

## HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Thursday, June 15, 2000

The House met at 9 a.m.

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer: It is You, O God, who brought people out of darkness of repression and revolution into Your own wonderful light of freedom.

As You have blessed this Nation in its infancy, bless it now in its maturity.

Banish the darkness of doubt and confusion. Free us of fear and selfishness. Bring us into Your own wonderful light where we can be our very best selves, caring about others. Help us to see the unrest from our own soul as a Nation that we may be fit instruments of peace to others.

It is You, O God, who brought people out of darkness of slavery and immigration into Your own wonderful light of possibility.

As You have blessed this Nation in its early trials, bless it now in its present difficulties.

End the night of cynicism and violence. Bring us into Your own wonderful light where we can meet others and accept our differences. Help us to recognize the poverty of our own spirits that we may be real hope to others.

Once we were "not a people" but now we are God's people. Keep us bonded in this truth, now and forever. Amen.

### THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Chair's approval of the Journal.

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

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. 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. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. HAYWORTH) come

forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. HAYWORTH led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). The Chair will entertain one-minute at the end of legislative business.

### PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4635, DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2001

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Madam Speaker, by the direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 525 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

#### H. RES. 525

*Resolved*, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4635) making appropriations for the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry independent agencies, boards, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2001, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. Points of order against provisions in the bill for failure to comply with clause 2 of rule XXI are waived except as follows: beginning with "except that" on page 63, line 4, through "drinking water contaminants" on line 8; page 67, lines 4 through 14. Where points of order are waived against part of a paragraph, points of order against a provision in another part of such paragraph may be made only against such provision and not against the entire paragraph. During consideration of the bill for amendment, the Chairman of the Committee of the Whole may accord priority in recognition on the basis of whether the Member offering an amendment has caused it to be printed in the portion of the Congressional Record designated for that purpose in clause 8 of rule XVIII. Amend-

ments so printed shall be considered as read. The Chairman of the Committee of the Whole may: (1) postpone until a time during further consideration in the Committee of the Whole a request for a recorded vote on any amendment; and (2) reduce to five minutes the minimum time for electronic voting on any postponed question that follows another electronic vote without intervening business, provided that the minimum time for electronic voting on the first in any series of questions shall be 15 minutes. During consideration of the bill, points of order against amendments for failure to comply with clause 2(e) of rule XXI are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Ohio (Ms. PRYCE) is recognized for 1 hour.

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Madam Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MOAKLEY), the very distinguished ranking member of the Committee on Rules; pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. All time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Madam Speaker, House Resolution 525 is an open rule that provides for the consideration of the fiscal year 2001 appropriations bill for the Departments of Veterans Affairs, Housing and Urban Development and independent agencies.

The rule provides for 1 hour of general debate to be equally divided between the chairman and ranking member of the Committee on Appropriations.

Under this open rule, the bill will be considered for amendment by paragraph, and Members will offer their amendments under the 5-minute rule. Priority recognition will be afforded to those Members who have preprinted their amendments in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

The rule waives points of order against provisions in the bill for failure to comply with clause 2 of rule XXI regarding unauthorized or legislative provisions of the bill, except as specified in the rule.

The rule also waives points of order against amendments for failure to comply with clause 2(e) of rule XXI since there is an emergency designation in the bill.

In an effort to provide for orderly and expedited consideration of the bill, the

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

rule allows the chairman of the Committee of the Whole to postpone votes and reduce voting time to 5 minutes as long as the first vote in a series is 15 minutes.

Finally, the minority will have an additional opportunity to change the bill through the customary motion to recommit, with or without instructions.

Madam Speaker, the fiscal year 2001 VA-HUD appropriations bill provides another example of a carefully crafted bill that strikes a balance between fiscal discipline and social responsibility.

I want to commend the gentleman from New York (Chairman WALSH) and his subcommittee for setting priorities and making very tough decisions required to produce a thoughtful bill that meets our greatest needs. It was hard work, and it was done well.

The VA-HUD appropriations bill funds a variety of programs from veterans' benefits and housing for the poor to the space program and environmental protection. Overall, this year's bill provides \$4.9 billion more than last year in discretionary spending.

Within the confines of a limited budget allocation, the subcommittee set priorities and decided to provide a significant portion of this year's increase to veterans medical care. An extra \$1.3 billion is provided to veterans health care which will help the Federal Government repay the debt we owe to those Americans who were willing to trade their lives to protect the freedoms that we enjoy. It may be impossible to compensate these individuals for their contributions and their sacrifices, but this bill makes a good-faith effort.

Under this legislation, more than \$20 billion will be available to provide medical care and treatment for veterans through VA medical centers, nursing homes, outpatient facilities, and other institutions that make up the largest Federal health care delivery system.

This bill does not just throw more money at the VA health system. It recognizes its shortcomings and makes recommendations for improvements. For example, the bill limits the amount of resources that may be used for maintenance and operations of buildings. A GAO report shows that one in four medical dollars is spent on upkeep of facilities which demonstrates poor planning that unnecessarily zaps resources from medical care.

In addition, the bill addresses a concern about the alarming incidents of hepatitis C among veterans and directs the GAO to examine the VA's response to this awful epidemic.

This legislation also directs the Department to review its drug formulary with a goal of ensuring veterans' access to necessary medications, medical supplies prescribed to them.

In addition to taking care of our veterans, the Federal government has a

responsibility to the poor and the vulnerable in our society, especially those Americans who cannot provide the most basic necessities to themselves and their families, such as housing.

Low-income families will benefit through this bill's investment in the Housing Certificate Program which provides funding for Section 8 renewals and tenant protections. A \$1.9 billion increase will allow for renewal of all expiring Section 8 contracts as well as provide relocation assistance at the level requested by the President.

Other housing programs that help our Nation's elderly, homeless, persons with AIDS, and Native Americans will receive level funding.

In addition to addressing today's societal needs, the Federal Government has a responsibility to look to the future and protect the interests of the next generation.

The VA-HUD bill fulfills that responsibility by funding environmental protection through the EPA. Specifically, this legislation puts an emphasis on the States, particularly in the areas of clean water, safe drinking water, and clean air.

The State Revolving Fund for safe drinking water will be increased by \$5 million, the fund for clean water will be increased by \$400 million above the President's request, and State air grants will receive an increase of \$16 million over last year.

Along with our commitment to environmental protection, an investment in science and technology will secure our Nation's future strength.

The VA-HUD bill will provide an increase of \$167 million for the National Science Foundation, bringing funding for this agency to \$4.1 billion. This investment will help the agency continue its mission of developing a national policy on science and promoting basic research and education in the sciences. NASA will also see an increase of \$112 million. That will bring total funding to more than \$13.7 billion.

Through this legislation, the United States will have the resources to maintain its preeminence in space and aeronautical research and accomplishment.

Madam Speaker, despite these thoughtful investments in our Nation's priorities, we are likely to again hear our Democrat colleagues bemoan the lack of funding in this bill. But I would remind my colleagues and make clear to the American people that we are increasing funding over what we spent last year. In fact, total funding from this legislation is \$8.2 billion above last year's level.

