

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1654,
NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND
SPACE ADMINISTRATION AU-
THORIZATION ACT OF 2000

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 574 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 574

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 1654) to authorize appropriations for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration for fiscal years 2000, 2001, and 2002, and for other purposes. All points of order against the conference report and against its consideration are waived. The conference report shall be considered as read.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York (Mr. REYNOLDS) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FROST) pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. Mr. Speaker, during consideration of this resolution, all time is yielded for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 574 is a standard rule providing for consideration of the conference report to accompany the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act, known as NASA.

The rule waives all points of order against the conference report and against its consideration. Additionally, the rule provides that the conference report shall be considered as read.

Mr. Speaker, this House could not have picked a more appropriate time for consideration of this conference report.

Earlier this week, the crew of mission STS-106 entered the International Space Station to prepare for the arrival of its first permanent crew.

Those crew members became the first humans to enter the service module which will serve as a living quarters and command and control center for the space station complex, an historic, multinational effort that is expected to create more than 75,000 jobs here at home.

With their scheduled return to Earth on Wednesday, I know that this House and this Nation wishes Commander Terry Wilcutt and the crew of *Atlantis* Godspeed.

Since the dawn of man, the human race has been ingrained with a fascination and a need to slip beyond its boundaries and explore the unknown. From across the continents to the depths of the oceans and to the far reaches of space, that pioneer spirit continues to this day. And its contributions and discoveries have had a significant impact on our society and our way of life.

When Neil Armstrong took that giant leap for mankind on July 20, 1969, perhaps he did not realize that the same technology that protected him from the harsh elements and atmosphere of the Moon would one day allow a 6-year-old boy from Virginia Beach to walk in the sunlight of the Earth.

Just a couple years ago, Mikie Walker became the first American child to receive a modified space suit that protects him from the sun's ultraviolet rays and other light sources.

Suffering from a genetic disorder that causes extreme and potentially dangerous sunlight sensitivity, NASA spacesuit technology allowed him to play outdoors for the first time in his young life.

More than 1,300 documented NASA technologies have benefited U.S. industry, improved our quality of life, and created jobs for Americans.

The Space Shuttle program alone has generated more than 100 technology spin-offs, including a tiny 2-inch by 1-inch, 4-ounce artificial heart pump whose technology was first used to drive fuel through the Space Shuttle.

Mr. Speaker, the underlying legislation will allow NASA to continue to ensure this Nation's leadership role in space exploration and applied science.

The underlying legislation authorizes funding for the Space Shuttle, International Space Station, scientific research, Payload/ELV support and investments in support at the level of the administration's request.

Mr. Speaker, the U.S. space program's new technologies, breakthroughs in medical research and other scientific discoveries have quite literally changed the lives of people across the globe.

Recognizing NASA's development of noninvasive diagnostic capabilities in the life sciences, the underlying legislation includes the House language setting aside \$2 million for early detection systems for breast and ovarian cancer.

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The legislation reflects Congress' continued endorsement of NASA's faster, better, cheaper concept and belief that a greater number of small missions will do more to advance certain scientific goals than large missions launched just once every decade.

Additionally, NASA has made strides to reduce institutional costs including management restructuring, facility consolidation and procurement reform. Under this legislation, they will be encouraged to continue to pursue these actions. With Congress' commitment to move our space program forward, young Americans will continue to be attracted to fields and job markets like science and engineering, areas that are key to making American industry more competitive across the globe.

I would like to commend the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSEN-

BRENNER) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL) for their hard work on this legislation. I urge my colleagues to support both the rule and the underlying bill.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this rule, which provides for the consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 1654, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Act of 2000. It is especially fitting that we should consider this conference report today since our shuttle astronauts have been this week working in space to outfit and activate the International Space Station in preparation for the first full-time crew's arrival in early November. NASA has scheduled a long list of flights to the space station to install modules which will aid in the long-term mission of research that has been designed specifically for this weightlessness scientific laboratory.

To fulfill these important missions of the space agency, this conference agreement authorizes a total of \$14.2 billion for NASA in fiscal year 2001 and \$14.6 billion in fiscal year 2002.

Mr. Speaker, this is the usual rule providing for the consideration of conference reports, and I urge its adoption.

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

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. REYNOLDS) for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this conference report and in support of the rule. I want to commend the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER), chairman and also the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics. I also commend the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) and the ranking member, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL), for navigating this important authorization through all the necessary hurdles and coming to the floor today with a good bill.

I am pleased that an amendment assisting our farmers and our ranchers I offered during the original consideration of this legislation remains in this final package. The amendment directs the Administrator of NASA to discover and catalog the kind of remote sensing information, commercial and otherwise, that might help farmers and ranchers determine potential crop shortages and surpluses and ultimately make decisions about how they might best use their land.

Our ability to anticipate crop production around the world by using remote sensing technologies has advanced tremendously over the last 30 years. We

are now able to estimate yields of some of the major crops, within plus or minus 10 percent 60 days before harvest. That means often within 30 days after planting, in southern climates we can predict expected over- and under-production before planting starts in some northern areas. By keeping track of what is happening on the ground, with planting date, moisture, etc. we can predict what is happening to that crop. Other farmers can adjust their plantings. We can help stop shortages and excess and maximize profit. We can make sure that there is not hunger because of the lack of knowledge on the part of farmers to plant the kind of acreage necessary to accommodate shortages in other parts of the world.

Once again, I am pleased that this provision has been retained. I am pleased to stand in support of this rule and this legislation.

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

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. SWEENEY).

Mr. SWEENEY. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. REYNOLDS) for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the rule and the conference report, the NASA Reauthorization Act. I believe it is a good bill and will continue to support NASA in its science exploration endeavors while maintaining the balance and cost effectiveness within its priorities. I want to specifically thank the chairman of the committee and the ranking member for their continued support of an amendment that I have had included in the legislation.

There have been two major occurrences within the past 10 years that have proven to be a striking blow to national security interests of our Nation. First, the People's Republic of China, the PRC, used information it obtained as a result of our cooperation on satellite technology to upgrade its ballistic missile system and thereby improving its range and accuracy of its booster systems. It also used information obtained as a result of deliberate and successful espionage efforts at our nuclear laboratories at the Department of Energy in order to improve their nuclear warhead arsenal.

