REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2926, AIR TRANSPORTATION SAFETY AND SYSTEM STABILIZATION ACT

Mr. REYNOLDS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 107-214) on the resolution (H. Res. 234) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2926) to preserve the continued viability of the United States air transportation system, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

WAIVING REQUIREMENT OF CLAUSE 6(a) OF RULE XIII WITH RESPECT TO CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 242 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. Res. 242

Resolved, That the requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII for a two-thirds vote to consider a report from the Committee on rules on the same day it is presented to the House is waived with respect to any resolution reported on the legislative day of Friday, September 21, 2001, providing for consideration or disposition of a bill to preserve the continued viability of the United States air transportation system.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 242 waives clause 6(a) of rule XIII requiring a two-thirds vote to consider a rule on the same day it is reported from the Committee on Rules. The rule applies to the waiver to a special rule reported on the legislative day of September 21, 2001, providing for consideration or disposition of a bill to preserve the continued viability of the United States air transport system, H.R. 2926, the Air Transportation Safety and System Stabilization Act.

The rule allows this body to take up this legislation in a timely fashion, making it possible for prompt consideration of a much needed relief measure for the airline industry.

Mr. Speaker, this House has been united as rarely, if ever, seen before. We came together in an overwhelming and bipartisan fashion to aid those in crisis and support our President as he seeks justice. We need to come together again to consider a critical piece of legislation to further guide our Nation and its citizens through this crisis. Now is not the time for stalling or dilatory tactics. This legislation has been approved by leaders on both sides of the aisle, in both Chambers, and in conjunction with the Administration. It is imperative that we move forward with this urgent measure. I urge my colleagues to support this rule so we may proceed with the legislation itself.

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

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for yielding the time, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This is the first of two rules that we will consider. This rule provides for the waiver of the 24-hour layover requirement for the next rule. I will have a fairly lengthy statement when we take up the next rule. We do have a number of other speakers who wish to speak on this rule as well as the next rule.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DeFAZIO).

Mr. DeFAZIO. I thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. REYNOLDS) for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, here we have before us a bill that will cost the taxpayers of America more than $20 billion. There will be 1 hour of debate. No amendments will be allowed. Even if this bill passes, 100,000 people in jobs directly related to the airline industry will lose their jobs. We have heard that from the CEOs who essentially wrote this bill. They are still going to fire or lay off 100,000 people. There is not one penny in this bill of accommodation for those people, for their insurance, for their mortgage, or anything else. Not one penny.

There are tens of thousands of other people who work in related businesses: travel agents, car rental agencies, hotels. The list is endless. There is not a penny in this or the next rule. Not one penny. And then we go to our local airports. Millions of dollars a day are being spent by our local airports to beef up security. There is not one penny in this bill for them either. So 100,000 workers, related workers, all the other governments in America that are incurring costs, not one cent in this bill.

And then we go to our local airports. Millions of dollars a day are being spent by our local airports to beef up security. There is not one penny in this bill for them either. So 100,000 workers, related workers, all the other governments in America that are incurring costs, not one cent in this bill.

Mr. Speaker, the danger is that the inadequate security measures that prevailed before this tragedy continue to prevail and under this bill will not be improved. This bill does not specify that we will federalize airline enforcement. We have heard from virtually every expert, we have even heard it from the airline CEOs, they just say they are not willing to pay for it, and they say the American public will not pay for it. They say the American public will not pay for it. They say the American public will also require a $2 tax for airline security. That is incredible. They are so out of touch. But they are so much in touch that they got everything they wanted in this bill, but everybody else is excluded.

This bill does not do the things we need to do today. It might be hard to do a good bill by tonight, but we can stay here this weekend and write a bill. If this is a crisis, why are the Republicans running out of town? Why are they pushing us out of here? Why are they limiting debate? And why are they not allowing a single amendment?

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

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER).

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, last night we heard from our President about what this Nation needs to do to come together in the face of the challenge and the crises and the dangers that we face. Yet today the first thing we do is introduce a legislation that is very narrow in its focus. It only takes care of the solvency of the airlines to the exclusion of everyone else; to the exclusion of the workers who have lost their jobs, who are directly related to this, to their families, the problems they are suffering now as a result of that.

We take care of airline executive compensation. They are guaranteed in this bill they can make somewhere between 5 and 35. And, if they bail out of this industry in the next few months, they can make up to $70 million. They are taken care of. But the people who have lost their health care coverage, the people who have lost their income, they are not taken care of.

This is about a Nation going forward together. But in this legislation, we left the workers behind. This legislation is based upon the premise that somehow if we give the airlines a bail-out, then people will fly again.

