

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the bankruptcy reform conference report.

This legislation has been a long time coming. Since 1980, bankruptcies have risen 400 percent, imposing a heavy burden on American families. Some estimate that bankruptcies cost each household \$400 a year in the form of higher interest rates on their credit cards, car loans, school loans, and mortgages.

The means testing approach championed by my colleague, GEORGE GEKAS, will make bankruptcy abuse much harder in the future. Wealthy individuals who can hire savvy lawyers will no longer be able to game the bankruptcy system at the expense of the American consumer.

What this bill says is that if you file bankruptcy, you will not be able to walk away from your debt if after all your reasonable monthly expenses are taken into account, you still have \$166 in your pocket. If you are one of these people, then you will have to enter into an agreement to repay at least part of your debt in a 5 year plan, unless you can prove special circumstances to the judge. That is taking responsibility for your debt instead of imposing the cost on other consumers.

I also want to thank Chairman GEKAS for his support in helping my home State of Delaware receive an additional bankruptcy judgeship. As I testified before a joint House-Senate Judiciary Committee hearing earlier this year, Delaware's bankruptcy judges have the highest average bankruptcy caseloads in the Nation according to the U.S. judicial conference. The need for relief has reached critical levels and Chairman GEKAS has been quick to recognize this.

Recognition also must go to Speaker HASTERT and Majority Leader ARMEY, who fulfilled their commitment to finding an appropriate vehicle that would allow the will of the House and the will of the Senate to proceed on this legislation. They did the honorable thing by taking our unrelated riders from both sides of the aisle and presenting this body with a clean bill for us to vote on. I thank them for their leadership.

Finally, I want to thank Chairman GEKAS for his support in removing a provision in the bill that would have eliminated a business' place of incorporation as an acceptable venue for filing a bankruptcy. Delaware's bankruptcy judges and the Delaware bar are among the finest in the Nation in resolving bankruptcies quickly, fairly and efficiently. We need to keep the courtroom doors open in Delaware.

Therefore, I urge my colleagues to support this clean, balanced bankruptcy reform conference report.

Mr. GEKAS. 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.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT OFFERED BY MR. CONYERS  
Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the conference report?

Mr. CONYERS. Yes, sir, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. CONYERS moves to recommit the conference report on the bill (H.R. 2415) to the committee of conference with instructions to the managers on the part of the House to insist on conducting at least one meeting of conferees as required by House Rule XXII, cl. 12, and in accordance with the motion to instruct conferees approved by the House of Representatives yesterday by a vote of 398 to 1, before making any report on the bill.

Mr. GEKAS (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the motion be considered as read and printed in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The motion to recommit was rejected.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the conference report.

The conference report was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

DIRECTING SECRETARY OF THE  
SENATE TO CORRECT ENROLLMENT OF S. 3186,  
BANKRUPTCY REFORM ACT OF 2000

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent for the immediate consideration of the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 427) directing the Secretary of the Senate to correct the enrollment of the bill S. 3186.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

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

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS) for the purpose of explaining what we have before us at this time.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GEKAS), the chairman of the Subcommittee on Commercial and Administrative Law and the Senator from Iowa, Mr. GRASSLEY, the subcommittee chairman of the Subcommittee on Administrative Oversight and the Courts, for all their hard work over the past few years in getting this legislation to the point where it is today.

Both men have demonstrated tremendous leadership and fairness in practice in creating this agreement that just passed this body, and I want to thank them for their efforts in the motion to rename this bankruptcy bill.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, continuing to reserve my right to object, did I understand the gentleman from Texas to say that he wanted to rename the bankruptcy bill in honor of the

gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GEKAS) and someone else, Senator GRASSLEY?

Mr. SESSIONS. In fact, the gentleman from Texas is seeking to rename the bill the Gekas-Grassley Act.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I would say to the gentleman, this is something that he thinks would help the bill, or help American history, or help those who are concerned with bankruptcy law? What are we doing?

Mr. SESSIONS. I thank the gentleman for his question. It is simply to rename the bankruptcy bill in honor of both the gentlemen who have worked diligently on its passage.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, continuing to reserve my reservation of objection, I have a number of questions that I will forego, but I want to say this. I think this is an appropriate disposition of this measure. I will not recall the way I have described this bill.

Mr. Speaker, if any of that is accurate and my friend, the gentleman from Pennsylvania, still wants to have the bill named in his honor, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman for not only his consideration, but his collegiality in this effort.

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

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the concurrent resolution, as follows:

H. CON. RES. 427

*Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That in the enrollment of the bill (S. 3186), A bill to amend title 11, United States Code, and for other purposes, the Secretary of the Senate shall make the following corrections:*

(1) Amend section 1(a) of the bill to read as follows:

“(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ‘The Gekas-Grassley Bankruptcy Reform Act of 2000.’”

(2) Strike “Bankruptcy Reform Act of 2000” each place it appears throughout the bill and insert “Gekas-Grassley Bankruptcy Reform Act of 2000”.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. SESSIONS

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I offer an amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. SESSIONS:  
Page 1, line 2, strike out “S. 3186”, and insert “H.R. 2415”; and

Page 1, line 4, strike out “Secretary of the Senate” and insert “Clerk of the House”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS).

The amendment was agreed to.

The concurrent resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The title of the concurrent resolution was amended so as to read: “Directing the Clerk of the House to correct the enrollment of the bill H.R. 2415.”