While I recognize the value of international cooperation on our space program, it is vital that such cooperation not result in the transfer of inappropriate technology or otherwise increase the threat to U.S. national security and international peace. I believe my amendment accomplishes this by requiring the Inspector General of NASA to assess, on an annual basis, in consultation with the intelligence community, NASA's compliance with export control laws and the exchange of technology and information that could be used to enhance the military capacities of foreign entities.

This amendment reestablishes that it is the policy of the United States to make certain our good faith efforts to share our technological advances with world partners are not turned against us in the form of advanced military threat.

Mr. Speaker, NASA is one of the most respected governmental institutions in the world and its contributions to the technological development in the United States are enormous. This amendment ensures that the reputation so painstakingly earned is never tarnished again. I want to praise the bill's sponsors, especially the chairman of the committee, for standing with us on this amendment and urge passage of this rule and this important legislation.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I would urge adoption of the rule, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 574, I call up the conference report on the bill (H.R. 1654) to authorize appropriations for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration for fiscal years 2000, 2001 and 2002, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska). Pursuant to House Resolution 574, the conference report is considered as having been read.

(For conference report and statement, see proceedings of the House of September 12, 2000, at page H7404.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the conference report to accompany H.R. 1654.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1654 and urge my colleagues to vote for the conference report so that we can send this bipartisan bill to the President and have it signed into law.

This bill is endorsed by all the conferees, regardless of party, in both the

House and the Senate. I wish to express my appreciation for the hard work of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL), the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. GORDON), the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WELDON), and the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER) and offer my thanks for their services on the conference committee and their suggestions for compromise without which we would not be on the House floor today.

In passing this bill, Congress will help determine the priority investments in science and technology needed to fulfill America's future in space.

H.R. 1654, the NASA Authorization Act of 2000, authorizes the activity of our civilian space program for fiscal years 2001 and 2002. The bill authorizes \$14,184,400,000 for NASA in fiscal year 2001, which is about \$149 million more than the President requested. It also authorizes \$14,465,400,000 for NASA in fiscal year 2002, which is \$160 million above the President's request.

The bill fully funds the request for human space flight, including the Space Shuttle and the International Space Station. More importantly, it contains key policy provisions to control cost growth and maintain the schedule of the International Space Station.

The bill caps station costs at \$25 billion. We have slightly increased the program reserves that a blue ribbon task force argued were needed to avoid future costs growth. Additionally, we have added a contingency authorization of 20 percent to address the worst case scenarios, such as a partner's withdrawal from the program or the loss of an element during launch. We have also protected the space station design, which will remove a source of future cost growth and scheduled delays.

By moving NASA in the direction of a commercial Transhab structure, we transfer the risks and costs of development to any private sector entrepreneur willing to take them. We have also developed three new provisions to address the Russian situation. For years, the Russian Government has failed to provide the resources needed for the Russian Space Agency to meet its obligations to the International Space Station partnership. These failures have cost the United States some \$5 billion and delayed the program's completion by over 4 years.

The Russian Government recently diverted two progress vehicles and a Soyuz spacecraft to Mir, despite previous promises to use them to meet Russia's obligation to the International Space Station. This bill would seek to prevent recurrences by directing the highest levels of the U.S. Government to raise this issue with their counterparts in Russia. Hopefully, by bringing higher level political attention to the problem, we can solve it.

The bill also directs the NASA administrator to seek and renegotiate the appropriate international agreements to bring the benefits each partner receives from its involvement in the International Space Station into line with the partner's actual contributions. This provision will help us return the International Space Station partnership to the equitable foundation required by the Intergovernmental Agreement. Simply put, the administrator would have to seek to reduce Russia's utilization rights while increasing our own and those of our other partners until such time as Russia meets all of its obligations to the International Space Station.

Last but not least, the bill directs the administrator to seek to reduce America's share of the operating costs as compensation for any additional capabilities we provide to our partners through NASA's Russian Program Assurance activities. NASA plans to spend about \$1.2 billion directly making up for Russia's failures. Some of this funding will result in a more capable station so it makes sense to reduce our outyear costs vis-a-vis the other partners as compensation for performing above and beyond the call of duty.

In addition to the policy provisions intended to improve our human space flight program, we have increased funding for the critical area of science aeronautics and technology. These critical investments are needed to build a better future and have produced such past scientific and technological breakthroughs as the Topex-Poseidon spacecraft, which has vastly improved our knowledge of the El Niño effect and its impact on the global environment.

NASA's activities in space science have brought us the amazing discoveries of distant planets and black holes by the Hubble Space Telescope and the Chandra X-ray Observatory. Aeronautics research has improved the performance and efficiency of our military and civilian aircraft, while life and microgravity research is helping chart the growth of cancer cells.

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These additional funds will accelerate NASA's Near Earth Object Survey to detect asteroids and comets that may threaten Earth, to enable NASA to conduct an Earth Science Data Purchase program that leverages billions in private investments for scientific purposes, to allow NASA to fund additional life and microgravity researchers so that the International Space Station is fully utilized for scientific benefit, and to accelerate NASA's efforts to leverage its scientific efforts to improve math and science education in the United States.

Members may be pleased to hear that we have authorized funding for space grant colleges and universities, which

many Members from both sides of the aisle have sought.

There have been no NASA authorization bills sent to the President since 1992. This is the first time in 8 years that the House and the Senate have managed to build a consensus about the policies and priorities that affect the future of our space program. By passing this bill, we hope to give the appropriators additional tools and guidance to use in their annual deliberations. We will provide congressional guidance on a variety of space issues facing NASA and again demonstrate our commitment to the future of science and technology in the United States. I urge my colleagues to adopt this conference report.

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

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a few words, add a few words to what our chairman, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER), has said in support of the conference report. The report, of course, provides a 3-year authorization for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. Specifically, it provides a total authorization of \$42.4 billion over the period starting in fiscal year 2000 through fiscal year 2002, including the authorization of \$14.184 billion for fiscal year 2001 and \$14.62 billion for fiscal year 2002.

While I feel like I may be as conservative maybe as some of the other guys around here in the House, I still believe and I think we are on solid ground when we invest in NASA. I think it is the right thing to do, and I think especially it is the right thing to do now that we finally balanced the Federal budget, and that we are in for some years of surplus years.