Does every program get an increase? No. But it is irresponsible to suggest that level funding or small cuts in some programs will lead to devastation. The truth is that this legislation takes a responsible path of governance by maintaining fiscal discipline and adhering to budget limits. These con-

straints require us to take a hard look at Federal programs, reduce waste and fraud where we can, and set priorities. That is exactly the kind of oversight Congress needs to exercise if we are to be responsible stewards of the taxpayers' hard-earned money.

We must reject the simplicity of arguments that say more spending is always better and, instead, look at spending bills in the context of where our Nation's needs lie and what priorities we can fulfill within our means.

I urge all of my colleagues to vote for this open rule and support the fiscal and social responsibility the underlying legislation embodies.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 0915

Mr. MOAKLEY. Madam Speaker, I thank my dear friend and colleague, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. PRYCE), for yielding me the customary half-hour, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, the bill for which this rule provides consideration funds two sets of programs, the veterans programs and the housing programs. While it does a relatively good job funding most veterans programs, and I really applaud the committee, that is just the good news. The bad news is that it just does not go far enough in funding veterans medical research and State veterans homes. The bill severely underfunds housing programs to the tune of \$2.5 billion less than the President's request.

Madam Speaker, I can tell my colleagues from firsthand experience on both counts, veteran and housing, that they are very vital. They save lives, they give people hope, and they should be adequately funded. That is why I just cannot understand why my Republican colleagues are so opposed to adding this additional money to help Americans find affordable housing.

Tuesday's Washington Post editorialized this bill, saying, and I quote, "HUD reports that 5.4 million families are either paying more than half their income for housing or having to live in severely inadequate accommodations." The Post further explains that what might be an economic boom for the rich and middle classes is actually a problem for affordable housing. As the economy gets better, affordable housing gets harder and harder to obtain.

Yet my Republican colleagues are determined once again to use the budget surplus to give tax breaks for the very rich rather than to use it to help everyone else find some kind of housing. Specifically, Madam Speaker, this bill will freeze spending for low-income elderly and disabled people, it will cut home programs which help local governments expand low-income housing, it cuts capital grants for public housing, and it cuts Community Development Block Grants. In short, it does

very little to improve the plight of millions of American families that are struggling to find housing in today's very, very tough market.

That is not all, Madam Speaker. In addition to ignoring the plight of the American families, this bill could do much more to make sure American veterans get the very best medical care that we can provide. Madam Speaker, veterans of World War II, the men who risked their lives for world peace, are dying at the rate of 1,000 people a day. For many in veterans health care, it just has not been all that it has been promised to be.

Madam Speaker, World War II veterans, all American veterans, deserve the best health care we can afford them. They need their country to keep its promise. And although this bill funds veterans medical care at the President's request, it still is really not enough to meet the need of the aging veterans population. For instance, this bill freezes funding for veterans medical research, the research that makes sure our veterans hospitals attract the very best doctors and provide the very best care. It also cuts money for the construction of State veterans homes.

Madam Speaker, listen to this fact. One-third of all the homeless people living in the streets are veterans of our military. This is absolutely wrong. Today, there are 5.9 million veterans of World War II. They make up one-fourth of all our American veterans. There are 8.1 million Vietnam era veterans, 4.1 million Korean conflict veterans, 2.2 million Gulf War veterans, 3,400 World War I veterans, not to mention 5.8 million peacetime veterans. Now, Madam Speaker, that is a lot of people expecting their country to make good on the promise of good health care, and this bill does not go far enough to honor that commitment.

It also fails to fund either AmeriCorps or an EPA cleanup of the Great Lakes. It underfunds NASA. It severely underfunds, by more than \$2.5 billion, FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, our Nation's safety net in time of natural disasters. Madam Speaker, we should all cross our fingers and hope that there are no hurricanes, no floods, and no tornadoes next year, because we may not be able to pay for them. Madam Speaker, during this economic boom, during this unprecedented American prosperity, we should be looking to adequately fund these Federal programs and we have not.

In the Committee on Rules, my Republican colleagues rejected two amendments, one to increase funding for elderly housing, disabled housing, homeless housing and housing for people with AIDS, and another to restore funding for housing, NASA, and the National Science Foundation. Both amendments were defeated on a party

vote. Madam Speaker, without these amendments, the bill simply does not go far enough to help the people who really need it. I urge my colleagues to oppose this bill and oppose this rule.

Madam Speaker, I yield 8 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY), the ranking member of the Committee on Appropriations.

Mr. OBEY. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Let me simply say that this is one of six appropriation bills that the President has indicated he would veto, because this is one of the bills that is scaled back by a huge amount from the President's request in order to make enough room in the budget for the Republican tax package which gives 73 percent of the benefits to people who are in the richest 1 percent category of all taxpayers. They give, for instance, \$90 billion in one bill alone in tax relief to people who make over \$300,000 a year. And so because they use the money for that, they have to invent "let's pretend" games on this bill.

Previous comment was just made that this is \$4 billion over last year. Baloney. Last year's budget contained \$45 billion of accounting tricks that made last year's budget look \$45 billion smaller than it is, and \$4.2 billion of the \$4.9 billion alleged increase in this bill comes because of those budget gimmicks that hid last year's spending.

This bill is \$6.5 billion below the President's request. On veterans, it includes a welcome increase for veterans medical care, but it fails to address adequately a number of other veterans programs. It freezes funding for veterans medical and prosthetic research, it cuts grants for construction of State veterans homes and a variety of other items.

In a politically pugnacious act that is bound to cause turmoil rather than pull people together, the committee has eliminated all funding for the President's top priority, the AmeriCorps program. On housing, it does virtually nothing to improve the housing situation in this country. It appropriates no funds for the 120,000 new housing units, the vouchers proposed by the administration.

It cuts the Community Development Block Grant by \$276 million below current level. Assistance for the homeless is frozen, which will mean more homeless people will be frozen, too, come next winter. It provides \$2.5 billion less than the President requests.

On EPA, in addition to some of the other reductions in the President's budget, it totally rejects the President's proposal for \$50 million to begin a major cleanup of the Great Lakes.

The National Science Foundation. The President's request is cut by \$500 million. I will return to that in a minute.

This bill ought to be called the Tobacco Company Protection Act of the

Year 2000. There is a slippery scheme going on in this Congress. What is happening is that, first of all, the Justice Department is being denied funds in the bill that funds that agency in order to pursue suits against the tobacco companies for lying to this country for 50 years about the cancer-causing nature of tobacco. The Justice Department is provided no funds in their own bill, and then, in each of the appropriation bills coming through here, the Justice Department is forbidden from going to other agencies that would benefit from our suit to recover funds to help finance it. So the veterans department will lose millions of dollars in potential additional revenue, and Medicare will lose billions of dollars in additional potential revenue.

I never want to hear the other side prattle any more about their dedication to Medicare, because this ought to be called the Medicare Insolvency Act of 2000. The Republicans assure that the government cannot effectively proceed to sue the tobacco companies to get back some of the costs that Medicare and veterans programs have laid out because of the lying performance of the tobacco industry over the last 40 years.

What the Republicans ought to tell the tobacco companies is that they ought to go jump in the nearest lake. But this Congress does not have the guts to do that. These provisions are in these bills for one reason. Not because they are right, but because the tobacco companies are powerful, and they ought to be stripped out.

