

DECriminalIZING MARIJUANA LAWS

(Ms. NORTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, 18 States and the District of Columbia have rapidly decriminalized marijuana laws, making them subject only to fines. They did so for various reasons. None of those reasons were more solid or important than the Council's decision to decriminalize D.C.'s marijuana laws.

African Americans in the District of Columbia and Whites use marijuana at the same rate, but Blacks have an arrest record for possession eight times that of Whites. That's discrimination.

It is the same thing when Chairman JOHN MICA of the Government Operations Subcommittee of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee decides to hold a hearing on D.C.'s marijuana decriminalization law but on no others. Two prior hearings have looked at marijuana decriminalization. None has called local public officials.

Be on notice. The District of Columbia insists that it not be treated any differently from the 18 States that have decriminalized marijuana and the States who have legalized it.

VETERANS FAIR ECONOMIC TOWN HALL

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

Mr. WALBERG. Madam Speaker, last week, I had the pleasure of holding a veterans fair economic town hall and several general town halls across my district. Throughout the conversations I had with my constituents, I heard a growing concern about the increasing government intrusiveness, whether it is in the doctor's office, the classroom, or the economy.

House Republicans understand that our constituents want government to work efficiently. We have offered real solutions that will grow good-paying jobs and expand opportunity for all.

In fact, we have already passed over 200 bills that will start helping people today but unfortunately are still collecting dust on Senator HARRY REID's desk. This includes bills that would lower health care costs and return choice back to patients, as well as expand domestic energy production to both create jobs and lower costs for consumers.

It is time, Madam Speaker, for the Senate to join us in advancing real solutions. It is time to make life work better for all Americans.

HONORING HAROLD CORBIN

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

Mr. MEADOWS. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor Mr. Harold Corbin

and thank him for his service to the 11th Congressional District. This last Saturday marked 50 years of continued service to this great district. It was the first district meeting that he had missed.

Mr. Corbin is a lifelong resident of Franklin, North Carolina, which is a testament to his commitment to our community; and from 1980 to 1989, Mr. Corbin served as the Republican chairman of the 11th Congressional District. As chairman, Mr. Corbin made important contributions that have had a lasting impact on western North Carolina.

In 1981, his activism led to the election of the former Representative Bill Hendon, who was the first Republican Congressman to represent the 11th District in over 100 years.

From 1982 to 2002, Mr. Corbin served as the chairman of the Macon County Board of Commissioners. His leadership and inspiration to his son led his son to get involved in politics. He now holds that same position. It is both of them that have set a tremendous example for our Nation.

I will close with this. All of us in Washington can learn a lesson from Mr. Corbin, who has long said that, once elected, Representatives serving constituents ought to leave their politics at the door and truly serve the citizens.

TVA'S WATTS BAR NUCLEAR FACILITY

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

Mr. DESJARLAIS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to share my findings from last week's tour of TVA's Watts Bar Nuclear facility located in Tennessee's Fourth District in Rhea County.

The Watts Bar facility is constructing a second nuclear unit, which will be completed late next year. It will be the 21st century's first new reactor to go online, doubling the facility's capacity and then creating reliable energy for nearly 1.3 million homes and businesses.

This project has contributed significantly to the local economy by providing more than 3,300 high-paying jobs. TVA makes safety and security its top priority. During the construction of Unit 2, the workers have achieved a milestone of 22.8 million work-hours without a lost-time incident.

I would like to extend a special thanks to TVA's senior vice president of operations and construction, Mike Skaggs, and his team for making my visit so educational and productive.

Madam Speaker, it is imperative that we continue to support the safe, affordable, and reliable energy that nuclear provides in order to attract industry and create jobs.

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2015

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on consideration of H.R. 4487, and that I may include tabular material on the same.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MEADOWS). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 557 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 4487.

The Chair appoints the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

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IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 4487) making appropriations for the Legislative Branch for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes, with Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

Mr. COLE. Madam Chairman, thank you for the recognition, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 4487, the Legislative Branch Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2015, provides \$3.3 billion for the operations of the legislative branch, excluding Senate items. The recommendation is the equivalent to the fiscal year 2014 level and a decrease of \$122.5 million, or 3.7 percent, from the requested level.

Conforming with the longstanding practice under which each body of Congress determines its own housekeeping requirements and the other concurs without intervention, funds for the Senate are not included in the bill as reported by the committee.

Through seven hearings and meetings with agency heads, the committee listened to all who presented their respective concerns and budget requests. It was necessary to make some critical decisions and prioritize programs, and we did this in a bipartisan and transparent manner.

We are presenting to the House today a bill that is fiscally responsible and maintains current operations for the Legislative Branch agencies.

The bill includes \$1.2 billion for the operations of the House. This is equivalent to the fiscal year 2014 enacted