Within those overall spending levels, the conference report fully funds NASA's major programs in both fiscal year 2001 and fiscal year 2002, including the International Space Station and the Space Shuttle. As part of the Space Shuttle authorization, funding is provided for needed safety and reliability upgrades to the Shuttle. All of the other accounts are also funded at or above the levels requested by the administration, including the Space Launch Initiative, an initiative that is intended to dramatically reduce the cost of getting payloads into orbit.

An area of research that I am personally interested in is life science and microgravity research. I am very pleased that the conference report increased funding for this important research, research that has already benefited our citizens here on Earth in many ways, and I am convinced that we will see even more significant ventures and more safe returns on our investment in that research once the space station is operational.

Among the areas receiving increases are NASA's educational programs. In particular, funding for the Space Grant program have been increased to \$28 million in both fiscal year 2001 and fiscal year 2002. That is an increase of almost \$9 million over what the President had requested for fiscal year 2001.

In addition to other very good features of this bill, in addition to the authorization levels, the conference report for H.R. 1654 includes a number of policy provisions. One of the policy provisions, namely section 313 on "Innovative Technologies for Human Space Flight," was proposed by our former chairman and my good friend the late George Brown. Ever the visionary, George wished to push NASA to apply the lessons of faster, better, and cheaper to human space flight, so that human exploration behind Earth's orbit could become affordable for this Nation in the not-too-distant future.

I will not take up a lot more time detailing all the provisions included in H.R. 1654; the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER), the chairman, has done a very good job of that.

My colleagues have copies of the conference report and accompanying statement of managers available to them. Instead, I would like to close by expressing my appreciation to fellow conferees for all their hard work, including the gentleman from Wisconsin (Chairman SENSENBRENNER), who is not only a good guy, he is very knowledgeable. He is good to work with, and we appreciate him; the gentleman from California (Chairman ROHRBACHER), who worked steadily with us; the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. GORDON); the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WELDON); Chairman MCCAIN; Chairman FRIST; Chairman STEVENS; Senator HOLLINGS; and Senator BREAUX.

In particular, I again want to commend the chairman for his leadership; as chairman of the conference, it was a difficult conference at times, but I think all the conferees made a good-faith effort to achieve a constructive piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, if H.R. 1654 is enacted into law, it will become the first NASA Authorization Act enacted since 1992. I think this is quite an accomplishment. I believe that it is important for both NASA and for the Congress that we do enact H.R. 1654. Furthermore, I believe that the conference report for H.R. 1654 represents a reasonable compromise that will help ensure the continued strength of the Nation's civil space program. I urge my colleagues to support the conference report.

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

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER), the chairman of the Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics.

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Speaker, first as the chairman of the Subcommittee on Space Aeronautics, I would like to personally thank the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. GORDON), my ranking minority member on the committee, for the great spirit of bipartisan spirit that we have shown in working together.

As the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL) just stated, this would be the first authorization bill that we will pass, the first NASA authorization bill that we passed since 1992, and let us all hope that we do this and get this through the system. But it has only been possible because of the goodwill and the spirit of compromise and honest disagreement, but also honest spirit of compromise that we have had working with the Members of the other party.

Let me thank especially the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL). He is sort of a treasure in this institution, a bipartisan treasure, let me add, in that he has an institutional memory that has served us well on this subcommittee and in our full committee, Committee on Science, and his good sense has helped guide us along here.

And also, of course, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER), who is the chairman of this subcommittee. He has provided me personal guidance in this job as chairman of the Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics and helped us be successful in our mission.

The bill before us now, H.R. 1654, the NASA authorization bill, offers the taxpayer a true choice in advancing America's leadership role in space. I rise in support of this bill, not because it is my role as chairman of the Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics and as a member of the team that helped draft the legislation, but because it offers the right approach in supporting the Nation's space exploration requirements at a time when we find ourselves on the verge of a technological and scientific epiphany.

H.R. 1654 reflects a bipartisan effort, as I said, to craft legislation enabling NASA to continue its work for the good of the Nation. Moreover, House and Senate conferees on both sides of the aisle labored for many months to ensure that this bill strikes the right balance between setting budget priorities and meeting NASA mission needs, as well as meeting the needs of our country to remain a leader in space exploration and utilization.

H.R. 1654 addresses the full array of elements that support NASA's responsibility for space exploration and near-Earth space transportation missions. In the Human Space Flight section of H.R. 1654, funding for international Space Station, the Space Shuttle, Payload/Expendable Launch Vehicle Support and Investments and support for these things, and support matches the

President's request for fiscal year 2001 and fiscal year 2002.

Within the science and aeronautics section and the technology section, the bill either matches or exceeds the President's request for fiscal year 2001 and 2002. And even in the face of major failures involving both Mars missions, we saw fit to authorize increases for space science by the tune of \$19 million for fiscal year 2001 and \$24 million for fiscal year 2002, and that was above the President's requested level.

That is, again, working together, we realized that if we are going to be a successful player in space, we have got to expect that that success will come with some failures, and we should build upon our failures in order to have a success.

Failures do not precipitate in this committee, bipartisan or should I say partisan, bickering that would in some way set back America's space program. Instead, we see failures as a means to learn and to move forward. It is important to note that space solar power benefits from those increases that I have been talking about today, and this space solar power and ability to relay system for energy and space solar power development is a technology that I believe will help address the energy needs of our country in the future.

Similarly, increases have been authorized for life and microgravity science are 13 percent higher than the President's request for the same year. Further, Earth science, aerospace technology, and academic programs for fiscal year 2001 and 2002 have seen substantial increases over the President's request. And finally, I am pleased to note that H.R. 1654 includes provisions to ensure that cooperative agreements between NASA and the People's Republic of China do not result in China improving its space launch assets and its ballistic missile capabilities.

H.R. 1654 contains a title regarding the International Space Station, including sections dealing with Russia's difficulty in meeting its obligations in the completion of the International Space Station. This issue was addressed by the chairman, and let me say the chairman has provided leadership in making sure that we do have cooperation with Russia, but to be done so in a way that is cost effective for our country.

We also have provisions to ensure that the space station is used for the scientific purposes that it was intended for and not just an engineering project, although, as an engineering project, it is certainly a fantastic and laudable achievement.

