

The House has passed four measures that would have kept the government open and operating, but they were all ignored by the Senate. First, we voted to keep the government open and to fund the President's health care bill, but they ignored that. Second, we voted to keep the government open and only delay the health care bill for 1 year. They ignored that. Then we voted to keep the government open and simply make the rules for the health care exchanges the same for all Americans. They ignored that. Lastly, we just asked the Senate to talk to us. They ignored that.

The Obama administration has given exceptions to their allies: big businesses and some unions. Why shouldn't the American people be given the same kind of treatment?

The Senate should come to the bargaining table today and end this shutdown today.

□ 0915

OPEN THE ENTIRE GOVERNMENT AND PASS A CLEAN CONTINUING RESOLUTION

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, the reason we have the shutdown is because of the Republican leadership.

The irony today is that the Republicans keep talking about the other side of the aisle here or the other House, yet they are going to go home at around 12 today, if not sooner, and not come back until Monday after 6:30. So if you really cared about negotiating and doing something, you wouldn't send everyone home for the next 3 days. You are not serious.

The spending levels have already been agreed on. I heard our Democratic leader, Ms. PELOSI, on the floor the other day saying she agreed with the spending levels. So the money isn't the issue. And I don't even hear the health care reform being talked about much anymore on the Republican side of the aisle.

I have no idea why the Speaker of the House continues to keep the government shut down, other than maybe they think they can show that they can do it.

This is absurd and it is cruel on the people, the people that are being furloughed. The effect on the economy is just awful at this point with this continued shutdown.

You come here and say you are going to piecemeal approach and we have bills every day to open up a little part of the government. Open the entire government. Pass a clean continuing resolution.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING NEED FOR CONTINUED AVAILABILITY OF RELIGIOUS SERVICES TO MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 58) expressing the sense of Congress regarding the need for the continued availability of religious services to members of the Armed Forces and their families during a lapse in appropriations.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 58

Whereas the Department of Defense has determined that some military chaplains and other personnel, including contract personnel, hired to perform duties of a military chaplain are not able to perform religious services on military installations during a lapse in appropriations;

Whereas this determination threatens the ability of members of the Armed Services and their families to exercise their First Amendment rights to worship and participate in religious activities; and

Whereas the Department of the Interior has permitted the performance of First Amendment activities in areas controlled by the National Park Service despite the lapse in appropriations; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress—

(1) recognizes that the performance of religious services and the provision of ministry are protected activities under the First Amendment of the United States Constitution;

(2) urges and intends that the Secretary of Defense permit the performance of religious services on property owned or maintained by the Department of Defense, during any lapse in appropriations, in the same manner and to the same extent as such religious services are otherwise available; and

(3) urges and intends that the Secretary of Defense permit military chaplains and other personnel, including contract personnel, hired to perform duties of a military chaplain to perform religious services and ministry, during any lapse in appropriations, in the same manner and to the same extent as such chaplains and other personnel are otherwise permitted to perform religious services and ministry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) and the gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from South Carolina.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend

their remarks and insert extraneous material on the concurrent resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of the concurrent resolution offered by my colleague, Representative DOUG COLLINS of Georgia, a dedicated chaplain and Iraq veteran of the United States Air Force Reserve. His resolution goes to the heart of our constitutionally guaranteed ability to worship without interference. I thank him for bringing it to the floor.

The resolution expresses the sense of Congress regarding the need for the continued availability of religious services to members of the Armed Forces and their families during a lapse of appropriations. As a grateful dad, with my wife, Roxanne, of four sons currently serving in the military, I know firsthand the importance of chaplains, such as Steve Shugart and Brian Bohlman.

Specifically, it addresses the issue this House became aware of yesterday—that religious services for military personnel are being curtailed, or not offered at all, because Federal civilian employees serving as chaplains, or personnel contracted to perform the duties of military chaplains, have been furloughed.

This is an extremely important issue for all of us to work together. There is no doubt that the furloughing of personnel hired or contracted to perform the duties of military chaplains is having an effect. Just in this region, church services, baptisms, weddings have been curtailed. For example, the Active Duty priest at the Navy Yard canceled mass there. He is needed at Joint Base Anacostia Bolling. It is a larger church and they don't have a priest there this weekend.

At Fort Belvoir, half of the masses have been canceled.

The impact is even more severe overseas, where options for worship are far more limited than in the United States.

What is more disturbing is that General Schedule Federal civilian and contractor chaplains are being told that if they do come to their jobs they will be trespassing. This is just not right.

The performance of religious services and the provision of ministry are protected activities under the First Amendment of the United States Constitution. If the Department of the Interior can permit World War II veterans in performance of First Amendment activities to visit the memorial constructed to honor their service, then certainly the Secretary of Defense can permit similar First Amendment activities.

The Secretary can and must allow military chaplains and other personnel,