This legislation does not deal with the problems that the American public is concerned about. They are not concerned about whether or not their airline is solvent, they are concerned about whether or not it is safe. We failed to address, as we have for over a decade, the federalization of the law enforcement powers given to the people who are screening the bags and providing security. The fact of the matter is we have heard from so many people first thing we do is bring out people are only marginally better off, if any better off, since September 11 in the airline industry. That is why they are not flying.

This legislation should direct this administration and this Congress to federalize those systems. No, we are going to debate it. We are going to debate and, the airlines are going to come back and tell us that airline traffic cannot stand this fee, they cannot stand it. We need to federalize this system. We had better do this, but we do not do it in this legislation. Why? Because we had to rush home
last weekend. Why? Because we have to rush home this weekend.

Supposedly we are in a setting here where we have to take these extraordinary measures to deal with the Nation’s business, and all the Congress can think about is getting out of town. We ought to take care of the American people. We ought to take care of the American people who lost their jobs.

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER), the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Rules.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for yielding time.

Mr. Speaker, our Nation has gone through some of the most extraordinary days in our over 200-year history. A week ago Tuesday, we saw the harshest, most strident, barbaric attack on our population of this country that we have ever seen. We have, over the last several days, been working together in a bipartisan way to deal with the challenge that lies ahead. Last night in this Chamber, the President of the United States stood right behind me and delivered an extraordinarily eloquent statement about the challenges that are ahead of us. As he did that, I was very pleased to see enthusiastic support from Democrats and Republicans, and the American people.

Last Friday night, an attempt was made to deal with part of this challenge by addressing the concerns of an industry that is critically important to the economic survival of the United States. I am not one who is a proponent of having the Federal Government subsidize or in any way underwrite a private sector entity. I happen to have very libertarian leanings as a Republican. I want to get the government out of the business of running our airports. I figure we could possibly can, especially when it comes to the marketplace. But a week ago Tuesday, following the tragic incident at the World Trade Center, here at the Pentagon, and in Pennsylvania, all planes that were headed, incidentally, to my State of California, we tried our darnedest to look at ways in which we could deal with this challenge. Obviously, a decision was made by the Federal Government that we had to, on Tuesday, close down our Nation’s airports.

In closing down those airports, we have seen figures of several hundred million dollars a day lost by the airline industry. That was a decision that the Federal Government made to close down our Nation’s airports. A private sector entity was impacted by that. It happens to be the industry which allows us to get the flow of goods and services, and people, around this country and throughout the world.

In that industry, it is obvious that air travel is going to be critical for our Nation’s survival. We have to rely on that. We cannot go back to simply rail, truck, car or bus travel. We need to have a viable airline industry.

Last Friday night, an attempt was made to put into place a package that would provide much or cash so that the airline industry did not go under, and provide some loan guarantees that would help sustain the industry for a longer period of time. I do not support the idea of rewarding any entity for bad practices, unwise business practices of the past. But I will say that when Speaker Hastert and Minority Leader Gephardt and our team, with the other body, proceeded to work on this package late into last night, my friend the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) has been very involved in this, many Members have been involved again on both sides of the aisle, a decision was made that we would try to ensure that we did not see the airline industry in this country go under.

That is exactly what we are trying to do right now, because a decision that was made by the Federal Government jeopardized the ability of this industry to have the flow of revenue that it needed to survive and continue to allow people and goods to move throughout this country. So that is why when the package, after having worked on it for a week, it was a week ago tonight that the first attempt was made to move this package through, and many Members, as I said, have been involved in this, we came together late last night. And I want to, as I often do here, thank both Democrats and Republicans on the Committee on Rules who worked late into the night in preparation for this and then reconvened early this morning to proceed again, and we have just now completed our work in the Committee on Rules, reporting out this bill which I believe is a very important step.

Now, as we held our hearing upstairs this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, I should say that there were a wide range of very important and understandable concerns that have been raised. There is a great deal of pain that these barbarians have inflicted on the American people and on the civilized world. We want to do everything that we possibly can to mitigate the level of that pain. But right now we are here dealing with a very important industry that needs to remain viable for the economic stability of the United States and the world. That is why this effort is focused on this industry.

Again, there are loads of very important issues that we have to deal with, and will be continually raised from both sides of the aisle. But at this point, I recommend, Mr. Speaker, that we pass, first of all, the provision that allows us to proceed with the same-day consideration of this rule; nothing by way of extending unemployment compensation; nothing by way of extending their health benefits under COBRA, even though they would have to pay for those benefits themselves; nothing by way of additional training for them.

