the people that are now in charge in Egypt.

I appreciate, Mr. Speaker, your attention and an opportunity to address you here this evening, and I yield back the balance of my time.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 27 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, September 11, 2013, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

2771. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's fiscal year 2012 report on the Regional Defense Combating Terrorism Fellowship Program; to the Committee on Armed Services.

2772. A letter from the Chairman and President, Export-Import Bank, transmitting a report on transactions involving U.S. exports to Qantas Airways Limited of Mascot, Australia, pursuant to Section 2(b)(3) of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945, as amended; to the Committee on Financial Services.

2773. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Amendment to Standards and Practices for All Appropriate Inquiries [EPA-HQ-SFUND-2013-0513; FRL-9845-9] received August 11, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

2774. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Disapproval of Air Quality State Implementation Plans; Arizona; Regional Haze and Interstate Transport Requirements [EPA-R09-OAR-2012-0904; FRL-9846-5] received August 11, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

2775. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; State of Wyoming; Revised General Conformity Requirements and an Associated Revision [EPA-R08-OAR-2013-0059; FRL-9846-8] received August 11, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

2776. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Emamectin; Pesticide Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2012-0405; FRL-9395-6] received August 11, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

2777. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Imazapic; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2010-0384; FRL-9394-8] received August 11, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

2778. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Revisions to the California State Implementation Plan, Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District and Ventura County Air Pollution Control District [EPA-R09-OAR-2013-0394; FRL-9845-5] received August 11, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

2779. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Regulation Fuels and Fuel Additives: 2013 Renewable Fuel Standards [EPA-HQ-OAR-2012-0546; FRL-9834-5] (RIN: 2060-AR43) received August 11, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

2780. A letter from the Acting General Counsel, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Revisions to Procedural Regulations Governing Transportation by Intra-state Pipelines [Docket No.: RM12-17-000; Order No. 781] received August 10, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

2781. A letter from the Chair, Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission, transmitting the June 2013 Report to Congress on Medicaid and CHIP; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

2782. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act with respect to Cote d'Ivoire that was declared in Executive Order 13396 of February 7, 2006, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1641(c); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

2783. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 13-067, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(c) and 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

2784. A letter from the Assistant Legal Advisor for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting report prepared by the Department of State concerning international agreements other than treaties entered into by the United States to be transmitted to the Congress within the sixty-day period specified in the Case-Zablocki Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

2785. A letter from the Assistant Director, Executive and Political Personnel, Department of Defense, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

2786. A letter from the Assistant Director, Executive and Political Personnel, Department of Defense, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

2787. A letter from the Office of Legislative Affairs, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's 2013 Annual Performance Plan, in accordance with the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

2788. A letter from the Acting Chairman, National Transportation Safety Board, transmitting the Board's No FEAR Report to Congress for Fiscal Year 2012; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

2789. A letter from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFIS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Kamchatka Flounder in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area [Docket No.: 121018563-3148-02] (RIN: 0648-XC750) received August 10, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

2790. A letter from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFIS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries in the Western Pacific; Fishing in the Marianas Trench, Pacific Remote Islands, and Rose Atoll Marine National Monuments [Docket No.: 110819515-3563-03] (RIN: 0648-BA98) received August 10, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

2791. A letter from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFIS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Dusky Rockfish in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska [Docket No.: 120918468-3111-02] (RIN: 0648-XC741) received August 10, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

2792. A letter from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFIS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Northern Rockfish and Dusky Rockfish in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska [Docket No.: 120918468-3111-02] (RIN: 0648-XC756) received August 10, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

2793. A letter from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFIS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Northeast Multispecies Fishery; Trip Limit Adjustment for the Common Pool Fishery [Docket No.: 120109034-2171-01] (RIN: 0648-XC737) received August 10, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

2794. A letter from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFIS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Northern Rockfish in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska [Docket No.: 120918468-3111-02] (RIN: 0648-XC740) received August 10, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

2795. A letter from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFIS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Commercial Gulf of Mexico Aggregated Large Coastal Shark and Gulf of Mexico Hammerhead Shark Management Groups [Docket No.: 120706221-2705-02] (RIN:

0648-XC748) received August 10, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

2796. A letter from the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting Activities of the Review Panel on Prison Rape in Calendar Year 2012 and the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Data Collection Activities for 2013; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