NASA's Space Launch Initiative offers the American people the opportunity to change how government has conducted the launch vehicle technology development, and through H.R. 1654, Congress essentially codifies the long-standing view that government

launch needs can be supported by a market-competitive space industry.

So we have, and it is not enough, however, to proclaim a national space policy. NASA must stay the course by funding technology and other risk-reduction activities that gives the broadest possible applications of new space technologies.

And so I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this regulation legislation, the first NASA authorization bill that we have been able to get through this body in about 10 years.

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. GORDON), the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics of the Committee on Science.

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the conference report on H.R. 1654, the NASA Authorization Act of 2000. I was a conferee on H.R. 1654, and I know the work that went into coming up with an agreement. While it is not a perfect piece of legislation, I believe that it is a constructive agreement that contains a number of useful policy provisions.

It also establishes funding targets for the next 2 years, which can provide important direction and stability for the Nation's civil space program.

The Statement of Managers that accompanies the conference report lays out the major funding authorizations. It also describes some of the policy provisions included in H.R. 1654. As a result, I will not spend a great deal of time discussing the details of H.R. 1654; instead, I would just like to make the following points:

First, this bipartisan conference report endorses, and in some cases, augments, the administration's funding priorities for NASA. I am pleased that we can get a bipartisan agreement that the administration's vision for NASA should be supported.

Second, the conference report adds funding in several important areas.

One of these areas is in education. I know firsthand in my district how important it is that we do all we can to support science and math education, especially at some of our smaller colleges and universities. Therefore, we have included increased funding for NASA's teacher faculty preparation enhancement programs in this bill.

Mr. Speaker, in addition, many Members recognize the value of the national space grant college and fellowship program, and the bill increases funding for that worthy program.

We also have provided funding above the President's request for minority university research education, and we have increased the funding for the experimental program to stimulate cooperative research.

Another area where the conference has added funding is in the area of aeronautics. We have seen the stresses

that the air traffic transportation system is facing these days, and we all are concerned about the impacts on our quality of life.

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That is why this conference report significantly increases the amount of funding for research on aircraft noise reduction, and for the development of cleaner, more energy efficient aircraft engines. The bill also makes a significant investment of \$70 million in NASA's Aviation Safety Research Program for both fiscal years 2001 and 2002.

Mr. Speaker, I will not take any more time to review the conference report, as I know there are others who would like to speak. Instead, I would just like to close by expressing my appreciation to my fellow conferees in both the House and Senate for their efforts to make this a productive conference. I am pleased that we were able to reach an agreement, and hope the House will support this conference report.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WELDON), a member of the conference.

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding me time, and I rise in strong support of this legislation.

I, too, would like to commend the chairman and the ranking member of the full committee and as well the chairman of the subcommittee, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER), and the ranking minority member, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. GORDON), for the bipartisan willingness to work together to try to get a bill through. I would also like to acknowledge the staff that worked very hard on this, Eric Sterner on the majority side and Dick Obermann.

I believe we have before us a good piece of legislation that the President should be pleased to sign into law.

It has been said several times that this is the first NASA bill in 8 years. It may also be the first NASA bill to come to the floor of the House while astronauts are orbiting above us as we speak. The Shuttle Atlantis was launched a week ago Friday, and they are completing the initial preparations for making the Space Station ready for a permanent crew, or a crew that will stay on orbit for 4 months that will be launched in November. They are currently working on a lot of electrical work, on getting the station ready and putting a lot of supplies up there.

I think it is a tremendous milestone that we have reached to be able to see the Space Station finally coming together, it has been very hotly debated on the floor of this body, and as well for us to be moving ahead with important legislative priorities for how we are going to manage the Space Station.

One of the features in this bill that I am quite pleased with, and I would just

like to echo the comments made by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. GORDON) about some of the educational priorities in the bill, I think they are very good. I am particularly pleased about the feature in this bill establishing a new approach to how we handle commercial space. I believe if space is ever going to be utilized the way I think many of us would like to see it utilized, we have to really see a flourishing of commercial operations in space.

What we are trying to do in this legislation is take a new approach as to how we do commercial space. I think it has a tremendous potential to be successful. The proof of the pudding is, of course, always in the eating, so time will tell, but I was very pleased to be able to work with the minority in crafting this bill, and I think it is a good future direction for NASA.

NASA is about the future, and I think we have a lot of reasons to be very pleased with this bill. I encourage all my colleagues to support it.

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. LAMPSON) whose district encircles Johnson Space Center.

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend not only the ranking member and the chairman for the significant work that has been done to bring this report to us, but all of our colleagues on the conference committee for bringing the first conference report for our NASA authorization bill in 8 years. I know the amount of time and hard work that each put into this bill, as well as the tremendous work of the committee staff, especially on our side, Dick Obermann, and I appreciate every bit of it.

I look forward to lending my support to this conference report, but I want to express my continued concerns about Section 127. Section 127 in its current form retains subsection (a), Replacement Structure, which is a general prohibition against NASA's use of funds authorized for the definition, design, procurement or development of an inflatable space structure to replace any International Space Station components scheduled for launch under the June 1999 Assembly Sequence. Subsection (b) has been revised to reflect an exception to permit NASA to lease or otherwise use a commercially provided inflatable habitation module under certain specified conditions.

As currently included in the June 29 House draft, Section 128 would effectively prevent NASA from jointly developing an inflatable habitation module with a commercial partner, even if NASA's contribution to such joint development were to be constrained to NASA's planned investment and related costs.

NASA is currently evaluating a very serious commercial proposal. Negotiations to date have been based on the principle that NASA would agree to de-

velop an inflatable space structure in conjunction with the commercial participant only if NASA does not assume costs or risk greater than those associated with the baseline non-inflatable habitation module.

I will be introducing legislation today that will modify Section 127(b) to include an exception for joint development, and a clarification that the cost restriction would apply to NASA's planned remaining cost for the baseline habitation module.

That being said, I again want to commend my colleagues on bringing this conference report to the floor. It funds all of NASA's accounts, Space Station, Space Shuttle, Space Launch Initiative, science programs and academic programs, at or above the President's request. We appreciate that. I encourage a yes vote.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KNOLLENBERG) for the purposes of a colloquy.

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise to engage the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Science (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) in a colloquy.