People are saying, “Oh, there is a limit of $300,000 in this bill on executive compensation for airline executives.” That is not true. This proposal says that if you made more than $300,000 last year, you cannot earn more than you made last year and have your company eligible for this loan guarantee. That means that one airline CEO can collect $13 million in compensation next year. Another, $11 million. Meanwhile, for workers, there is zip, zero.

If we are going to have everybody get into the lifeboats, we ought to have enough lifeboats. We should not be like the Titanic. There is enough lifeboats so that not just investors and CEOs but also workers get some help out of their government. We ought to be willing to stay here Saturday and Sunday and Monday, however long it takes, to put this package together.

There is much talk of unity. God knows how much we need it. But if you want unity, the best way to get it is to convince all Americans that they are going to be treated equally. Do not tell the workers of this country that they will be considered as afterthoughts, and that is what has happened.

Yes, we have an urgent need to act, but we also have an urgent need to provide fairness and justice. That is what the American people deserve. This problem does not exist merely by having a government that does not want to vote against it, but it is very difficult to vote for it when it has this kind of rampant unfairness.

This bill ought to go back to committee. Our leaders on both sides of the aisle have demonstrated a very commendable dedication to take a couple of extra days and put this package together so that everyone, everyone is helped by it,
not just those who have the best connections with Washington.

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Flor-ida (Mr. REYNOLDS) for bringing this matter to consideration on the floor.

I am chairman of the Travel and Tourism Caucus, as I can underscore the concern in this building today is to get the economy moving. Now, I re- spect the concerns of the other Mem- bers of this body who are worried about employees and safeguards for employ- ees. I struggle with those issues, too, but if we do not deal with this issue rather quickly, there will not be em- ployees at all, regardless of the efforts of those to protect them in this bill.

The Dow Jones industrial average dropped 200 points this week. I left my home a moment ago to watch the news out of BWI airport talking about massive layoffs. Wall Street is looking and the major banks around the globe are watching what we do tonight to de-cide whether any credit will be avail- able for airlines.

So we have a real choice here today. We have a choice of helping imme-diately, move some economic stimulus, loan guarantees to the airline industry or we can sit here and twiddle our thumbs and assume that this will fix itself. Wall Street is saying it will not.

I can assure you, based on the eco-nomic model that I am seeing in Flor-ida, Hawaii, California, New York, Texas, Arkansas, I do not have time to go over 50 States, but stick around be-cause the economic pain is real, not imagined.

One of the prior speakers said some-how that we flushed out of this building last week and we are trying to rush out of this week. I take great excep-tion to that because many of us have worked and labored and toiled to try and find some opportunity to pro-vide comfort for those in New York, those at the Pentagon; and we have fo-cused our efforts on both relief and remedy for those. And we have also given the President of the United States the unified support of the Con-gress and the people of this country to endeavor to try and rid the world of ter-rorism.

I would love to obviously have a lot of time to debate some of these issues. God knows we would love to sit around and hammer things out, knock the table, and protect everyone in the room. I mean this in all sincerity, that we need to put this underlying legis-la-tion on the floor now today and move expeditiously so that on Monday next when the markets open there is a safe- ty net under the structure of the air-line industry.

Believe me, I complained to many of these same operators yesterday that were in my office that own the major carriers, and I was worried about bag-gage carriers and line workers and fuel-ers and mechanics and flight attend-ants and captains and co-captains. I worry about the treatment of individ-uals.

Worry about the treatment received by individual Americans as they tra-versed this country just but a few weeks ago and complaining about how they were treated and talked about air-line passenger rules or bill of rights. And, sure, I would like to sweep up some of these things and spend hours and days and weeks on finding a per-fect solution here, because I know with both sides working, we can.

But, regrettably, based on this eco-nomic crisis we face, either provide the guarantee, as we did in the Chrys-ler Corporation bailout years ago that Members from Detroit insisted we needed; and, thank God, the Congress responded, because, God knows, Chrys-ler not only succeeded, but survived and excelled and hired millions of American workers to be on their as-sembly line.

So the choice is clear today: move consideration or find huge massive lay-offs. So the employees you think you are protecting under the debate today will be those that are, in fact, given pink slips on Monday, because credit will be shut off, airline employees will be going home, no one will be flying, and the economy of the United States of America will grind to an absolute halt.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. Holz).

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

Mr. Speaker, this bill should not be coming up now. It is not ready. It does not deal with the fundamental prob-lem. Yes, there is an urgent need to strengthen the airline industry. We need to do this in a bipartisan way. We need to do it urgently. There is much in this bill, $15 billion in direct aid and loan guarantees, and that is good. You will hear about perspective liability and retrospective liability. I will not talk about that.