Now, I would like to return to the National Science Foundation. Every politician on this floor brags about what we are doing for the National Institutes of Health. Oh, yes, we want to get their budgets up by 15 percent, so we raise the NIH budget by 15 percent. NIH does research on all health problems in the country. But then what happens is, the committee slips a little provision in the labor-health bill which says, "Oh, yes, we have appropriated a \$3.7 billion increase, but NIH can only spend \$1 billion of it." Which means they will have fewer new research grants going out next year than this year.

And then take a look at the National Science Foundation. Economists tell us that in the past 50 years half of the United States economic productivity can be attributed to technological innovation and the science that has supported and developed it. The way science works is that organizations such as the National Science Foundation develop the basic science. And then, when they answer the key questions of nature, then that science is given to the National Institutes of Health and the National Institutes of Health do research which is more applied in nature, leading to specific cures for specific diseases. But the underlying foundation of all progress

against human disease is the National Science Foundation, and the President's budget for it is being whacked by \$500 billion.

Now, I know that the chairman of this subcommittee is a good man. And if he had enough dollars, he would put dollars in the National Science Foundation. It is not his fault that this bill is in a shambles like this. He has done the best he can, given the fact that he was given an impossible limit on what the committee could provide in the first place.

I would urge a vote against the bill, and I would also urge a vote against the rule, because the Committee on Rules made in order none of the amendments that we requested in order to try to correct this problem. They say, "Oh, the amendments had no offsets." Our position is that virtually everything we are trying to do to increase funding for education, for health care, for science, can be financed by about a 20 to 30 percent reduction in the size of the tax gifts that the other side is planning to give to the wealthiest 2 percent of all Americans. That is the linkage. They resent it every time we raise it, but that is the truth.

Even the amendment that was offset, that would have provided tiny amounts of additional help for housing for the elderly, for the disabled, for the homeless, and for housing opportunities for people with AIDS, even that amendment, which would have provided an offset by using funding that was already approved in passage of the authorization bill that passed this House by only four dissenting votes, even that was denied.

□ 0930

So I urge rejection of this bill and I urge rejection of the rule. And, sooner or later, I urge the majority party to begin a process of working together so we can produce bipartisan appropriations bills rather than partisan political documents.

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), the distinguished chairman of the Subcommittee on VA, HUD and Independent Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations.

Mr. WALSH. Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for recognizing me to work with my distinguished friend and colleague, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Judge PRYCE), who has guided this rule through the House now for 2 years in a row. She does it with aplomb and grace. We appreciate her help not only today but also in the full Committee on Rules.

I would like to thank the Committee on Rules for giving us a fair and honest rule, for giving us an opportunity to bring this bill to the floor with an open rule, and to protect what should be

protected and not protect what should not be protected in the bill.

This is, as has been discussed, a very complex bill. It is always easier to bring a bill through the House with lots of extra money in it. Positive things seem to happen when we do that. But we do not have lots of extra money.

I would submit that, if we provided all the money that the President requested for this bill, our surplus would be far smaller than it is projected. And it says something about the way we have attempted to present this bill and the other bills.

We know that, no matter how much we spend, the White House will want to spend more. That is a fact. Everybody knows that. So when we get to the end of this process, if we are up here with the House bill or the conference report, the President will get us to here. So if we start here, then we maybe get a little bit higher because we know there is an unlimited thirst for more spending down there.

So do we have enough money in this bill to meet all of our needs? Barely. Will we probably spend more by the time we are finished? I suspect that we will. History would tell us that that is true.

What we tried to do was present an honest bill with honest numbers, and the House will make its judgment on this today.

What we did do, Madam Speaker, is we put in a fully funded Veterans Medical Care package, \$1.355 billion. That is what the President requested. That is what the subcommittee presented.

Now, I would remind my colleagues, Madam Speaker, last year the President wanted to level fund the Veterans Medical Care. We put in over, I believe, \$1.7 billion last year above the President's request. I think the President learned from that. Now he has realized that the veterans are a priority with the House; and he came back with, I think, an honest request, and we honored it.

So I think we have done well for veterans in this bill. I think that any Member who supports this bill, the main reason they will do so is because they want to keep our commitment to our veterans.

As my colleagues know, there are a number of other areas in this bill that we address. One of them is HUD. The President asked for a 20 percent increase in HUD funding, 20 percent equals a \$6 billion increase in HUD.

Now, my colleagues can imagine what would happen if we did that with every bureau in the Federal budget. There would be no surplus. We would be back in deficit spending. So we tried to pare that request down to meet the absolute needs of the housing and economic development aspects of this bill.

We fully funded section 8 housing. There was a request on the part of the

administration to put an additional 120,000 section 8 vouchers into this bill.

Madam Speaker, they did not even use \$2 billion worth of section 8 money last year; 247,000 section 8 vouchers went begging last year.

Now, what kind of service is that to the American public? What kind of service is that to the people who deserve and need the help of their government to provide for their housing? 247,000 section 8 vouchers unused. And they are asking for another 120,000 this year.

We will be glad to discuss those at the end of this process, but HUD needs to do a lot better job of using these billions of dollars that we are appropriating to provide for housing for those among us who have the most need.

Within the Community Development Block Grant program there was a slight reduction of \$20 million in the Block Grant program. So there will be a very tiny reduction in this Community Development Block Grant program for our cities and our entitlement communities.

EPA's operating programs have been funded, while the various State programs which assist the States in implementing Federal law have been more than fully funded.

The Clean Water SRF program that was gutted by the President's budget request has been restored to \$1.2 billion, while State and local air grants and section 13 non-point source pollution grants have been significantly increased.

Perhaps most importantly, we proposed a \$245 million expenditure, more than double last year's amount and \$85 million more than the President requested, for section 106 pollution control grants. These grants offer the States maximum flexibility to deal with the difficult TMDL issues facing the States.

One of my distinguished colleagues on the other side said that FEMA was underfunded by over \$2 billion. I would remind my colleague that there is \$2 billion in the FEMA pipeline unspent, unobligated, authorized, and appropriated. Those funds are waiting for an emergency that we all know will come, and we are ready for it. And those \$2 billion are waiting for that to happen. When it happens, FEMA will begin to pay out. And if \$2 billion is not enough, we will do an emergency supplemental, which we do every single year, at least one.

So I think \$2 billion waiting in the pipeline is sufficient to handle any emergency; and if it is not, we can provide the balance through the emergency supplemental.

Madam Speaker, there is one point regarding this bill which needs to be made. I stated at the outset that we face a tight allocation. Nevertheless, there is some talk circulating that we

had a tremendously huge increase in our allocation, over \$5 billion. I would like to try to clarify that.

The reality is that our allocation is \$78 billion in new budget authority. The reality is that CBO reported our freeze level at \$76.9 billion. We have, therefore, a net increase of just a little over \$1 billion in actual budget authority over last year.

I hasten to add that that increase has been eaten up by the VA Medical Care increase of over \$1.3 billion, and the section 8 housing vouchers, which we fully funded even though they are not spending it. We wanted to be fair; and hopefully, HUD will do a better job of getting that money out to the people who need it; and increases in National Science Foundation and NASA. NASA is increased by over \$100 million and National Science Foundation by \$167 million, very substantial increases.

