COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted to Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on June 16, 2000 at 9:12 a.m.:

That the Senate agreed to Conference Report S. 761.

Sincerely,
Jeff Trandahl,
Clerk of the House.

APOLOGY FOR UNWARRANTED TERM USED IN COMMITTEE HEARING LAST THURSDAY CONCERNING MERGER OF UNITED AND US AIRWAYS

Mr. OBERSTAR asked and was given permission to address the House for 5 minutes and to revise and extend his remarks.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, last Thursday, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure held a hearing on the proposed merger of United Airlines and US Airways. In the course of that hearing, I used an inappropriate and unwarranted term to describe the status of the spin-off carrier DC Air that would be created if the merger were to be approved.

Mr. Robert Johnson, CEO of Black Entertainment Television and proposed owner of DC Air, took justifiable exception of that characterization of the proposed new carrier. In a letter to me late Friday, Mr. Johnson said he is personally hurt and offended and called upon me to change my attitude.

I take the well today to apologize to Mr. Johnson and to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure for my careless, inappropriate, and offensive remark.

Madam Speaker, in my years of Congress, I have staunchly maintained an attitude of support for civil rights in the United States and human rights around the world. I will not dwell on that history today except to say that, in the most recent civil rights issue before my committee, TEA 21, I championed the inclusion of language to give a fair share of Federal transportation ac-
counts to disadvantaged businesses. Before coming to Washington, I spent 3½ years working in Haiti. During my time of Congress, I worked to bring economic and political stability to that first black republic in the world. I cannot let that record of 40 years be tarnished by one ill-chosen, inappropriate, offensive word.

In the spirit of Psalm 51, verse 19, “My sacrifice, O God, is a contrite heart. A heart contrite and humbled, O God, you will not spurn.”

Madam Speaker, it is further my re-

sponsibility and that of my colleagues in Congress to stay focused on the main issue here, the effects of this pro-
posed merger of United and US Airways on air service in Washington and throughout the country.

I have reviewed DC Air’s business plan and am concerned it would be tied too closely to the newly merged United and not be an effective competitor. The concern is not based on Mr. Johnson’s ownership of the airline, for I have great respect and appreciation for Mr. Johnson’s abilities as a businessman and his success as an entrepreneur, but on the new carrier’s dependence on its much larger partner. If the Justice De-

partment sees fit to approve this deal, I would hope that it would require the merging airlines to divest additional assets to DC Air to make the start-up carrier a stronger, more viable compet-
itor.

I am opposed to the United-US Airways merger on its merits. I believe it will diminish competition, spur addi-
tional consolidation in the airline in-

dustry, and result in fewer choices and con-

sumers. (Mr. OBERSTAR asked and was given permission to address the House for 5 minutes and to revise and extend his remarks.)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore, Pursuant to the provisions of clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair announces that she will postpone further proceedings today on each motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record votes on postponed ques-
tions will be taken after debate has concluded on all motions to suspend the rules, but not before 6 p.m. today.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN INTERPRETIVE CENTER

Mr. SOUDER. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3084) to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to contribute funds for the establishment of an interpretive center on the life and con-

tributions of President Abraham Lin-
colin, as amended.

The Clerk reads as follows:

H.R. 3084

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Repre-

tsatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARD ESTAB-
 LISHEMENT OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN INTERPRETIVE CENTER.

(a) GRANTS AUTHORIZED.—Subject to sub-

sections (b) and (c), the Secretary of the Interior shall be prepared in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior and the Governor of Illinois and in cooperation with such other public, munici-

pal, and private entities as the Secretary con-

siders appropriate, to contribute funds for the establishment in Springfield, Illinois, of an interpretive center to preserve and make available to the public materials related to the life of President Abraham Lincoln and to provide interpretive and educational services which communicate the meaning of the life of Abraham Lincoln.

(b) PLAN AND DESIGN.—

(1) SUBMISSION.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the entity selected by the Secretary of the Interior to re-

ceive grants under subsection (a) shall submit to the Secretary a plan and design for the interpretive center, including a description of the fol-

lowing:

(A) The design of the facility and site.

(B) The method of acquisition.

(C) The estimated cost of acquisition, con-

struction, operation, and maintenance.

(D) The manner and extent to which non-Fed-

eral entities will participate in the acquisition, construction, operation, and maintenance of the center.

(2) CONSULTATION AND COOPERATION.—The plan and design for the interpretive center shall be prepared in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior and the Governor of Illinois and in cooperation with such other public, munici-

pal, and private entities as the Secretary con-

siders appropriate.

(c) CONDITIONS ON GRANT.—

(1) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—A grant under subsection (a) may not be made until such time as the entity selected to receive the grant cer-
tifies to the Secretary of the Interior that funds have been contributed by the State of Illinois or raised from non-Federal sources for use to estab-
lish the interpretive center as required under subsection (b) and that the amount of such match is equal to at least double the amount of that grant.

(2) RELATION TO OTHER LINCOLN-RELATED SITES AND MUSEUMS.—The Secretary of the Interior shall further condition the grant under sub-

section (a) on the agreement of the grant recipi-

ent to operate the resulting interpretive center in cooperation with other Federal and non-Fed-

eral historic sites, parks, and museums that represent significant locations or events in the life of Abraham Lincoln.

Cooperative efforts to pro-

mote and interpret the life of Abraham Lincoln may include the use of cooperative agreements, cross references, cross promotion, and shared ex-

hibits.

(3) PROHIBITION ON CONTRIBUTION OF OPER-

ATING FUNDS.—Grants amounts may not be used for the maintenance or operation of the interpretive center.

(4) NON-FEDERAL OPERATION.—The Secretary of Interior shall have no involvement in the actual operation of the interpretive center, except at the request of the non-Federal entity respons-

ible for the operation of the center.

(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of the Interior a total of $50,000,000 to make grants under subsection (a). Amounts so appropriated shall remain available for expendi-

ture through fiscal year 2006.