2797. A letter from the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting the Department's quarterly report from the Office of Privacy and Civil Liberties for the second quarter of fiscal year 2013 (January 1, 2013 — March 31, 2013); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

2798. A letter from the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting the Department's quarterly report from the Office of Privacy and Civil Liberties for the first quarter of fiscal year 2013 (October 1, 2012 — December 31, 2012); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

2799. A letter from the Staff Director, Sentencing Commission, transmitting report on the compliance of the federal district courts with documentation; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

2800. A letter from the Chairman, Medicare Payment Advisory Commission, transmitting the June 2013 Report to Congress: Medicare and the Health Care Delivery System; jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington: Committee on Natural Resources. S. 130. An act to require the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain Federal land to the Powell Recreation District in the state of Wyoming (Rept. 113-190). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington: Committee on Natural Resources. S. 304. An act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey to the state of Mississippi 2 parcels of surplus land within the boundary of the Natchez Trace Parkway, and for other purposes (Rept. 113-191). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington: Committee on Natural Resources. S. 157. An act to provide for certain improvements to the Denali National Park and Preserve in the State of Alaska, and for other purposes (Rept. 113-192). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington: Committee on Natural Resources. S. 459. An act to modify the boundary of the Minuteman Missile National Historic Site in the State of South Dakota, and for other purposes (Rept. 113-193). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 2650. A bill to allow the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa in the State of Minnesota to lease or transfer certain land (Rept. 113-194). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 2388. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to take certain Federal lands located in El Dorado County, California, into trust for the benefit of the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians, and for other purposes; with amend-

ments (Rept. 113-195). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 2337. A bill to provide for the conveyance of the Forest Service Lake Hill Administrative Site in Summit County, Colorado (Rept. 113-196). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 1964. A bill to amend the Naval Petroleum Reserves Production Act of 1976 to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct an expeditious program of competitive leasing of oil and gas in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska, including at least one lease sale in the Reserve each year in the period 2013 through 2023, and for other purposes. (Rept. 113-197). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 1684. A bill to convey certain property to the State of Wyoming to consolidate the historic Ranch A, and for other purposes (Rept. 113-198). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 1394. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to establish goals for an all-of-the-above energy production plan strategy on a 4-year basis on all onshore Federal lands managed by the Department of the Interior and the Forest Service (Rept. 113-199). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 255. A bill to amend certain definitions contained in the Provo River Project Transfer Act for purposes of clarifying certain property descriptions, and for other purposes (Rept. 113-200). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 555. A bill to amend the Mineral Leasing Act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct onshore oil and gas lease sales through Internet-based live lease sales, and for other purposes (Rept. 113-201). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 1818. A bill to amend the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 to allow importation of polar bear trophies taken in sports hunts in Canada before the date the polar bear was determined to be a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (Rept. 113-202). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 740. A bill to provide for the settlement of certain claims under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, and for other purposes, with an amendment (Rept. 113-203). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 553. A bill to designate the exclusive economic zone of the United States as the "Ronald Wilson Reagan Exclusive Economic Zone of the United States" (Rept. 113-204). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. KLINE: Committee on Education and the Workforce. H.R. 2637. A bill to prohibit the Secretary of Education from engaging in regulatory overreach with regard to institutional eligibility under title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 113-205).

Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BURGESS: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 339. A resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2775) to condition the provisions of premium and cost-sharing subsidies under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act upon a certification that a program to verify household income and other qualifications for such subsidies is operational, and for other purposes (Rept. 113-206). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee:

H.R. 3073. A bill to amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to require that supplemental nutrition assistance benefits be used to purchase only supplemental foods that are eligible for purchase under section 17 of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (commonly known as the WIC program); to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. FINCHER (for himself and Mrs.

BLACK):

H.R. 3074. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require the Secretary of the Treasury to notify the taxpayer each time the taxpayer's information is accessed by the Internal Revenue Service; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. RUSH:

H.R. 3075. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study to determine the feasibility of designating the study area as the Black Metropolis National Heritage Area in the State of Illinois, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. DeSANTIS (for himself, Mr. SANFORD, Mr. ROSS, Mr. LATTA, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. SALMON, Mr. GINGREY of Georgia, Mr. YOHO, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. MASSIE, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, and Mr. COTTON):

H.R. 3076. A bill to amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act with respect to health insurance coverage for certain congressional staff and political appointees in the executive branch, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committees on House Administration, Ways and Means, and Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. NUNES (for himself and Mr.