Lastly, I would just like to make a point on this issue of tobacco in this bill. There has been a lot of rhetoric. We are going to hear a lot more today. I would just like to point out that this subcommittee has struggled mightily to make sure that we have the resources available to provide for our veterans' medical care, to meet the commitments that were made years and years and years ago to those men and women who put their lives on the line for their country.

Now the administration is shopping from one budget to the next to find the money to run this suit against the tobacco companies. If they want to do that, that is fine. All we are saying is do not use medical care money, do not use our veterans' medical care funds.

There is not one single veterans' organization that has come out and said, yes, it is okay to use our medical care money for this lawsuit. Not one. We are going to hear something possibly to the contrary. But listen closely. What the veterans are saying is, we have no objection to this lawsuit. Quite frankly, Madam Speaker, I do not, either. But do not use veterans' medical care, because those dollars are precious. And we can tell our colleagues in each and every area of health care what impact those losses of \$4 million to \$6 million per year as long as that suit goes on will mean to our veterans.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, this is a good bill. Is it perfect? No. If it were, I would not have my name on it, because I do not think I have ever done anything perfect. But it is a good start. I would appreciate very much the support of both parties across the aisle. If we do not get that, I think we can pass this bill anyway. But I would like to have bipartisan support. I think we will by the time we are completed.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY), the ranking member, to respond to the previous speaker.

Mr. OBEY. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, my distinguished friend has just indicated that we should not use veterans' money because that money is too precious and we should not use it in a tobacco suit. Well, if you do not let the Justice Department use its own money and if you do not let the agencies who are going to receive the money from that suit, you are not going to have a successful suit.

The fact is that this suit will bring in many times more dollars to the veterans' health care fund than it would ever cost to pursue that suit; and, in my judgment, if you vote against allowing that to happen, you are really voting to make the veterans' health care fund less sound than it is and to make Medicare less sound than it is.

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), the subcommittee chairman.

Mr. WALSH. Madam Speaker, I will be very brief. I just wanted to respond.

The gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) is correct. I think the Justice Department should use their own funds, not veterans' medical care funds. I would remind the gentleman that there is absolutely no guarantee that any of those funds will come back to the veterans.

In fact, if the administration's policies are consistent, those funds will go into the Treasury, just like the funds that are available from the Veterans Millennium Health Care Fund that plows private insurance back into the Treasury. We want those funds to go into the Veterans' Administration.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY).

Mr. OBEY. Madam Speaker, let me point out that the amendment that we offered, the amendment that the Committee on Appropriations refused to make in order, specifically provided that the money would go in that veterans' account. If you do not believe it, ask the sponsor of the amendment. She is sitting right here.

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 4 minutes to my distinguished colleague, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS).

Mr. EHLERS. Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise and comment on this bill. It is a pleasure, also, to recognize the efforts of our good friend, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), who faced a very difficult position in this particular subcommittee this year, because it simply was not given an allocation sufficient to do the job.

I have previously made an issue of this inadequate allocation on the floor. I have also generated a letter to the chairman of the Committee on Appropriations and to the Speaker pointing out the need to increase the allocation

to this subcommittee so that it can meet its responsibilities in the various areas. I am referring particularly to one special area, and the rest of my comments will be regarding that.

Many times I have spoken to the House and to the Nation about the importance of continuing a strong research effort in science, engineering, technology, and mathematics. Very few people in this country realize that this marvelous economic boom that we now enjoy is due largely to advancements in science and technology.

One-third of our economic growth is due just to one factor. That factor is information technology. When we add to that the improvements and increases in technology in other areas, we find well over half of our economic growth is due just to advancements in science and technology. It is absolutely essential for our country to keep ahead of this research curve if we want our economic boom to continue.

Right now, relative to other nations, our investments in science, engineering, technology, and mathematics research have been decreasing. For example, Japan's research funds, as a percent of GDP, are greater than ours and increasing faster. Germany is above us. South Korea, believe it or not, is advancing rapidly and very shortly will be spending more for research, as a percent of GDP, than the United States.

Those countries recognize that they have to do this to remain economically viable and to catch up with us.

□ 0945

Our Nation has made improvements in the last several years. I am really delighted with the budget that the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) and others developed last year in this area. I am also pleased with what he has been able to do this year within his allocation. Last year the funding in the House bill was so abysmal that I offered a floor amendment. This year I do not plan to do that, because the gentleman from New York has done yeoman's service in coming to the floor with an amount for science, mathematics, and engineering research that is appropriate, given his allocation. But the point is the allocation simply was not large enough.

I want to get on the record that my lack of offering an amendment this year does not mean I am happy with this bill's scientific research budget or think it is great enough. Rather, I am convinced that given the gentleman from New York's good efforts and what he has done with the small allocation he has, I believe that, when we go to conference and deal with the Senate and negotiate with the President, the final result will be good for the Nation and good for the scientific research community. I wanted to get on the record that this is an extremely important area for our Nation and for our future, particularly our long-term future.

I hope all of us in this Congress will unite in providing sufficient funding for scientific research.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS).

Mr. EVANS. I thank the gentleman from Massachusetts for yielding me the time.

Madam Speaker, I want to recognize the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN) who has called this measure "a series of missed opportunities." I completely agree. These opportunities have been squandered because the priority of the Republican leadership has been to provide huge tax cuts to the wealthiest of all Americans. Dollars earmarked to tax cuts are not available to fund programs important to most Americans.

Among those opportunities squandered are \$25 million less for medical research conducted by the VA. This is some of the best research in the whole United States going after Parkinson's disease and Alzheimer's disease. This money would be cut by \$25 million. There is \$80 million less funding for the construction of State homes to provide for the growing need of long-term care for our Nation's disabled, infirm, and aging veterans; \$3 million less to maintain our national cemeteries; and \$62 million less for other important construction projects.

My Republican colleagues will say that they were constrained to provide this needed funding. Do not be misled. Squandered opportunities and available shortfalls in funding for basic programs are the consequences of the priority of the Republican leadership of this House.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. LAFALCE).

Mr. LAFALCE. I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Madam Speaker, I have the greatest both professional and personal respect and admiration for the chairman of the housing appropriation subcommittee and the ranking member, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN). I think they have done the best job they possibly could. But by their own words, they said they were operating under a constraint, an overly tight allocation. The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS) came up, I have the greatest respect for him, too, and he bemoaned the fact that we have to live under this unbelievable constraint. That constraint is grounds enough for voting against the bill because it is much, much too tight in virtually every area. When we look at real cuts, we have had real cuts over the past 6 years in housing program after housing program.

But now we are dealing with the rule. What could we do within those tight allocation constraints? We could change some programs that would make

money for the government and then we could use them on programs such as housing for the elderly, for the disabled, for the homeless, for the afflicted. So we came up with some provisions that we offered to the Committee on Rules, provisions that have already passed the House of Representatives in the authorization bill, provisions that were praised by the chairman of the housing authorization subcommittee and by the chairman of the full banking and housing committee.

The gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY), the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN), and I said, Let's do more for the homeless, for the elderly, for the disabled, and we can pay for it within this bill with changes that are bipartisan in nature. We were rejected, maybe because we were Democrats, and that is one very, very good reason for as unanimous opposition to this rule as we can muster.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

Ms. DELAURO. I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Madam Speaker, let me just say that the chairman of the subcommittee, the gentleman from New York, who is a friend but who yesterday missed an opportunity to vote to increase funding for veterans health care by allowing the Department of Justice to proceed with their suit against the tobacco companies which, in fact, would recover billions of dollars because the tobacco industry lied to the American people about the addictive quality of its product.

We would have been able to return that money to the Veterans' Administration in order to provide for health care for veterans in this country who are suffering. Yet, the chairman missed an opportunity to vote to increase funding for veterans health care, and those on the other side of the aisle voted against us being able to provide these needed funds. So it is disingenuous to talk this morning about how they want to try to preserve resources for veterans health care. Let the record show that the opportunity was there and he said no, as did others.

This bill, including the issue on veterans, includes the issue of housing. Unfortunately, this legislation takes us in an opposite direction from our promise for affordable and accessible housing in this Nation. It says to people who want to buy a home, the American dream, this robs thousands of Americans by cutting first-time home buyer assistance by \$65 million.

It cuts 120,000 new rental assistance vouchers that would help hardworking, low-income Americans. It cuts community development block grants by \$295 million, robbing cities large and small of the lifeblood of community projects. It has cutbacks for the most vulnerable, \$180 million in funds for local pro-

grams for the homeless. This bill undermines hardworking low- and moderate-income Americans struggling to make ends meet and it does that in order that we may provide a tax cut for the wealthiest Americans.

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), the chairman of the subcommittee.

Mr. WALSH. I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Madam Speaker, this issue of tobacco which I suspect will dominate the debate today, unfortunately, because we are spending billions of dollars to meet our commitments to veterans, the focus will tend to be on the 4 or \$5 million that the administration wants to take out of veterans medical care and spend on this lawsuit.

I have a letter here from the American Legion. I would just like to read excerpts from it.

It says:

"In the VA-HUD and independent agencies for fiscal year 2001 appropriations bill is language prohibiting the Secretary of Veterans Affairs from transferring Veterans Health Administration funds to the Department of Justice for the purpose of supporting tobacco litigation. Although we support tobacco litigation efforts as an alternative, the American Legion strongly supports the use of VHA funds for the provision of health care to veterans.

"The American Legion strongly encourages Congress to identify \$4 million in the projected surplus to be earmarked in the Department of Justice appropriations bill to pay for the VA's share of any litigation. VA funding should be used for its intended purpose, 'to care for him who shall have borne the battle.'"

Pretty clearly, the largest veterans organization in the country does not want veterans medical care funds used for a lawsuit to pay lawyers. That is another department's responsibility. These funds are precious. Let us keep them where they are.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY).

Mr. OBEY. Madam Speaker, the letter that the gentleman conveniently cites was written by an organization that did not know that the DeLauro amendment yesterday would have put all of the funds recovered from that suit back into the agencies that we are talking about, Medicare and the Veterans Agency. So the gentleman can quote an irrelevant letter if he wants but the fact is that he cannot convince anyone that any veterans organization is going to oppose an action which would bring many times more dollars into the veterans health care program than it would ever cost to bring the suit in the first place.

Mr. WALSH. Madam Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. OBEY. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. WALSH. The date of this letter is today, June 15. It is today.

Mr. OBEY. Did the gentleman from New York tell them about the amendment he voted against yesterday? I bet he did not.

Mr. WALSH. That was not the point of the letter. The point of the letter was do not use veterans medical care.

Mr. OBEY. The point of the letter is to cover their tails over there. That is the point of the letter.

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the very distinguished gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN).

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me this time.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this rule. I thank the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. PRYCE) and the work of her committee on the VA-HUD appropriations bill. I commend the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) for all of his hard work.

This is an excellent bill for veterans, as is the rule, because it provides an increase of \$1.3 billion for veterans medical care next year. It also matches the President's budget request for veterans medical research and for the program that funds construction of State nursing homes. And it makes sure that all veterans medical care dollars that are collected stay within the VA. The President's budget proposed returning, Madam Speaker, \$350 million in third-party payments to the Treasury. Under our bill, every dollar collected stays within the VA system.

Contrary to what we may be hearing, there is no scheme in this bill to stop this tobacco lawsuit from going forward. This bill prevents the VA from diverting veterans medical care dollars from being used to pay for this lawsuit. Whatever the merits of the lawsuit, the money should not come from veterans medical care. The money can come from any other VA account, including general operating and administrative expenses. The Secretary should cut his own budget if he knew what was in it and reduce administrative overhead and not raid the veterans medical care accounts.

This is a good bill for housing as well, especially for individuals with disabilities which has been a particular concern of members on both sides of the aisle on the committee. In the past, Congress has created a section 8 disability set-aside to earmark funds within this larger account to help individuals with disabilities find suitable housing. This year the President finally recognized the importance of this set-aside. It took a while. This bill meets his request to provide \$25 million specifically for that purpose.

Further, this bill again contains important language regarding section 811 housing for tenant-based rental assist-

ance for individuals with disabilities. Since there is an insufficient supply of available, suitable housing, this bill requires HUD to spend 75 percent of its fiscal year 2001 funds to build new housing units for individuals with disabilities.

This is a good bill, also, for protecting the environment. This bill provides an increase in funding for the Superfund hazardous waste cleanup program. The \$1.22 billion for the Superfund is an increase of \$2.5 million over the previous year's level. The Superfund program was established in 1980 to help clean up emergency hazardous materials, spills and dangerous, uncontrolled and/or abandoned waste sites. Too much money has been spent on litigation, and now we are spending more on remediation.

Also, this bill provides \$79 million for the leaking underground storage tank, or LUST program, to clean up hazardous wastes that have leaked from underground storage facilities.

□ 1000

This is \$9 million over last year's level, and \$9 million is to be used to mitigate the problems with the underground storage tanks caused by the presence of NTBE in our fuel supplies, another disaster out of the Environmental Protection Agency.

Finally, this is a good bill for scientific research, specifically for the National Science Foundation, which marks its 50th anniversary this year. With a small portion of Federal spending, this agency has had a powerful impact on national science and engineering. Every dollar invested in NSF returns many fold its worth in economic growth.

The NSF traditionally receives high marks for efficiency; less than 4 percent of that agency's budget is spent on administration and management. To meet these goals in the NSF this year, the bill provides a record \$4 billion for the National Science Foundation, a \$152 million increase over last year. This is a good rule. It is a good bill. It deserves our support.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY).

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time.

Madam Speaker, we spend a lot of time on this floor extolling the unprecedented economic prosperity and patting ourselves on the back for this remarkable economy, but we ignore the reality of a housing crisis that we have here in the United States. In fact, the economic prosperity has worsened the housing crisis because fewer and fewer people are able to really afford to even stay in their neighborhoods, pay the real estate taxes, find affordable housing.

If we look at the shelters, we will find that they are bulging, emergency

shelters are bulging, and these are people who are working. These are sometimes people who are making \$20,000 and even more. And this piece of legislation does virtually nothing to address that problem.