Mr. Speaker, as we grapple with increasing oil and natural gas prices, we must realize that the administration's flawed 1997 Kyoto Protocol, if implemented, would effectively double our energy costs and sacrifice millions of American jobs. As the gentleman is aware, many people are deeply concerned over administration efforts to implement the protocol prior to Senate ratification as mandated by the Constitution.

Section 315 of the NASA reauthorization legislation would provide \$5 million for research on the carbon cycle and carbon sequestration. Sound scientific research on the mapping and monitoring of vegetation and its role in the carbon cycle is to be commended. However, modeling and research should not cross the line and delve into carbon trading.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. I yield to the gentleman from Wisconsin.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I share the concerns of the gentleman from Michigan, and as the chairman of the Committee on Science, I want to assure the gentleman that there was no intent to and indeed this bill does not authorize modeling or research into carbon trading.

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I thank the gentleman from Wisconsin for his attention to this matter.

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ETHERIDGE), a member of the committee.

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this conference report and to discuss one of the important initiatives which it contains. As has been said, this is the first NASA reauthorization to pass Congress since 1992, and I want to congratulate the chairman and ranking Democratic members on the Committee on Science and the subcommittees, on which I have the pleasure of serving, for the accomplishment of have gotten this bill here.

This is not a perfect bill, but I think, on balance, it represents significant progress. This bill increases funding for many important priorities, including space science, Earth science, aerospace technology, science grants, Historically Black Colleges and Universities and other vital initiatives.

As the former superintendent of North Carolina's schools, I am particularly pleased by the improvements in the educational provisions of this bill, and I am proud to discuss an important education initiative that I recommended and the committee accepted that is a part of this bill.

This bill directs NASA to develop an education initiative for our Nation's schools in recognition of the 100th anniversary of the first powered flight which will take place on December 17, 2003. On this date in 1903, Orville and Wilbur Wright took their dreams of powered flight from the drawing boards of their bicycle shop to the Crystal Coast of North Carolina. On that day, our world was changed forever. The anniversary of this historic accomplishment provides an excellent opportunity for our Nation's schools to promote the importance of math and science and education.

Mr. Speaker, America's future will depend on our ability to adapt to change in technology that will dominate life in the 21st century. Our Nation's record economic growth is being fueled by gains in the technology sector, but recent studies show that America's students are falling behind their counterparts around the world in areas of math and science education. It is no longer a luxury to demand excellence in science and mathematics; it is an absolute necessity.

The 100th Anniversary of Flight Education Initiative will use the history of flight and the benefits of flight on science and mathematics and scientific principles that are underlying the flight to generate interest among students in math and science education. This initiative provides an excellent opportunity to recapture our young people's interests in the wonders of flight and space exploration and rekindle their interests in math and science.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the committee's leaders for including this important provision in the bill, and encourage my colleagues to support this conference report.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA).

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the conference report for H.R. 1654, the NASA Authorization Act of 2000. I want to certainly commend the chairman of the Committee on Science, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER); and the committee ranking member, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL); as well as the chairman of the Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER); and the subcommittee ranking member, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. GORDON), for their dedication and their efforts in bringing this bill to the floor.

In my home State of Maryland, we are proud to have the Goddard Space Flight Center, the centerpiece of NASA's Earth science enterprise. The space science research that is performed at Goddard is vital, not just for NASA, but for our country. From the Hubble Space Telescope to the Earth Observing System's Mission to Planet Earth to the Tracking and Data Relay Satellite System, which is NASA's primary satellite communications system, Goddard's capabilities and functions are entirely unique to all of NASA's 10 space centers.

The work at Goddard allows us to answer the unexplained questions of our universe and help predict the future of our planet. So I am pleased that the funding levels in this conference report allow Goddard to continue fulfilling its vital scientific research mission.

H.R. 1654 provides a healthy 2-year authorization of appropriations for NASA at \$14.184 billion for fiscal year 2001, and \$14.625 billion for fiscal year 2002. These funding levels represent an increase over the amount requested by the President of almost \$150 million in fiscal year 2001 and \$160 million in fiscal year 2002. Specifically, for NASA's space science programs, the conference report increases the President's budget request by \$19 million in fiscal year 2001 and \$24 million the subsequent year. For Earth science programs, the conference report increases the President's budget request by \$25 million in fiscal year 2001 and \$25 million in the subsequent year 2002.

So, by authorizing these NASA funding levels, the research at Goddard will advance our understanding of our global environment system. It will also determine how the Earth has evolved, and observe how we interact with other planets.

Mr. Speaker, I support the funding levels and the provisions in this conference report, and I urge my colleagues to support this conference report as well.

□ 1345

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE), a supporter of NASA and the space station.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, let me congratulate the chairman of the committee and the ranking member, along with the subcommittee Chair and ranking member. I believe this is a day of great celebration and commemoration. For we hope, as this bill is supported by our colleagues, as I ask for their support, that this may be the first NASA space authorization bill that gets to the President since 1992.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this legislation in particular because of the work that has been done by the conference committee, particularly noting that the conference report includes a \$6.3 billion amount for the International Space Station, and \$9.45 billion for the Space Shuttle.

Now, there needs to be some substance behind these numbers. Many of my colleagues from Texas, and I appreciate very much the steadfastness of the ranking member on behalf of the various space centers throughout our country, which include, of course, Marshall and Kennedy and, of course, Johnson Space Center, that deal particularly with our Space Shuttle and, as well, our International Space Station.

Mr. Speaker, I am gratified for the investment, because my concern has always been that we need to build leaders for space and science in the future; and out of this funding for the NASA space effort comes the recognition that we must support, historically supporting Asian, Hispanic and African American colleges. There is \$54 million to provide for the research and education of young people at these institutions. I am very gratified that institutions like Texas Southern University, Oakwood College in Huntsville, Texas Southern University being in Houston, Texas, will be able to access these dollars to provide opportunities for young students to come in and actually confront the issues of space.

I am gratified, likewise, that we have the dollars to begin to assess the needs of training our young people in the primary and secondary schools in math and science.

Mr. Speaker, just an hour or so ago I was listening to a technology conference that spoke about the need of improving the scores of our young people in primary and secondary education in math and science. The only way we can do it is if we focus on it; and I am very delighted that NASA funding in an educational component mentioned by my colleague will include the opportunity for us to make it interesting to study math and science.