It does not include, however, any-thing, about the needs of working fami-lies—the baggage handlers, the flight attendants, the pilots, the agents, the clerks—unless you consider executive salary packages of $33 million as deal-ing with the needs of working families.

But let us face facts. What is the real problem now? People are not flying. Why are they not flying? They are con-cerned about airline security.

This bill has two sentences about air-line security. One sentence says that last week we said we were going to do something. The other sentence says that in the future we are going to do something.

If we want to revitalize the airline industry, we have to get people back in the planes. How are we going to get them back in the planes? Certainly we cannot do it unless we reassure them about the security of the airlines. The fundamental problem right now is people are not flying.

Yes, we have an urgent need. We should stay here this weekend, Satur-day, Sunday, Monday, if necessary, and get it right. This is an important in-dustry. It is critical to all other as-pects of our society. We should do it, and we should take the time to do it right.

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Flor-ida (Mr. WELDON).

Mr. WELDON. Mr. Speaker, I rise by way of introducing my colleagues to vote for this rule, which allows same day consideration, and then the subse-quent rule on the bill, and certainly passage of the final bill.

This is the first bite of the apple. There have been a number of Members who have risen who want to do more. We are going to have plenty of opportu-nity to do more, but we are clearly in a crisis situation right now.

I know the impact of this issue in the State that I represent, Florida, is gi-gantic. We have hotels in Florida that are virtually empty, rental car fleets that are virtually at a standstill, theme parks and other tourist attrac-tions that are empty. We are going to be seeing layoffs in a lot of other indus-tries, and all of the myriad other issues, airline safety, fair treatment for employees, we are going to have an opportunity to take those issues up. I will tell you an issue I am very con-cerned about. We have indemnification in this underlying bill. We indemnify the airlines, but not the manufactur-ers. Some people might say how ridicu-lous; what trial attorney would sue a manufacturer of an airplane in a hijack situation? Mr. Speaker, it has happened. They have tried to sue manufactur-ers of airplanes in hijacking situa-tions. So we are going to have to go back and revisit indemnification.

We are going to have lots of opportu-nities to deal with these issues. But this is the right thing to do at this hour. We need to do this for America. It is not for the airline industries, it is for Florida, California, Washington State, it is for the United States of America.

Let us pass this rule, and pass the next rule and the underlying bill.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WATT).

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

Mr. Speaker, I am going to vote against the rule for same day consider-a-tion and the underlying bill because this bill were not considered today and were consid-ered tomorrow, we could get a much, much better bill in several respects. I
am going to vote against the second rule for consideration of the bill, because I think if we were allowed to offer amendments to the bill, we would end up with a much better bill.

But if, at the end of the day, those rules are passed and this bill comes before us, I am going to vote for the bill. Not because I think it is a perfect bill. It can be improved by adding security provisions, which I think are gravely needed and we must pass, whether we pass them tonight or in the near future. It can be improved with amendments regarding executive compensation and a number of other things.

But we must get the airlines back on a solid footing, and we must provide an assurance to the families of the victims of this tragic incident that their interests, their financial interests, will be taken care of. Those two things are in this bill.

So my opposition to the bill really is about the things that are not in it, which I hope the majority will see fit to bring a bill on next week. I understand that is being considered. I think it is absolutely imperative that we deal with employee assistance provisions, whether in this bill or in some other bill. And if we were not rushing to judgment tonight, we could do it in the context of this bill, I think we are missing an opportunity.

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON).

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time. Mr. Speaker, I rise in favor of this rule, the subsequent rule, and the final bill. As a member of the Subcommittee on Aviation and as a Member that has answered numerous questions over the last 2 days, and in light of some of the things that have been said, I think it is important that we be very honest and very candid in our debate today.

Mr. Speaker, safety was considered first priority to this bill, and any reference to the contrary is incorrect.

In fact, the $5 billion infusion is in part because the FAA shut down the American airlines, all of them, until such time as new security procedures were put in place, which, in fact, have resulted in the arrest and capture of those who object. There will be no signal to America that we have not paid attention to safety is incorrect.

As J OHN SWEENEY says, who is the president of the AFL–CIO, "If Members of Congress fail to include relief to workers in the airline bailout bill, it will be an unconscionable, divisive and economically irresponsible omission."

He writes, "Over the past ten days, our Nation has been reminded again and again by the grim and inspiring images of rescue and relief workers that it is working people who are the first to step up to respond to their neighbors, their community and their country. And it is workers and their families who are taking a direct and immediate hit from the terrorist attacks and the resulting airline crisis—a hit that will also have a rippling, destabilizing effect on the economy unless it is addressed.