We find that nationally 13.7 million households, that is a lot of people, are living in substandard housing or paying more than half of their income on housing. In Chicago, in my city, 35,000 families are on the waiting list for the Chicago Housing Authority, for public housing; and that will take 10 years to get through that list. Madam Speaker, 28,000 families plus are waiting for section 8 rental vouchers, and the rental voucher program is closed. It will take 5 to 6 years to get through that program.

The budget cuts from this year, not just under the President's, but \$100 million from the President's requested for public housing. It cuts Hope 6, \$10 million from last year. It cuts homeless assistance funding. It cuts help for people, homeless options for people with AIDS is even. And yet there are more people that need the service.

So we are going to serve even fewer people. This is a serious problem that we are facing. We need to address it in this legislation. We are far from achieving our goals. I would oppose the rule and support the President in his pledge to veto this legislation.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Madam Speaker, how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). The gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MOAKLEY) has 7¼ minutes remaining, and the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. PRYCE) has 3½ minutes remaining.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER).

Mr. FILNER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Madam Speaker, I have heard statements on the floor this morning that says this is a good bill for veterans. I defy any of you to go before any town meeting in this Nation and tell our veterans that this budget makes up for the contract that we made with them.

We are not, my colleagues, fulfilling our contract with our veterans. We have asked them to sacrifice during war. We asked them to sacrifice in this budget process when we had deficits, and now we continue to ask them to sacrifice when we have surpluses. That is not right.

This is not a good bill for our veterans. We are falling further and further behind each year that we have a surplus, and we do not make up for past injustices to our veterans.

This budget does represent the strongest request the administration has ever made; but serious deficiencies are in this budget. Whether we look at research, whether we look at our State

homes, and whether we look at Montgomery GI bill benefits, we simply have not fulfilled our contract where our Nation's veterans.

Let me just tell everyone about research. Yes, we have fulfilled the administration's request, but if we consider inflation and salary increases, we have fallen behind another 10 percent in this vital account.

We are 10 years after the Persian Gulf War, and we do not have either a cause or a treatment for that affliction that is affecting hundreds of thousands of our veterans. We need the research. We have the money.

Let us put this in this budget. The biggest emergency we now face in our recruiting and in our retention of military is the lack of educational benefits for our veterans. Today's Montgomery GI benefit is \$535 a month. It is not enough to pay for any bit of college that any veteran wants.

This is an emergency, I will tell my colleagues. And I have an amendment to deal with this later on in the discussion. And if we are going to make our all-volunteer force effective, we need educational assistance at a much higher level.

A whole coalition across this country agreed that this budget could afford a Montgomery GI bill increase that would basically allow the average commuter student to pay for three-fourths of his or her college education. That would mean a rise under today's prices to \$975 a month for our GIs.

We can afford this amount of money. We must make that much money available. Our budget today makes \$535 available per month for college education. This is not a recruitment tool. This is not an honor to our veterans.

Let us see this as an emergency. Let us raise the Montgomery GI bill benefit to at least the \$975 a month that a broad array of organizations has requested. Let us reject this budget. Let us honor our veterans in the way they should.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. MEEK).

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time.

Madam Speaker, I also want to compliment my chairman and my ranking member. I serve on the Subcommittee on VA, HUD and Independent Agencies. There are a few disappointments with this bill. I have expressed them before. I will express them again this morning.

I think because of the budgetary gymnastics that the majority party has instigated here, our chairman and the leadership of this House, they have had trouble adjusting to this. They have done a good job apparently for veterans and, particularly, for medical care for veterans. They have done some other good jobs, but I am concerned that of all the people, the needy people

in this country, this particular bill does not address the empowerment zones. It is not funded at all.

This is the second year that this has happened. I want to know what is going on here where for each year we cannot fund the empowerment zone, which is supposed to be the one thing that is going to help us in these distressed communities. We did not fund, as we should have either, some of the other programs that are important in city communities.

Now, someone has to take notice of this. In this year of surpluses, we look back and we fail to try to empower people that are trying their very best to use the resources that are given to them both by government and the private sector. So it is very important that we look at community development. City CDBG plans, we did not receive the amount of money in CDBG that we should have in this day of fine monies and good surpluses.

The Community Development Block Grant Fund is being raided by so many other programs coming in; yet we did not fund it according to what was promised to us by the Speaker and some other people.

Let us look at this budget, and we know it has some very good points, but some of the flaws are very glaring; and I call our attention to them once again, and that is community development going out into the community, helping those people through the empowerment zones and through the Brownfields initiative and those kinds of things.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Madam Speaker, I yield the remaining 2 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY), the ranking member of the Committee on Appropriations.

Mr. OBEY. Madam Speaker, the problem with this bill is that it is a let's-pretend legislative document. It is the sixth time in a row that a bill was brought to the floor which is not in shape to be signed by the President.

Then it is said, "Well, this is only the second step on the way; we will fix it down the line." I mean, what that really says is, "We will not take the responsibility to produce a responsible bill; somebody else at some other time will do it." That is a "great" message for this Congress to send out to the American people, somebody else will fix our mistakes. That is a really big confidence builder. I think we ought to be able to do better.

Secondly, with respect to the comments about veterans. I have a letter from four veterans organizations, the AMVETS, the Disabled American Veterans, Paralyzed Veterans of America and the acting deputy executive director of the VFW; and what that letter says is on behalf of Members of AMVETS, Disabled American Veterans, Paralyzed Veterans of America, and Veterans of Foreign Wars, we are

fighting "to oppose efforts to stymie amendments by the Department of Justice to advance the lawsuit seeking to recover health costs associated with tobacco-related diseases."

It then goes on to cite the mistakes that the Congress has made in the past, the very actions which that side of the aisle are defending, and then says "From that point forward, veterans have been denied compensation for these disabilities. We urge you not to make the same mistake again." And they recognize fully that you cannot run a lawsuit unless you pay money to run the lawsuit.

Now, regardless of what the other side says, the game they have played is they have said to the Justice Department, "No, we are not going to appropriate money for you to use to pursue the tobacco suit," and you are denying them the opportunity to use money from any other agency to bring money back into those agencies. That hurts veterans beyond repair.

Madam Speaker, for the RECORD, I include the following letter:

THE INDEPENDENT BUDGET,  
A BUDGET FOR VETERANS BY VETERANS,  
June 13, 2000.

Hon. DAVID R. OBEY,  
House of Representatives,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE OBEY: On behalf of members of AMVETS, Disabled American Veterans, Paralyzed Veterans of America and Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, we are writing to oppose efforts to stymie attempts by the Department of Justice to advance a lawsuit seeking to recover health care costs associated with tobacco-related diseases. This matter is properly before the federal courts, where it will be decided on its merits. It is inappropriate for Congress to attempt to undermine this litigation by manipulating the resources needed to support this action.

Two years ago, much to the outrage of veterans across the country, Congress accepted a proposal by the Administration to terminate compensation for veterans with tobacco-related disabilities. This was done despite the fact that smoking had been sanctioned, subsidized, encouraged, and part of military life and culture for decades. Many in Congress refused to listen to the arguments we put forth to counter this proposal, in large part due to the temptation to use the totally unrealistic cost savings for other purposes unrelated to veterans' needs. The needs of sick and disabled veterans were cast aside as soon as potential paper savings of \$15.5 billion were transferred to help fund pork barrel highway projects in that year's transportation bill. From that point forward, veterans were denied compensation for these disabilities. We urge you not to make the same mistake again.

