EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS
THE CHARTER BOAT INDUSTRY
HON. DONNA MC CHRISTENSEN
OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Friday, November 19, 1999

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a bill to help to revitalize the charter boat industry in my district by giving charter boat operators the ability to compete against their competitors in the neighboring non-U.S. jurisdictions. In the almost three years that I have served as the elected representative of the people of the U.S. Virgin Islands in the House of Representatives, there have been few other issues that have generated more passion and concern among all Virgin Islands business community than this one.

Mr. Speaker, the Passenger Vessel Safety Act, which was enacted on December 20, 1993, made several changes to the laws for passenger vessels. One such change, which required uninspected vessels weighing less than 100 gross tons to carry not more than 6 passengers, has had a significant negative impact on the charter boat industry, as well as the overall economy of my district. The limitation of only six passengers for uninspected vessels has resulted in virtually all vessels, which are able to carry more than 6 passengers, leaving U.S. Virgin Islands waters and relocating to the nearby British Virgin Islands.

According to Virgin Islands charter boat industry officials, approximately one third of all charters on crewed yachts carry more than six passengers and less than twelve. Just about all of this type of business has relocated to other areas, primarily the British Virgin Islands which is located only 12 miles from St. Thomas. Additionally, it is estimated that each charter yacht and their clientele spend over $500,000 annually.

Because the international standards for the inspection of passenger vessels only apply to vessels that carry more than 12 passengers, foreign registered vessels cannot comply with U.S. laws and enter U.S.V.I. waters carrying more than six passengers. Guests who might otherwise enjoy visiting the U.S.V.I. while chartering in the BVI are not able to visit us if their charter numbers more than six passengers.

Mr. Speaker, enactment of this bill is important to the Virgin Islands because of its potential to help revitalize our currently stagnant economy. As recently as 1998, U.S.V.I. marine businesses generated more than $85 million in revenue. But that figure has dropped to less than $15 million today, because of the decline in the industry due to the change in law.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill which is vitally important to the economy of the U.S. Virgin Islands, due to its heavy dependence on tourism.

November 19, 1999

THE ISSUE IS PROTECTING THE RULE OF LAW
HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.
OF MICHIGAN
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, November 18, 1999

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to submit for the RECORD a memorandum on the importance of the rule of law in our constitutional democracy written by Professor Harold Norris. Widely regarded as one of our Nation's foremost constitutional law experts, Professor Norris shaped the careers of many of Michigan's foremost attorneys and members of the State and Federal judiciary. Throughout his long life, Professor Norris has provided insight and analysis of constitutional issues throughout my congressional career, most recently during the impeachment proceedings against President Clinton. Professor Norris' commitment to the spirit of our Constitution and the Bill of Rights and his zealous defense of our civil liberties should be heeded by all Americans.

[From the Bradenton Herald, Oct., 1998]
THE ISSUE IS PROTECTING THE RULE OF LAW
(By Professor Harold Norris)
On two separate occasions, the American people have decided that William Jefferson Clinton is fit to be President of the United States by electing him to that office. To proceed to nullify a presidential election on the basis of authoritarian, privacy-invading questions about sex, questions the government does not have the legal power to ask, is producing irreparable harm to our nation and to its Constitution. There is no crime of perjury arising out of the government's conduct; the government doesn't have and should not have the legal authority to ask. We must stop this terrible carnal carnival, this tragic, malevolent, partisan, anguishing national experience.

Electioning a president under our Constitution is the most important expression of the political sovereignty of the whole of the American people. To diminish, countermand or nullify the legitimacy of a presidential election for behavior rooted in personal private conduct diminishes, degrades and abuses our Constitution, our nation, the office of the president, the rule of law itself. The purpose of the Constitution to unify the nation in opposition to autocracy and to abuse of constitutional authority is being dangerously undermined and diminished by the presently-invoked processes of political and unconstitutional impeachment.

Perjury and subornation of perjury, rooted and based exclusively upon an illegal invasion of personal privacy like sex, is not "treason, bribery, or high crimes and misdemeanors." Elizabeth Holtzman, former U.S. representative and former New York City prosecutor, concluded in an Op-Ed in the New York Times that perjury in the Clinton matter is a "manufactured" crime. She wrote (Aug. 10):
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 1999

Mr. BLILEY. Mr. Speaker, earlier today, the House passed a consolidated appropriations act funding a number of agencies for fiscal year 2000.

Among the legislative items attached to that measure was a provision imposing a moratorium on the Administration’s organ allocation regulations. Under the legislation we passed earlier today, that moratorium extends for 42 days.

That moratorium is not a sufficient amount of time for Congress to complete its work in legislating changes in the National Organ Transplant Act.

Accordingly, the legislation we currently have under consideration, the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999, goes a step further. This legislation extends the moratorium an additional 90 days. I fully expect that President Clinton will sign the consolidated appropriations measure into law in the near future. When he does so, under the terms of that law, the first moratorium of 42 days will begin.

I further anticipate that the President will sign the Work Incentives legislation after he signs the appropriations bill. When he does so, it is my firm belief that H.R. 1180’s 90-day moratorium will then begin. As the legislative language of the bill states: “The final rule entitled ‘Organ Procurement and Transportation Network’, promulgated by the Secretary of Health and Human Services on April 2, 1998 (63 Fed. Reg. 16295 et seq.) (relating to part 121 of title 42, Code of Federal Regulations), together with the amendments to such rules promulgated on October 20, 1999 (64 Fed. Reg. 56649 et seq.) shall not become effective before the expiration of the 90-day period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act.” As the Chairman of the Committee with exclusive jurisdiction of the matter, and the author of this provision, my legislative intent is that, when the Work Incentives legislation is signed into law, it will begin a new 90-day moratorium period.

In the unlikely event that President Clinton signs the consolidated appropriations measure after the Work Incentives measure, I also want to be clear about my legislation intent. Because Congress acted on the appropriations measure first, the Secretary of Health and Human Services should view the moratorium set forth in the Work Incentives measure as Congress’ last statement. In other words, if the Work Incentives measure is signed after the appropriations bill, Congress’ intent is that a 90-day moratorium remain in effect from the date of enactment of H.R. 1180.