I do want to note the Johnson Space Center and many of the sort of complementary efforts that it has made

with our school districts, and I look forward to that work being done even more.

I do want to note as well that the conference report does not include a prohibition on the use of funds for the Triana satellite program, and I believe that was a prudent decision by the conferees. We must keep our resource choices open in the area of space exploration, especially in light of the recent discoveries on the surfaces of Mars and the Moon. There was a vigorous debate about that, and I am delighted that we have been able to secure the funding for the Triana program. I think it is vital and necessary.

I am, however, concerned that the agreement still retains a House provision prohibiting the use of funds for the development of Trans-Hab, an inflatable space structure to replace any baseline module on the space station. I think that there is some light at the end of the tunnel, because there is the opportunity to produce this privately; but I hope to join the gentleman from Texas (Mr. LAMPSON) in hoping that we can also engage with public funds to do this important work.

Finally, I would say that many people question what we do with monies when we give it to the space station and the Space Shuttle. I am reminded of the great strides we have made in diabetes research, heart research, HIV/AIDS research, cancer research; but the most important aspect of what we do is to keep America in front of the technological curve and to work with our partners to develop opportunities in enhancing environment, better fuel resources, and training our young people for the work of the 21st century. I congratulate our committee, and I hope the President will sign this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the passage of H.R. 1654, the Conference Report on NASA Reauthorization. When the House passed the bill by a vote of 259–168 on May 19, 1999 and the Senate amended the bill and passed it by unanimous consent on Nov. 5, 1999 it became obvious that this is a bipartisan measure in the truest sense.

Because of the strategic location of the constituents of the 18th Congressional District of Houston, Texas, both physically and passionately to America's space effort, I approach this hearing with much concern. The Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas has been designated the lead center for management of the Space Station program.

The health of America's space program is of vital concern to all of the Members of the House Science Committee. This concern is strongly felt by those of us on the Subcommittee on Space Aeronautics because we are charged with the heavy responsibility of recommendation and oversight of the United States involvement in space exploration.

The last time a NASA reauthorization bill reached the president was in 1992. Since then, funding and policy decisions for NASA have been made in the VA–HUD appropriations bill.

This agreement authorizes \$42.4 billion for FY 2000 through FY 2002 for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)—including \$13.6 billion in FY 2000, \$14.2 billion in FY 2001 and \$14.6 billion in FY 2002. The FY 2001 authorization is approximately \$149 million more than the administration's request, \$430 million more than the House-passed bill and \$220 million more than the Senate version. The agreement provides approximately \$160 million more than the president requested in FY 2002, \$780 million more than in the House-passed bill and \$410 million more than the Senate-passed measure.

FY 2000 authorizations, reflecting the FY 2000 appropriations, include \$5.5 billion for Human Space Flight, \$5.6 billion for Science, Aeronautics and Technology, \$2.5 billion for Mission Support and \$20 million for the NASA Inspector General.

The authorization total of \$2.1 billion is provided for the international space station in FY 2001 and \$1.9 billion in FY 2002. The agreement includes a cost cap of \$25.0 billion for development of the international space station. Space shuttle launch costs connected with assembly of the space station are capped by the agreement at \$17.7 billion.

Unlike the House-passed bill, the agreement does not include a prohibition on the use of funds for the Triana satellite program, which I believe to be a prudent decision by the conferees. We must keep our research choices open in the area of space exploration especially in light of the recent discoveries on the surface of Mars and the Moon.

The agreement retains the House provision prohibiting the use of funds for the development of Trans-Hab, an inflatable space structure, to replace any baseline module on the space station. The agreement, however, does permit NASA to lease a privately developed Trans-Hab.

I believe that the reauthorization of NASA is long overdue, but that it is better that the 106th Congress took its time to act than to have not acted at all in this vital area of our nation's interest.

I thank the conferees for their dedication in completing the work on this legislation and would urge all of my colleagues to vote in favor of its passage.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS), the vice chairman of the Committee on Science.

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding me this time.

We have heard a great deal of discussion about the specifics of this bill. I simply wish to add some general comments about it.

First of all, I want to congratulate the chairman of the Committee on Science for successfully, for the first time in almost a decade, getting a conference report on NASA authorization with the Senate's cooperation. I believe this is a good omen for the future, and I certainly congratulate the chairman for his hard work and his success.

Over the past half century, America has led the world in science. Also during that half century, space science has

captured the imagination of the American public to a greater extent than any other scientific work that we have performed. Taking a trip to the Moon was a momentous event, not only for our Nation, but for our entire planet; and we continue to bask in that accomplishment today.

However, now we are down to the hard work of not only exploring space, but learning more about our universe through experimentation in space. This is grinding hard work, perhaps not as glorious as going to the Moon, but extremely important; and I am very pleased that this bill will increase our ability to perform space science as the United States, with the cooperation of other nations, during the next half century. It will be a long time before we engage in interplanetary travel, so we will not have that spectacular show for some time; but we will get a lot accomplished in space thanks to this bill, and it will provide a great deal of knowledge that will be very useful to our Nation and to the people of our planet in the future as we continue to expand the boundaries of our knowledge and find uses for the results that we find.

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON).

Mr. LARSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the conference report and add to the chorus of extending my personal gratitude for the outstanding leadership performed by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER), the chairman of the Committee on Science, and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL), the ranking member, and the other distinguished members of the conference committee and the Committee on Science in general for their hard work.

I also would like to commend directly the men and women of NASA and their visionary leader, Administrator Dan Goldin. His vision of aerospace as a commercial industry, and as continued space exploration, the confluence in coming together of biotechnology, information technology, and the nanosciences is what places this country on the cutting edge of technology.

I have had the opportunity to bring our astronauts to our schools. These heroes of space exploration indeed are an inspiration to all of our children. Now, this is just a small portion of what NASA does for the continuing education of our children, especially in the critical areas of math and science.

I would also like to thank very much the conference committee for including the ultra-efficient engine technology. As Administrator Goldin has pointed out, when it comes to engine technology, there is no greater core science that goes into the creation of machine than that science, math and engineering capability that goes into the making of aircraft.

Again, I commend the chairman and the entire committee.

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

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of the time, just to say that this is a good bill, it is an excellent compromise, it is something that has been done for the first time in 8 years. I urge the membership to support it.