We also believe it is important to note that the same statute that terminated compensation benefits for disabled veterans with tobacco-related diseases (the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century—PL 105-178) called on the Government to address this issue by proceeding with the lawsuit to recover costs of veterans' health care for tobacco-related diseases. Section 8209 of the law (copy attached) called on the "Attorney General or the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, as appropriate, [to] take all steps necessary

to recover from tobacco companies amounts corresponding to the costs which would be incurred by the Department of Veterans Affairs for treatment of tobacco-related illnesses of veterans, if such treatment were authorized by law." The same section called on Congress to authorize the treatment of tobacco-related illnesses upon recovery of such amounts. Any attempt now to block the lawsuit is in direct contradiction of the sense of Congress expressed in a previously approved statute to help cover the cost of, and, provide health care for these veterans.

While the outcome of this litigation is in doubt, it does provide a possible avenue to help defray the enormous health care costs, past, present, and future, associated with tobacco-related disabilities. We urge you to resist efforts to attempt to restrict funding for the Department of Justice to continue this important litigation.

Sincerely,

DAVID E. WOODBURY,  
*Executive Director,*  
*AMVETS.*

GORDON H. MANSFIELD,  
*Executive Director,*  
*Paralyzed Veterans*  
*of America.*

DAVID W. GOMAN,  
*Executive Director,*  
*Disabled American*  
*Veterans.*

ROBERT E. WALLACE,  
*Acting Deputy Executive*  
*Director, Veterans*  
*of Foreign Wars of the United*  
*States.*

Mr. MOAKLEY. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, this is an open rule, so any Member that wants to offer any amendment that complies with the rules of this House may do so under this process.

The VA/HUD bill which this rule makes in order provides an increase, an increase of \$8.2 billion over last year and adds funding to a number of important programs, including veterans medical care, veterans compensation and pensions, section 8 housing, safe drinking water, clean water, state air grants, EPA research, pollution control grants, the National Science Foundation and NASA.

Those of us who do not care for the tobacco provisions can vote to strike them. That is the beauty of this wide open rule. That is the fairness of this wide open rule.

At the same time the bill funds these priorities, it lives within the parameters of the budget resolution. This balance of fiscal and social responsibility deserves our support. I urge a yes vote on the rule and the bill.

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, here we go again.

Every year the Majority party underfunds affordable housing in the appropriations process and every year the President and Secretary Cuomo are forced to negotiate for every last family in an omnibus bill.

Unfortunately, it looks like we are headed down this road again.

The VA-HUD bill before the House is cut \$6.5 billion below the President's request and the President will rightfully veto this bill in its present form.

Madam Speaker, we are hearing a lot about "Compassionate Conservatism" in the press—but there is no compassion in this bill.

Programs under VA-HUD benefit some of our nations most needy citizens and this bill does them wrong.

This bill provides no new funds for elderly housing, for homeless assistance grants, for Housing Opportunity for People with AIDS, or for Native American block grants.

Madam Speaker, the people who benefit from these programs don't have high paying lobbyists representing them on Capitol Hill. They don't have 527 groups pushing their special interests. They are simply needy Americans who need housing assistance.

Furthermore, this bill cuts public housing anti-drug programs and capital and operating grants \$120 million below last year's level.

Madam Speaker, this country spends far too many resources on putting drug offenders behind bars. Cutting drug prevention efforts in public housing just does not make sense.

Furthermore, this bill does damage to the enforcement of our nation's environmental laws by funding the EPA at \$282 million less than last year.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to oppose this bill.

Ms. PELOSI. Madam Speaker, this bill is a bad bill because it fails to adequately fund housing assistance for impoverished working men and women and it ignores America's housing crisis. Despite the shortage of affordable housing that plagues many cities and rural communities, this bill fails to fund America's tremendous housing needs. Even worse, this bill cuts several billion dollars from last year's budget for many important affordable housing programs.

Why did the Republicans design a bill that cuts housing assistance for low-income working men and women? Why do Republicans ignore America's obvious shortage of affordable housing? Quite simply, they cut housing assistance to pay for tax breaks to the wealthiest Americans. In March, they voted \$123 billion in tax breaks for the best-off one percent of all taxpayers—those with an annual salary exceeding \$319,000. Just last week, the Republicans voted to repeal the Estate Tax—a giveaway of another \$50 billion to the wealthiest 2 percent of Americans. This GOP plan would provide about \$10 billion to America's wealthiest 400 families.

In sharp contrast, this bill denies housing assistance to Americans living in Section 8 housing and public housing, who on average earn an annual \$7,800. It denies housing assistance for senior citizens on fixed incomes. It forces working men and women to choose between housing, health care, food, and other basic needs.

This GOP budget is unlivable for us in San Francisco. Compared to President Clinton's requested budget, HUD estimates it reduces housing assistance for San Francisco by \$10.9 million and denies affordable Section 8 housing vouchers to 458 San Francisco families. It denies housing help to 234 San Francisco residents who are homeless or are living with HIV/AIDS.

This GOP budget is also unlivable around the country. At the full Appropriations Committee, the Ranking Democrat, Rep. MOLLOHAN, offered an amendment to invest an additional \$1.8 billion that would provide assistance across the country. I voted for this amendment. The Committee Republicans rejected it. This amendment would have increased investments to build new affordable housing; provide new affordable housing vouchers; provide housing to the homeless; operate, build and modernize public housing; promote community economic development; provide housing and services to seniors, individuals with disabilities, and individuals with HIV/AIDS. Americans need this assistance and this bill falls short.

I oppose this Rule because it restricts our opportunities to improve the underlying bill. The GOP denied us a fair House floor vote on our amendments to increase housing assistance. Our amendments could have transferred this into a more bipartisan bill that President Clinton may have signed. Since Clinton has promised to veto the current bill, the GOP's decision ensures a veto and ensures we are wasting our time. I urge my colleagues to oppose the rule.

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

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

Mr. MOAKLEY. Madam 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 232, nays 182, not voting 20, as follows:

[Roll No. 278]

YEAS—232

Aderholt	Calvert	Ehlers
Archer	Camp	Ehrlich
Bachus	Canady	Emerson
Baker	Cannon	English
Ballenger	Castle	Everett
Barr	Chabot	Ewing
Barrett (NE)	Chambliss	Fletcher
Bartlett	Coble	Foley
Barton	Coburn	Fossella
Bass	Collins	Fowler
Bateman	Combest	Franks (NJ)
Bereuter	Cook	Frelinghuysen
Biggart	Cooksey	Gallely
Bilbray	Cox	Ganske
Bilirakis	Crane	Gekas
Bliley	Cubin	Gibbons
Blunt	Cunningham	Gilchrest
Boehlert	Davis (VA)	Gillmor
Boehner	Deal	Gilman
Bonilla	DeLay	Goode
Bono	DeMint	Goodlatte
Boucher	Diaz-Balart	Goodling
Brady (TX)	Dickey	Goss
Bryant	Dooley	Graham
Burr	Doyle	Granger
Burton	Dreier	Green (WI)
Buyer	Duncan	Greenwood
Callahan	Dunn	Gutknecht