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Mr. Speaker, $20 billion has already been appropriated for relief. The President has signed legislation to speed up payments to the families of police and firefighters killed in the line of duty and the Crime Victims Compensation Fund has over $1 billion already available for disbursement. Millions come from FEMA and the Department of Health and Human Services and elsewhere, and there will be tens of billions of dollars from insurance and those liable.

But stop, let us do this right. Let us vote this bill down and come back and address these very legitimate problems.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN).

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, as our country faces some very difficult times, we are going to hear a lot about shared sacrifice. Shared sacrifice is so overly used that it means little in the minds of the American people. December 4, 1982, the first of the major oil companies charging into the World Trade Center to rescue people they had never met and dying in the effort. Shared sacrifice, we are told, is the unfortunate news that over 100,000 workers are going to lose their jobs for the good of their companies. Shared sacrifice, it is clear, means that our sons and daughters, mothers and fathers in the military are going to be sent into battle. But today, in the first economic bill to deal with the September 11 tragedy, we see that there are limits to shared sacrifice.

Under this airline bailout bill, senior executives will be able to continue to earn millions of dollars in salary and other compensation. In one case, this bill will permit a senior executive to earn over $34 million and, if he leaves the company, to receive up to $70 million in severance benefits. This is unacceptable, it is obscene, it exploits a painful tragedy, and it makes a mockery of the idea of shared sacrifice.

We cannot change this bill; but we can be morally outraged by this inequity, and we can ask the airline CEOs to do what this bill does not. They are asking taxpayers for billions of dollars in help, and then they will be firing thousands of their workers. At this time, they should publicly adopt policies that limit executive compensation to reasonable levels. That will honor shared sacrifice and the sacrifice of so many others have made and will make.

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

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS).

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time.

Mr. Speaker, we are moving into an economic recession; and in a certain sense, this legislation is the first bill that we will be looking at as to how we are going to respond; and the American people are demanding that, if we are in this together, we have got to protect the most vulnerable people; and this legislation does not do that.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. CLAYTON).

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time. Mr. Speaker, we have a crisis in public confidence in our airline industry. Before September 11, fuel prices were rising, business travel was declining, and some of our airlines in my State had serious financial problems.

After September 11, the government ordered the grounding of flights for several days, which caused considerable financial loss to all airlines. Now the flights have resumed. Consumers have been slow to return to the air. Therefore, the financial problems of our airlines have become more severe, and they need help from the Federal Government.

Indeed, the Federal Government should help the airlines, but this bill does not adequately address the economic and security issues resulting from the terrorist hijacking and the crashes on September 11. A Federal bailout of our airlines alone will not restore public confidence and increase ridership in our airlines which is, indeed, the basis for the airlines' long-term viability.

Simply stated, people are afraid to fly. In order to restore public confidence, we should move responsibility
for aviation security from airlines and their subcontractors to the Federal Government, employing trained security experts. We should do this immediately. In this bill, at least make an indication we are committed to it, not sometime in the future but in this bill.

The tragic events of last Tuesday should be a wake-up call to this Nation. No longer can we afford to rely upon low-wage unskilled workers, with an astonishingly high turnover annually, to manage our first line of defense against a repeat of events of September 11. We should act now to federalize airport security. This probably will substantially increase public confidence and ridership, and increase financial stability and the cash flow to our airlines.

In addition to the hardships suffered by our airlines during the crisis, thousands of workers have lost their jobs or may lose their jobs in the future. Thousands of airport vendors, hotels, tourism, business, and small business, mostly, also are suffering economically and need help from the Federal Government. We should be careful how we respond here, because we must respond to others as well; not that we should not respond, but this response is insufficient. The workers and small business operators in communities all across our Nation constitute the backbone of their local economies. These workers, tens of thousands of them, may be expendable from any airline, but they are essential to their families and to their communities.

Mr. Speaker, we should vote against this rule, and we should also vote against this bill.

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BARTON), who represents the Dallas-Fort Worth Airport, one of the busiest in the world.

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York, the distinguished member of the Committee on Rules, for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, D-FW airport, except for one runway, is totally within the Sixth District of Texas, which happens to be the district that I am privileged to represent. There were over 40,000 American Airlines and Delta Airlines and various other airline employees that work at that hub airport.

We know the tragic events that happened on September 11 in which four American flag carriers, two Delta and two American Airlines, went into the Trade Center, the Pentagon, or into the countryside in Pennsylvania. At D-FW as we speak, it is an airport that is operating at less than 50 percent capacity. The flights that go in that airport are operating about at about 30 percent capacity.

American, United, and other airlines have laid off tens of thousands of people this week. This is not the time to argue about the perfect airline relief bill. We have a very reasonable bill before us. It has been hammered out in negotiations, so the majority, the airline industry, the airport associations, and the White House. We need to get the bill on the floor. The first thing we have to do is pass this rule. Then we have to pass the second rule, and then we have to pass the bill.