PALLONE):

H.R. 3077. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to permit certain Medicare providers licensed in a State to provide telemedicine services to certain Medicare beneficiaries in a different State; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SMITH of Washington:

H.R. 3078. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to disregard amounts transferred from a traditional IRA to a Roth IRA in computing income for purposes of determining the income-related premiums under parts B and D of the Medicare program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition

to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky:

H.J. Res. 59. A joint resolution making continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2014, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Appropriations, and in addition to the Committee on the Budget, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BILIRAKIS (for himself and Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York):

H. Res. 338. A resolution recognizing the National Hellenic Museum in Chicago, Illinois, and the contributions of Hellenism to the United States and celebrating Greek and American democracy; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Ms. MATSUI:

H. Res. 340. A resolution expressing the support of Congress for National Telephone Discount Lifeline Awareness Week; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

PRIVATE BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

Mr. PASTOR of Arizona introduced a bill (H.R. 3079) for the relief of Jesus Garcia Flores; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee:

H.R. 3073.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress as stated in Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. FINCHER:

H.R. 3074.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8.

By Mr. RUSH:

H.R. 3075.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1: "The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States; but all duties, imposts and excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;"

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18: "To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States, or in any department or officer thereof."

By Mr. DESANTIS:

H.R. 3076.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 and 3

By Mr. NUNES:

H.R. 3077.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 3 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution

By Mr. SMITH of Washington:

H.R. 3078.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I

Mr. PASTOR of Arizona:

H.R. 3079.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8, clause 4

By Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky

H.J. Res. 59.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The principal constitutional authority for this legislation is clause 7 of section 9 of article I of the Constitution of the United States (the appropriation power), which states: "No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law. . . ." In addition, clause 1 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution (the spending power) provides: "The Congress shall have the Power . . . to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States. . . ." Together, these specific constitutional provisions establish the congressional power of the purse, granting Congress the authority to appropriate funds, to determine their purpose, amount, and period of availability, and to set forth terms and conditions governing their use.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 12: Mr. NEAL.

H.R. 148: Mr. BARBER.

H.R. 207: Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas.

H.R. 259: Mr. LABRADOR, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, and Mr. FRANKS of Arizona.

H.R. 288: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

H.R. 335: Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania and Mr. KILDEE.

H.R. 411: Ms. JACKSON LEE.

H.R. 436: Mr. OLSON, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, and Mr. CARTER.

H.R. 450: Mr. SCHWEIKERT.

H.R. 460: Mr. BACHUS, Ms. LEE of California, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, and Mr. PAYNE.

H.R. 495: Mr. BUCHANAN and Mr. PRICE of Georgia.

H.R. 526: Ms. MOORE and Mr. HASTINGS of Florida.

H.R. 565: Mr. PAYNE.

H.R. 574: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida.

H.R. 594: Mr. ISRAEL.

H.R. 596: Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, and Mr. GARCIA.

H.R. 611: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.

H.R. 616: Mr. WELCH.

H.R. 679: Mr. FITZPATRICK, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Mr. KENNEDY.

H.R. 683: Mr. LYNCH.

H.R. 685: Mr. WELCH, Mr. STUTZMAN, Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, and Mr. KING of New York.

H.R. 688: Mr. VALADAO.

H.R. 695: Mr. COBLE.

H.R. 712: Mr. TONKO.

H.R. 792: Mr. GIBSON and Mr. SCALISE.

H.R. 794: Mr. PETERSON, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. JONES, and Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas.

H.R. 813: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

H.R. 820: Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 847: Mr. HORSFORD.

H.R. 855: Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky and Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 858: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois and Mr. THOMPSON of California.

H.R. 911: Mr. VISCLOSKEY.

H.R. 920: Mr. HINOJOSA and Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky.

H.R. 928: Mr. CICILLINE.

H.R. 1014: Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mr. CRAMER, and Mr. HORSFORD.

H.R. 1019: Mr. DEUTCH.

H.R. 1037: Mr. MORAN.

H.R. 1089: Mr. HORSFORD.