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1654, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act is a fiscally responsible space bill that not only authorizes appropriations for NASA, but also imposes rules and restrictions on the space agency to ensure appropriate spending of federal funds.

As a member of the House Committee on Science, and as a member of the Space and Aeronautics Subcommittee, I am very concerned that NASA receives adequate funding. Citizens of the United States benefit economically from the many technologies learned through space exploration. Much of today's technology came from the space program, and much of tomorrow's technology will come from research taking place today. These new technologies will not only make our lives better but also will increase health and medical advances, labor and time saving devices, transportation and improve communication devices. Clearly, the new technologies generated from our space program greatly impact our economic growth and our ability to remain competitive in the world marketplace.

Additionally, the bill will set a spending cap on Space Station development thereby forcing our foreign partners to live up to their commitments.

Mr. Speaker, it is vital for the U.S. to remain on the cutting edge of scientific discoveries and technological advances, and H.R. 1654 provides the funding to ensure that NASA spearheads both of these efforts. I urge my colleagues to support this Act and safeguard the future of generations to come.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1654, the NASA Reauthorization bill. This is an exciting week to bring this legislation to the floor as the crew of the Space Shuttle Atlantis prepares the International Space Station for full-time service. In addition to the Space Station, this bill provides funding for NASA's other priorities including the Space Shuttle Program and for the Earth and Space Science program.

I opposed this legislation when the House first took it up because of efforts to kill the Triana Satellite Mission. Triana, a project directed by the Scripps Institution of Oceanography in La Jolla, California in conjunction with the Goddard Space Flight Center in my District, would provide not only a real-time view of the Earth for distribution on the Internet, but will also include instruments to study solar influences on climate, ultraviolet radiation, space weather, and the microphysical properties of clouds. I thank my colleagues in the Senate for taking the partisanship out of this important program.

This conference report also authorizes significant funding for the Science, Aeronautics, and Technology Account. The \$2.3 billion for Space Science will insure that the Hubble

Space Telescope Program continues to provide us with phenomenal data over the next ten years. It is crucial that Hubble's successor, the Next Generation Space Telescope, receive the necessary support to match and surpass Hubble's success. In addition, the \$1.5 billion for NASA's Earth Science programs will insure that programs like the Landsat, a cornerstone of NASA's Earth Science Enterprise, can continue to study the Earth's global environment, and that the Terra Satellite, which has been vital in the past week in fighting wild fires in the west, receives the funding necessary for continuing operations.

I urge my colleagues to support this conference report and support NASA as we continue to explore our last frontier.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the conference report.

The previous question was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). The question is on the conference report.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 399, nays 17, not voting 17, as follows:

[Roll No. 475]

YEAS—399

Abercrombie	Brown (FL)	Delahunt	Lucas (OK)	Ryan (WI)
Aderholt	Brown (OH)	DeLauro	Luther	Ryun (KS)
Allen	Bryant	DeLay	Maloney (CT)	Sabo
Andrews	Burr	DeMint	Maloney (NY)	Salmon
Archer	Burton	Deutsch	Manzullo	Sanchez
Baca	Buyer	Diaz-Balart	Markey	Sandlin
Bachus	Callahan	Dickey	Mascara	Sawyer
Baird	Calvert	Dicks	Matsui	Saxton
Baker	Camp	Dingell	McCarthy (MO)	Scarborough
Baldacci	Canady	Dixon	McCarthy (NY)	Schakowsky
Baldwin	Cannon	Doggett	McCrery	Scott
Ballenger	Capps	Dooley	McDermott	Sensenbrenner
Barcia	Capuano	Doolittle	McGovern	Serrano
Barr	Cardin	Doyle	McHugh	Sessions
Barrett (NE)	Carson	Dreier	McIntyre	Shadegg
Bartlett	Castle	Duncan	McKeon	Shaw
Barton	Chabot	Dunn	McKinney	Shays
Bass	Chambliss	Edwards	McNulty	Sherman
Bentsen	Clayton	Ehlers	Meehan	Sherwood
Bereuter	Clement	Ehrlich	Meek (FL)	Shimkus
Berkley	Clyburn	Emerson	Meeks (NY)	Shows
Berman	Coburn	Engel	Menendez	Shuster
Berry	Collins	English	Metcalf	Simpson
Biggert	Combest	Etheridge	Mica	Sisisky
Bilbray	Condit	Evans	Millender-	Skeen
Bilirakis	Cook	Everett	McDonald	Skelton
Bishop	Cooksey	Ewing	Miller (FL)	Slaughter
Blagojevich	Costello	Farr	Miller, Gary	Smith (MI)
Bliley	Cox	Fattah	Minge	Smith (NJ)
Blumenauer	Coyne	Filner	Mink	Smith (TX)
Blunt	Cramer	Fletcher	Moakley	Smith (WA)
Boehlert	Crane	Foley	Mollohan	Snyder
Boehner	Crowley	Forbes	Moore	Souder
Bonilla	Cubin	Fossella	Moran (KS)	Spence
Bonior	Cummings	Fowler	Moran (VA)	Spratt
Bono	Cunningham	Franks (NJ)	Morella	Stabenow
Borski	Danner	Frelinghuysen	Murtha	Stearns
Boswell	Davis (FL)	Frost	Myrick	Stenholm
Boucher	Davis (IL)	Gallely	Nadler	Strickland
Boyd	Davis (VA)	Ganske	Napolitano	Stump
Brady (PA)	Deal	Gejdenson	Neal	Stupak
Brady (TX)	DeGette	Gekas	Nethercutt	Sununu
			Ney	Sweeney
			Northup	Talent
			Norwood	Tanner
			Nussle	Tauscher
			Oberstar	Tauzin
			Obey	Taylor (MS)
			Olver	Taylor (NC)
			Ortiz	Terry
			Ose	Thomas
			Owens	Thompson (CA)
			Oxley	Thompson (MS)
			Packard	Thornberry
			Pallone	Thune
			Pascrell	Thurman
			Pastor	Tiaht
			Payne	Tierney
			Pease	Toomey
			Pelosi	Towns
			Peterson (MN)	Trafficant
			Peterson (PA)	Turner
			Petri	Udall (CO)
			Phelps	Udall (NM)
			Pickering	Upton
			Pickett	Velazquez
			Pitts	Visclosky
			Pombo	Vitter
			Kingston	Walden
			Pomeroy	Walsh
			Porter	Wamp
			Portman	Waters
			Price (NC)	Watkins
			Pryce (OH)	Watt (NC)
			Quinn	Watts (OK)
			Radanovich	Waxman
			Rahall	Weiner
			Rangel	Weldon (FL)
			Regula	Weldon (PA)
			Reyes	Weller
			Reynolds	Wexler
			Riley	Weygand
			Rivers	Whitfield
			Rodriguez	Wicker
			Rogan	Wilson
			Rogers	Wolf
			Rohrabacher	Woolsey
			Ros-Lehtinen	Wu
			Rothman	Wynn
			Roukema	Young (AK)
			Roybal-Allard	Young (FL)
			Royce	
			Rush	