I have an airport security task force at D-FW that has been operating for over a year and a half to come up with a series of recommendations about how to increase airport security. Most of those recommendations, until last week, dealt with increasing security to prevent illegal drugs from going through our hub airports, but many of them are applicable to terrorism. I am very willing to continue the dialogue with the Department of Transportation, the FAA, and all the other interested parties, but I am not willing to get into a contest where we refuse to bring up absolutely necessary legislation.

I would urge my colleagues, let us pass this rule, let us pass the second rule, and then let us pass the bill. If we need to come back in a month, 2 months, or whatever, let us do it, but let us not take an industry that is on its knees and force it to be flat on its back. Let us help the airlines and the economy. Pass these rules and pass this bill.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. EDWARDS).

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, this is not a perfect bill, but it is an important first step toward protecting the viability of our Nation’s air transportation system. For that important reason, I am going to support these rules and support this bill.

But, Mr. Speaker, I also want to send a very clear message to the airlines that will receive these taxpayers’ funds today. That is that those of us who represent hundreds of thousands of people from mid-sized cities and rural areas will be watching to see whether they take our Federal tax dollars in one hand and with the other hand cut off service to middle America.

That should not happen, it cannot happen; and if it were to happen, I think when the second round of this airline support legislation inevitably comes back before this House, it would be very difficult to encourage and convince the taxpayers of middle America that we are continuously supporting airline viability if there is no viability in rural areas because they have already cut off service.

With that caveat, we will support this legislation, and hope Members on both sides of the aisle will do so, as well.

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

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. MALONEY).

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the the rule and in support of the underlying bill.

Last week's attacks did unspeakable damage, unspeakable harm with great loss of life, but last week's attack underscored just how indispensable air travel is to our economy. Since the attacks, hotel occupancy in New York City has plummeted, restaurants are empty, Broadway shows have closed. People fly to New York from all over the world, but right now they are scared to fly.

With the $3 billion allocated from the antiterrorism package, new safeguards will be added to make air travel safer, but we do not know when passengers will return. In the meantime, if the airlines go out of business, what will be the next business to go out of business? We will all be out of business, and we cannot let that happen.

Supporting our airlines is also an act of patriotism. The terrorists wanted to ground America, so we need to fly. We also need to compensate victims, many of whom were my constituents and friends. We need to compensate workers that are not covered in this package. I have been assured by our leader, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GERHARDT), that he will introduce a bill tomorrow which will do just that, with the support of many in the leadership on the other side of the aisle. We need to answer this act of hostility by restoring the friendly skies domestically, and by sending airplanes of a different sort to get the cowards of the September 11 attacks.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT).

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by commending President Bush for his efforts to bring our Nation together. This is a time for bipartisan commitment to make common cause on behalf of our country.

Yet the handling of this bill, I believe, violates that very spirit. We now debate an air travel safety bill immediately followed by a "gag rule" that denies the Members the slightest opportunity to improve this bill by offering amendments and strictly limits their remarks during debate. Such parliamentary tricks, really, I think divide us at a time when we should be coming together.

There was a plainspoken Texan who once sat in that chair, a legendary figure who presided over this House, by the name of Sam Rayburn. He said that, in conducting the people's business, three of the most important words are "wait a minute."

That simple maxim I think has never rung more true than with this piece of legislation.

At midnight last Friday, when many Members of this House were asleep, like many members of the American public, when we had been told that all of our regular work was completed, an attempt was made to force through this House, in a matter of minutes, a bill that spent $15 billion, that is billion with a B, of taxpayer money, a bill composed of a mere three pages.

All that I personally did about those three pages at that time was to apply Mr. Rayburn's three words: Wait a minute. Wait a minute, because the bill that we had then and that we have now contains nothing meaningful, not one word, well, a few words at the end of the bill that are meaningless, making passing reference to previous legislation, to assure the security of Americans on planes flying across this country. That is deferred until later, instead of making it our first priority now. We have 31 pages tonight instead of last Friday's three pages, but those pages provide no more security for the travelling public.

I said "wait a minute" because that bill did not contain protection for the taxpayer; those three pages were only a blank check.

In that regard, I want to commend again President Bush's administration, because had it not been for them seizing the opportunity of these last few days and demanding an Air Transportation Stabilization Board, it would not be in the bill. This very provision of which the supporters tonight boast in this bill would not be there if they had overcome my objection at midnight last week.

I said, wait a minute then, because it contained no provision to protect those who do the hard work within our airline industry.