Hansen	McKeon	Sessions
Hastings (WA)	Metcalf	Shadegg
Hayes	Mica	Shaw
Hayworth	Miller (FL)	Shays
Hefley	Miller, Gary	Sherwood
Herger	Minge	Shimkus
Hill (MT)	Mollohan	Shows
Hilleary	Moran (KS)	Shuster
Hobson	Morella	Simpson
Hoekstra	Murtha	Sisisky
Holden	Myrick	Skeen
Horn	Nethercutt	Smith (MI)
Hostettler	Ney	Smith (NJ)
Hulshof	Northup	Smith (TX)
Hunter	Norwood	Souder
Hutchinson	Nussle	Spence
Hyde	Ose	Stearns
Isakson	Oxley	Stenholm
Istook	Packard	Stump
Jenkins	Paul	Sununu
Johnson (CT)	Pease	Sweeney
Johnson, Sam	Peterson (PA)	Talent
Jones (NC)	Petri	Tancredo
Kanjorski	Pickering	Tanner
Kasich	Pitts	Tauzin
Kelly	Pombo	Taylor (NC)
King (NY)	Porter	Terry
Kingston	Portman	Thomas
Klink	Pryce (OH)	Thornberry
Knollenberg	Quinn	Thune
Kolbe	Radanovich	Tiahrt
Kuykendall	Ramstad	Toomey
LaHood	Regula	Traficant
Largent	Reynolds	Upton
Latham	Riley	Vitter
LaTourette	Rogan	Walden
Lazio	Rogers	Walsh
Leach	Rohrabacher	Wamp
Lewis (CA)	Ros-Lehtinen	Watkins
Lewis (KY)	Roukema	Watts (OK)
Linder	Royce	Weldon (FL)
LoBiondo	Ryan (WI)	Weldon (PA)
Lucas (OK)	Ryun (KS)	Weller
Manzullo	Salmon	Whitfield
Martinez	Sanford	Wicker
McCollum	Saxton	Wilson
McCrery	Scarborough	Wolf
McHugh	Schaffer	Young (AK)
McInnis	Scott	
McIntosh	Sensenbrenner	

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Ackerman	Deutsch	Kilpatrick
Allen	Dicks	Kind (WI)
Andrews	Dingell	Kleccka
Baca	Dixon	Kucinich
Baird	Doggett	LaFalce
Baldacci	Edwards	Lampson
Baldwin	Engel	Lantos
Barcia	Eshoo	Larson
Becerra	Etheridge	Lee
Bentsen	Evans	Levin
Berkley	Farr	Lewis (GA)
Berman	Fattah	Lipinski
Berry	Filner	Lowe
Bishop	Forbes	Lucas (KY)
Blagojevich	Ford	Luther
Blumenauer	Frank (MA)	Maloney (CT)
Bonior	Frost	Maloney (NY)
Borski	Gejdenson	Markey
Boswell	Gephardt	Mascara
Boyd	Gonzalez	Matsui
Brady (PA)	Gordon	McCarthy (MO)
Brown (FL)	Green (TX)	McCarthy (NY)
Brown (OH)	Gutierrez	McDermott
Capps	Hall (OH)	McGovern
Capuano	Hall (TX)	McIntyre
Cardin	Hastings (FL)	McNulty
Carson	Hill (IN)	Meehan
Clay	Hilliard	Meek (FL)
Clayton	Hinche	Meeks (NY)
Clement	Hoefel	Menendez
Clyburn	Holt	Millender-
Condit	Hoolley	McDonald
Conyers	Hoyer	Miller, George
Costello	Inslee	Mink
Coyne	Jackson (IL)	Moakley
Cramer	Jackson-Lee	Moore
Crowley	(TX)	Moran (VA)
Davis (FL)	Jefferson	Napolitano
Davis (IL)	John	Neal
DeFazio	Johnson, E. B.	Oberstar
DeGette	Jones (OH)	Obey
Delahunt	Kennedy	Olver
DeLauro	Kildee	Ortiz

Owens	Rush	Thompson (MS)
Pallone	Sabo	Tierney
Pascarell	Sanchez	Towns
Pastor	Sanders	Turner
Payne	Sandlin	Udall (CO)
Pelosi	Schakowsky	Udall (NM)
Peterson (MN)	Sherman	Velazquez
Phelps	Skelton	Waters
Pickett	Slaughter	Watt (NC)
Pomeroy	Smith (WA)	Waxman
Price (NC)	Snyder	Weiner
Rahall	Spratt	Wexler
Rangel	Stabenow	Weygand
Reyes	Stark	Wise
Rivers	Strickland	Woolsey
Rodriguez	Stupak	Wu
Roemer	Tauscher	Wynn
Rothman	Taylor (MS)	
Roybal-Allard	Thompson (CA)	

NOT VOTING—20

Abercrombie	Doolittle	Sawyer
Armey	Hinojosa	Serrano
Barrett (WI)	Houghton	Thurman
Campbell	Kaptur	Vento
Chenoweth-Hage	Lofgren	Visclosky
Cummings	McKinney	Young (FL)
Danner	Nadler	

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Ms. RIVERS and Mr. DEUTSCH changed their vote from "yea" to "nay."

Mr. HEFLEY changed his vote from "nay" to "yea."

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Madam Speaker, during the vote I was unavoidably detained with my staff concerning issues related to the FY 2001 Energy and Water Appropriations bill. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" for rollcall vote 278.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the pending business is the question of agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal of the last day's proceedings.

The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The Journal was approved.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Lundregan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 4387. An act to provide that the School Governance Charter Amendment Act of 2000 shall take effect upon the date such Act is ratified by the voters of the District of Columbia.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed bills of the following titles in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 1967. An act to make technical corrections to the status of certain land held in trust for the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, to take certain land into trust for that Band, and for other purposes.

S. 2498. An act to authorize the Smithsonian Institution to plan, design, construct, and equip laboratory, administrative, and support space to house base operations for the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory Submillimeter Array located on Mauna Kea at Hilo, Hawaii.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed with amendments in which the concurrence of the House is requested, bills of the House of the following titles:

H.R. 2614. An act to amend the Small Business Investment Act to make improvements to the certified development company program, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4576. An act making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2001, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate insists upon its amendment to the bill (H.R. 4576) "An Act making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2001, and for other purposes," requests a conference with the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon, and appoints Mr. STEVENS, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. SPECTER, Mr. DOMENICI, Mr. BOND, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. GREGG, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. INOUE, Mr. HOLLINGS, Mr. BYRD, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. DORGAN, and Mr. DURBIN, to be the conferees on the part of the Senate.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. REGULA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 4578, and that I may include tabular and extraneous material.

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

There was no objection.

TIME LIMITS ON AMENDMENTS OFFERED ON H.R. 4635

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

Mr. REGULA. Madam Speaker, I just want to say to all of the Members, the goal of the gentleman from Washington (Mr. DICKS) and myself is to get this bill finished in a timely manner today, by 6:00 or before, because I know that many of the Members have plane reservations. We can accomplish that if everybody will cooperate. We will have to get time limits on some of the amendments, and perhaps we can address some of them with a colloquy. We will work together to accomplish the goal to finish this bill in a timely fashion.