NAYS—17

Barrett (WI)	Lee	Sanders
Chenoweth-Hage	McInnis	Sanford
Coble	Miller, George	Schaffer
Conyers	Paul	Stark
DeFazio	Ramstad	Tancredo
Frank (MA)	Roemer	

NOT VOTING—17

Ackerman	Ford	Martinez
Armey	Greenwood	McCollum
Becerra	Gutierrez	McIntosh
Campbell	Klink	Vento
Clay	Lazio	Wise
Eshoo	Linder	

□ 1424

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida changed his vote from "nay" to "yea".

So the conference report was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONGRATULATING RON LASCH ON HIS RETIREMENT

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

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, I have asked to speak out of order for 1 minute because there is a situation here on the floor that may not recur again. There are many new Members here who are beginning to learn that this institution could not run without the staffs that sometimes are never acknowledged or recognized but go about their work very quietly and efficiently.

Unfortunately, someone who had been of great assistance to our side of the aisle for more than 42 years decided to leave just as quietly and efficiently as he had carried out his job over the years. I am not able to deal with the efficiency of his leaving, but I do think we can deal with the quietness.

Somewhere back there is the gentleman by the name of Ron Lasch. I would ask Ron Lasch to come to the floor. Mr. Speaker, as usual, Ron Lasch is not to be found. But for 42 years, he provided this House with good counsel and assistance in doing our jobs.

There are a number of people who make our jobs possible who do not get the desired or needed or worthy recognition. I just thought it would be nice, since he may not be able to be here again or he will not be here again after this particular occasion, to say to one of our long-time employees, thank you very much, Ron Lasch.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. THOMAS. I yield to the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I am sorry that Ron is not on the floor, but I want to rise on behalf of all of us on this side of the aisle. The gentleman from California indicated that Ron Lasch has been helpful to his side. That is of course very true. He is, after all, assigned that responsibility.

On the other hand, I want my colleagues to know and I want everybody to know that those of us on this side of the aisle who happened to be on the gentleman's side of the aisle and needed a question answered felt very comfortable talking to Ron Lasch. Because Ron Lasch, although he served in a partisan role, clearly felt himself an institutional person who wanted to facilitate the workings of this institution on behalf of the American people.

I want to join the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS), the chairman of the Committee on House Administration in saying that we share his congratulations and appreciation for all the work that Ron Lasch has done and the service that he has performed for everybody on the floor of the House and for the American public.

Mr. KASICH. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. THOMAS. I yield to the gentleman from Ohio.

Mr. KASICH. Mr. Speaker, I happen to know Mr. Lasch is, in fact, seeing this telecast, and he ought to come to the floor if he can. But I think that what is most important about Ron Lasch is that, as he sat in the back, he was always kind of a governor on sometimes the crazy emotions that this House gets itself whipped up into.

What Ron Lasch is always able to do is to really, he has been around so long, is to be so grounded and to immediately translate a sense of responsibility and a sense of self-control and a sense of humility to every Member. If Ron looked one in the eye and called one on something, one listened to him. Because he had seen so much, and he had such a great sense of this place.

Many times, Members of Congress get, as we all do in life, get full of ourselves. Ron Lasch is one guy that always said, Wait a minute. Remember, you came in here. It is a privilege to serve, and you are going to leave this place. And trust me, when you go out the door, you are only what you are when you came in the door, just another human being trying to do a job.

□ 1430

And he is a great, great guy, I think one of the best that we have ever had in this House; and the House will very much miss him. But I have a suspicion that he will move in and out.

To the younger Members, they should avail themselves of Ron Lasch in these last couple weeks that he will be around this floor.

Speaking for many of the Members who have been here for a long time, I think it would be fair for me to say, Ron Lasch, thank you, God bless you, and Godspeed.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN).

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for bringing Ron's name

before us once again. He left us so suddenly, none of us really had an opportunity to wish him well or to say a proper goodbye.

Ron served both sides of the aisle in an appropriate manner. He was not only a time keeper, a controller of emotions in the back of the room, but he was a good advisor.

I had the opportunity of having Ron join us on several of our CODELs where he added a great deal and was able to exchange thinking with parliamentarians overseas.

So I thank the gentleman for raising this. We wish Ron good health and happiness in his retirement.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE).

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I say I can say without fear of contradiction that I probably have known Ron Lasch longer than any other person in this Chamber because Ron Lasch and I came to Congress together as pages just a few months apart when we were at the age of 16 years.

Earlier this summer we did some tributes to Ron Lasch but, of course, he chose, as he has today, to not be here on the floor.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, we almost got him.

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will continue to yield, we almost got him today. The gentleman is absolutely right.

So I would simply repeat what I said in that tribute, and that is that this body is poorer for his absence; and we have been richer as an institution for what he brought to this body, the sense of calm, the sense of history, the sense of understanding of where this place is and where it is going.

I think that he has elevated and has leavened this body I think substantially. I believe that the House of Representatives will miss him tremendously. I know all of us individually will. I wish him well.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, just let me say that, as we move into this period in which demands are going to be made that are actually inhumane and we expect materials to be prepared in absolute time frames, for those staff who are here and continue to carry on the work, I just think that they also need to get recognition, credit, and a "thank you" ahead of time. All too often we fail to say, it is not just us. Because, without them, it would not be us.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. HORN).

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, I commend Ron Lasch. He is a real loss to our Chamber. We all know him as an institutional citizen dedicated to the House of Representatives and dedicated to legislative government.