It contained no shared sacrifice. At that time all the money could have gone to executive compensation, to those at the top.

Tonight, I want to commend again President Bush's administration, because it has not been for them seizing the opportunity of these last few days and demanding an Air Transportation Stabilization Board, it would not be in the bill. This very provision of which the supporters tonight boast in this bill would not be there if they had overcome my objection at midnight last week.

I said, wait a minute then, because it contained no provision to protect those who do the hard work within our airline industry.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 1⁄2 minutes to my friend, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT).

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

I am ready to help it. I am ready to respond. I am ready to respond to this very minute. But crafting this bill has not been an open inclusive process. Rather it has been one closed-door session after another where the taxpayer rights, the safety of the American public, and the rights of American workers have been ignored.

I am voting no because it's not right to put those at the top in first class seats and leave everybody else—the taxpayers, the flying public, and the workers out on the tarmac without even a bag of peanuts.

I want to remind Members of the history of last week. We were actually in regular order of business. There was a unanimous consent request brought, as the gentleman knows, because he was here as part of the debate that was under consideration.

And the second thing the gentleman referred to was the language regarding executive salaries. I would like the record to so record that the executive salaries language that capped the executive salaries was included at the request of a minority ranking member, and that is why that language appears as it does in the legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 1⁄2 minutes to my friend, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), who has spent countless hours on this legislation in the spirit of compromise with both Republican and Democratic Members and leadership.

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

That is why I say it is a shame what is happening here tonight. They got nothing last Friday, and we have come around to another Friday and those hardworking Americans do not get the protection they need in this bill. It is wrong for this Congress to help those at the top and forget those who are doing the hard work out there. And we have been told in the interim that 500,000 Americans working for the airlines will probably be laid off even if the airlines get every dime for which they are asking.

It is not my intent to demonize this industry or question the motives of those who have come forward. That is a vital industry to our country. I am ready to help it. I am ready to respond. I am ready to respond to this very minute. But crafting this bill has not been an open inclusive process. Rather it has been one closed-door session after another where the taxpayer rights, the safety of the American public, and the rights of American workers have been ignored.

I am voting no because it's not right to put those at the top in first class seats and leave everybody else—the taxpayers, the flying public, and the workers out on the tarmac without even a bag of peanuts.
What has happened, Mr. Speaker, in the last week, is that 100,000 layoff announcements have been issued. I do not know how many fewer of those would have been announced if we had acted last week, but I think fewer than that. And if we do not act this week, there will be more layoffs next week.

We have had a whole week to discuss this bill. People have suggested that was not a bipartisan process. I can seldom be accused of having acted in the House in the few years I have been here, of a more bipartisan process, where the minority leader in the House, the Speaker of the House, the two leaders of the other body both agreed totally on what was going to go in this bill.

That does not mean they think that is the only thing that needs to be done, nor should anybody suggest for a minute that anybody on this floor thinks this will be the last thing that is done. Just because our leaders on both sides of the aisle were eager for this does not mean that all they are for. It does not mean we will not hear even later in this debate an understanding that there will be more legislation. But what it does mean is that if this rule is not approved and the second rule is not approved and the bill is not approved, after a week, a full week to come together, for our leaders to come together with the very best thing they could all agree on, is that some time this week airlines would no longer have insurance.

The unknown liability of two airlines who were victims of terrorists last week would make it impossible, in all likelihood, for them to get access to the financial markets they need to get access to this time next week, planes all over America would be sitting on runways. Nobody will be flying if we do not address these critical issues. Airlines cannot fly without liability coverage.

We address those issues here. Two airlines would not be able to have access to capital with some unknown question about their liability. We address those issues here. Victims could not begin to get access to compensation through a special procedure that is addressed in this bill.

This is a critical time. There will be more legislation that relates to this industry. Many of the points that have been made here tonight can be addressed. Those points were not made during these discussions in the last week. Now, that does not mean they cannot be made, but not made they cannot be made or will not be made in the next few days. It does mean that we need to stop the layoffs now, we need to keep these planes in the air, and we need to keep this irreplaceable industry a viable industry.

We do this with the action we take here tonight. I urge my colleagues to vote for the rules and for the bill.

Mr. DeFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to a point of personal privilege on the previous statement of the gentleman. If I could state that, or I could allow his words taken down, if you would give me a moment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would inform the gentleman that there is no point of personal privilege based on an earlier debate which is in order at this time.

Mr. DeFAZIO. Well, then, if the gentleman made a statement that was untrue about the position of the Democratic leaders and basically directly casting aspersion on him by saying that they did not raise the issues raised by many Members here on the floor in those discussions, and we know that they did, is there a process under which I could have his words taken down or reviewed?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. It is certainly the right of any Member during debate to ask that a Member’s words be taken down. At that point the words must be transcribed and read to the House and the Chair will rule upon them.