H.R. 1091: Mr. FLEISCHMANN and Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 1102: Mr. McDERMOTT.

H.R. 1146: Mrs. CAPITO, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. YOUNG of Indiana, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania and Ms. TSONGAS.

H.R. 1154: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 1175: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 1201: Ms. ESHOO.

H.R. 1209: KUSTER, Mr. CICILLINE, and Mr. WALBERG.

H.R. 1250: TIPTON.

H.R. 1276: KILDEE.

H.R. 1313: CICILLINE.

H.R. 1339: Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. HOLT, Mr. O'ROURKE and Mr. HINOJOSA.

H.R. 1346: Ms. DELAURO.

H.R. 1354: Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas and Mr. TIPTON.

H.R. 1385: Mr. CARTWRIGHT and Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 1386: Mr. BISHOP of Utah.

H.R. 1396: Mr. HUFFMAN.

H.R. 1428: Mr. RADEL, Mr. MORAN and Mr. PETERS of Michigan.

H.R. 1526: Mr. BACHUS and Mr. PALAZZO.

H.R. 1551: Ms. JENKINS.

H.R. 1587: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.

H.R. 1588: Ms. MOORE.

H.R. 1616: Mr. PASCRELL.

H.R. 1666: Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. HINOJOSA and Mr. HOLT.

H.R. 1692: Ms. JACKSON LEE and Mr. BACHUS.

H.R. 1701: Mr. WEBER of Texas.

H.R. 1726: Mr. COLE, Mr. CARNEY, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. MARCHANT, and Mr. COURTNEY.

H.R. 1729: Mr. CASTRO of Texas and Ms. KELLY of Illinois.

H.R. 1750: Mr. QUIGLEY and Mrs. BLACKBURN.

H.R. 1756: Mr. CONYERS.

H.R. 1779: Mr. GIBSON, Mr. ROTHFUS and Mr. SMITH of Nebraska.

H.R. 1795: Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. MASSIE and Ms. LEE of California.

H.R. 1796: Mr. MORAN and Mr. KENNEDY.

H.R. 1801: Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia and Ms. ESTY.

H.R. 1809: Mr. TIERNEY.

H.R. 1812: Mr. YOHO and Mr. REED.

H.R. 1814: Mr. PETERS of California.

H.R. 1845: Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 1851: Ms. FUDGE.

H.R. 1861: Mrs. BACHMANN.

H.R. 1875: Mr. YARMUTH.

H.R. 1905: Mr. YOUNG of Florida, Mr. WOLF, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. BARBER, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. SLAUGHTER, and Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 1907: Mrs. NAPOLITANO and Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.

H.R. 1920: Mr. CARDENAS and Mr. MCINTYRE.

H.R. 1921: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida.

H.R. 1940: Mr. McDERMOTT.

H.R. 1980: Mr. CICILLINE.

H.R. 1992: Mr. MICHAUD.

H.R. 2003: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY and Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 2020: Mr. GRAYSON.

H.R. 2027: Mrs. ELLMERS.

H.R. 2028: Mr. BECERRA and Mr. PASCRELL.

H.R. 2056: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.

H.R. 2066: Mr. QUIGLEY.