Mr. DeFAZIO. But what my question is, since he made an assertion about the Democratic leaders, which I know and others know to be untrue, and about the points we are making on the floor, that these issues were not raised in the negotiations, is there some objection that I could lodge against such an untrue statement on the floor of the House?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair is unable to rule or respond in anticipation of the actual words being read back to the House.

Mr. DeFAZIO. At this point, hopefully, we will get a chance to rebut those untrue words in future debate. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York (Mr. REYNOLDS) has 4 minutes remaining.

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT).

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say that if I inadvertently suggested that anybody had not addressed these issues in good faith all week, or suggested that all of our leaders had not worked hard to make this happen, or that the issues, and I believe in fact I said I was confident that later in this debate our leaders would come to the floor, I meant to say and indicate they had discussed this; they had an understanding of how this would be worked out in the future.

I certainly meant no suggestion of any kind that our leaders had not worked hard; that they, and that all sides are not concerned about these issues. If I mispoke in any way, I certainly will refer to. Because I think there has been hard and dedicated work put in on this by all sides this week.

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the other body intends to deem it has passed with no debate, because I think they recognize the seriousness and the cooperation, the unity that has been the hallmark here since September 11 between both bodies of the Congress and the administration. And therefore should be a full debate. We are trying to next move into a rule that will provide debate on the bill; and, if it is passed, we will move forward to the debate on the issue at hand.

Today, we need to come together again to consider a critical piece of legislation to further guide our Nation and its citizens through this crisis. Now is not the time for stalling or dilatory tactics. This legislation has had constant participation by legislative leaders on both sides of the aisle, both Houses, and with the administration. It is imperative that we move forward with this urgent message and this measure before us tonight.

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

The previous question was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes had it.
CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—HOUSE

September 21, 2001

Mr. KUCINICH and Mr. BAIRD changed their vote from "yea" to "nay."

Mr. SCHIFF and Mr. MALONEY of Connecticut changed their 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.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2926, AIR TRANSPORTATION SAFETY AND SYSTEM STABILIZATION ACT

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 244 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. Res. 244

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order without intervening motion to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 2926) to preserve the continued viability of the United States air transportation system. The bill shall be considered as read for amendment. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate on the bill equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and (2) one motion to recommit.

Mr. Speaker, the ripple effect of last week's events has been felt all over the world. In the blink of an eye, the way of life that we have taken for granted for so long has been changed forever. Despite a national state of shock, countless individuals. But in the wake of the cowardly attacks on our Nation, we must remember that this is not a moment to lose our resolve. As President Bush said, our nation's outstretched hand of help and hope must be immediately extended to our fellow citizens imme- diately to ensure the safety and security of American citizens. Within a matter of hours on the day of the attacks, the Federal Aviation Administration carefully orchestrated the safe grounding of every single airplane flying within the United States. This quick response and cooperation from the entire airline industry is an appropriate response to the brave actions of countless individuals. But in the wake of the cowardly attacks on our Nation, we must remember that this is not just an industry giant that is suffering. This is a critical component to our way of life and a vital segment of our national economy. Our airlines move people and products across America and week's tragic attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

The rule provides for 1 hour of debate to be equally divided between the chairman and the ranking minority member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. Finally, the rule provides one motion to recommit, with or without instructions.

Mr. Speaker, since the morning of September 11, 2001, when, as President Bush said last night, enemies of freedom committed an act of war against our country, our Nation has been through extraordinary and trying times. Over the past week and a half, we have heard countless stories of personal tragedy and selfless heroism. We have seen a Nation come together in a steady resolve to justly serve the just cause. And we have felt here in this Congress an unprecedented unity, rooted not just in bipartisanship but nonpartisan- ship, in citizenship. And we have much work to do.

As President Bush said, "We face new and sudden national challenges," because this war has many fronts. It was heartening for me to see my State's great Governor, George Pataki, and New York's outstanding Mayor, Rudy Giuliani, here in these Chambers last night. I have long valued their friendship. But as a New Yorker, today I value even more their leadership. Each as shown a steady hand and quiet courage through which so many have drawn strength. Equally important, their attendance served as a reminder that we still have work to do to recover, rebuild and strengthen a city and a Na- tion.

Mr. Speaker, the ripple effect of last week's events has been felt all over the world. In the blink of an eye, the way of life that we have taken for granted for so long has been changed forever. Despite a national state of shock, thou- sand of lives and a vital segment of our na- tion's economy. Our airlines move people and products across America and