- H.R. 2084: Mrs. BUSTOS.
H.R. 2088: Mr. TIERNEY.
H.R. 2108: Mr. RANGEL and Mr. CONYERS.
H.R. 2110: Mr. CAPUANO.
H.R. 2111: Mr. CONYERS.
H.R. 2134: Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. LANCE, Mr. DOGGETT, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. NEAL, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. COLE, Mr. CUELLAR, and Mr. MEADOWS.
H.R. 2189: Mr. TURNER, Mr. MCINTYRE, and Mr. MEADOWS.
H.R. 2194: Mr. ROE of Tennessee.
H.R. 2288: Mr. ISRAEL.
H.R. 2313: Mr. COURTNEY.
H.R. 2315: Mr. NUNES, Mr. ENGEL, and Mr. RANGEL.
H.R. 2338: Mr. DELANEY.
H.R. 2343: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 2355: Mr. YARMUTH.
H.R. 2426: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.
H.R. 2453: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 2482: Mr. CONYERS and Mr. SCHIFF.
H.R. 2483: Mr. MCDERMOTT.
H.R. 2506: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. HANNA, and Mr. JOYCE.
H.R. 2510: Mr. MCDERMOTT and Mr. SCHIFF.
H.R. 2554: Mr. COSTA.
H.R. 2578: Mr. MICHAUD.
H.R. 2615: Mr. JONES.
H.R. 2619: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida and Ms. SHEA-PORTER.
H.R. 2633: Ms. EDWARDS and Mr. OWENS.
H.R. 2637: Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. PRICE of Georgia, Mrs. ROBY, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. RIBBLE, and Mr. MATHESON.
H.R. 2646: Mr. FARR and Mr. WALDEN.
H.R. 2654: Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 2663: Mr. WHITFIELD.
H.R. 2686: Mr. HANNA.
H.R. 2691: Mr. ISRAEL.
H.R. 2702: Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. WELCH, Mr. DOYLE, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. MORAN, Ms. TSONGAS, and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H.R. 2705: Mr. COSTA.
H.R. 2715: Mr. OWENS.
H.R. 2725: Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. SCHOCK, Mr. TIPTON, and Mr. LONG.
H.R. 2726: Mr. LOBIONDO and Mr. NUGENT.
H.R. 2728: Mr. MCKINLEY.
H.R. 2737: Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. SLAUGHTER, and Mr. CONYERS.
H.R. 2744: Ms. DELBENE.
H.R. 2750: Mr. PAULSEN.
H.R. 2765: Mr. GIBBS, Mr. JOYCE, and Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas.
H.R. 2773: Mr. RYAN of Ohio.
H.R. 2775: Mr. MARCHANT.
H.R. 2783: Mr. HARPER, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. KILDEE, and Ms. CLARKE.
H.R. 2785: Mr. NUGENT.
H.R. 2788: Mr. CONYERS.
H.R. 2801: Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, and Mr. HUELSKAMP.
H.R. 2807: Mr. OWENS.
H.R. 2823: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 2825: Ms. TSONGAS.
H.R. 2839: Mr. RUIZ.
H.R. 2845: Mr. BARLETTA and Mr. COLE.
H.R. 2854: Mr. MCCAUL and Mr. VELA.
H.R. 2904: Mr. TIERNEY.
H.R. 2905: Mr. TIERNEY.
H.R. 2909: Ms. ESHOO, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. HOLT, Ms. BASS, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, and Mr. TIERNEY.
H.R. 2918: Mr. RYAN of Ohio.
H.R. 2936: Ms. LEE of California.
H.R. 2962: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. VELA, and Mr. CÁRDENAS.
H.R. 2993: Ms. SHEA-PORTER and Ms. LOFGREN.
H.R. 3005: Mr. HONDA.
H.R. 3026: Mr. POSEY and Mr. NUNNELEE.
H.R. 3027: Mr. SCHWEIKERT.
H.R. 3036: Mr. STIVERS.
H.R. 3040: Ms. SEWELL of Alabama.
H.R. 3045: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. LAMALFA, and Ms. FRANKEL of Florida.
H.R. 3050: Mr. KIND and Mr. HORSFORD.
H.J. Res. 44: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.
H.J. Res. 47: Mrs. HARTZLER and Mr. DAINES.
H.J. Res. 51: Mr. WEBER of Texas.
H. Con. Res. 8: Mr. DUFFY.
H. Con. Res. 16: Mr. TIPTON, Mr. COOK, Mr. BARR, Mr. CAMPBELL, Mr. MESSER, Mr. PAL-LONE, and Mr. WENSTRUP.
H. Con. Res. 51: Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. RIGELL, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, and Mr. PAULSEN.
H. Res. 36: Mr. HECK of Nevada and Mr. HUDSON.
H. Res. 101: Mr. DOYLE.
H. Res. 112: Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Ms. ESHOO, and Ms. DUCKWORTH.
H. Res. 227: Mr. MEEHAN.
H. Res. 254: Mr. KILMER.
H. Res. 319: Mr. ENYART, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. MEEKS, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. RUSH, Mr. DINGELL, and Mr. VARGAS.
H. Res. 331: Mr. PAYNE and Mr. MCGOVERN.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

OFFERED BY MR. ROGERS OF KENTUCKY

H.J. Res. 59, the Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2014, does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

DELETIONS OF SPONSORS FROM PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were deleted from public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 2019: Mr. MORAN.