

things. And that is what you would be doing, because, as everybody knows, race and religious identity track one another very, very closely.

Today, when black people go to Catholic Charities or to Lutheran Services they see people of every race and color working there. And do you know what? I have not heard these organizations and the many other faith-based organizations complain that in order to serve my African American community, they sometimes reach out and find black people who are not Catholic and who are not Lutheran, because they do not ask what they are.

We have resisted pressures in this House for repeal of affirmative action, for repeal of goals. Surely we can resist the role back to the bad old days of religious discrimination and a violation of title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Chairman, I am happy to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. PRICE), a new member of the committee.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I thank the chairman and the gentleman from California for allowing me to participate in this debate.

Mr. Chairman, I am somewhat perplexed and disappointed by the tactics from the other side. This is serious business, and simply working to divide our citizens I believe to be counterproductive.

This bill, this bill, will enhance employment; it will increase employment and job retention, plus increase the overall skill level of our labor force. Now, the demagoguery that you hear from the other side on this issue, and, frankly, on every issue, seemingly every issue, frankly is a disservice to this debate and does a disservice to our Nation.

This bill gets more resources to the individual needing it. That is a good thing.

These are very challenging times for many in our workforce. They need more options for assistance, not a one-size-fits-all model or program. Streamlining the one-stop career center system is easier for the client. That is a good thing. It does not harm the Wagner-Peyser money. There are no lost resources.

Greater flexibility in the delivery of core, intensive, and training services allows individuals to receive the most appropriate services specifically for them. That is a good thing. Providing Personal Reemployment Accounts allows those who are unemployed an opportunity to use money for those things that are often that final hurdle to getting a new job, child care, transportation, housing assistance. That is a good thing. Getting more resources to those most in need when they are out of school helps those without other opportunities, and that is a good thing.

Faith-based language in this bill is identical, identical, to four separate

pieces of legislation passed during the Clinton administration. There is no discrimination on the provision of services.

With this legislation, we are actively and positively addressing how the Federal Government, and ultimately how each and every citizen, will come together and lend a helping hand to those needing that assistance at a very pivotal time. That is a good thing.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to support this bill and move forward in helping those needing to return to the workforce. This is a good thing.

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY).

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Chairman, once again my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are claiming they want to help workers in this Nation. But, as usual, their actions say otherwise.

The newest WIA proposal does nothing more than force workers to compete with each other for services that they have come to expect and services they deserve from the WIA system. WIA one-stops provide important job training services to help those struggling to find work to get resources they need.

If this bill passes, veterans and unemployed adults will be placed second to infrastructure costs. Instead of increasing funding in the bill to address infrastructure needs separately, this bill forces Governors to choose between workers and updating facilities, all from the same pot of money. Limiting this pool of funding will deny workers quality services for reemployment and adult education programs, and that is just plain and simple true.

This bill also sets up a voucher system that will actually decrease the amount of services available to job seekers. Those receiving these new job vouchers will be able to pay for training courses or other job-searching expenses. That sounds great. But the catch is that once a worker takes a voucher, they will lose access to Federal job training programs through WIA for an entire year. Money and services are both critical for many workers to get back on track, particularly when they have become unemployed over and over again, and workers who should not have to make the choice between one or the other are continually faced with the dilemma.

This bill also changes the way in which the government will evaluate the success of WIA programs. Now workers will be judged on how they serve the company they work for rather than on the quality of services they received under WIA. Since when was WIA focused on big business' needs rather than the worker's needs?

The worst part of this bill, however, is that it will write discrimination into the law. At religious institutions receiving WIA funds, those who share the

same religious philosophies will have an advantage over those applying for employment that do not subscribe to the same views. Workers can now lose job opportunities through blatant religious discrimination at places our tax dollars are funding. This bill turns WIA into a competitive service provider, rather than an equal opportunity resource for our Nation's unemployed workers.

This is not the way we can help our Nation's workforce, and I urge my colleagues to oppose H.R. 27 as it is written.

The CHAIRMAN. The committee will rise informally.

The Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MCKEON) assumed the Chair.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will remind all persons in the gallery that they are here as guests of the House and that any manifestation of approval or disapproval of proceedings or other audible conversation is in violation of the rules of the House.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages in writing from the President of the United States were communicated to the House by Ms. Wanda Evans, one of his secretaries.

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The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCKEON). The Committee will resume its sitting.

#### JOB TRAINING IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2005

The Committee resumed its sitting.

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Puerto Rico (Mr. Fortuño).

Mr. FORTUÑO. Mr. Chairman, back in 1998, Congress enacted the Workforce Investment Act, which established a system for a one-stop career centers aimed at providing one convenient central location to offer job training and other employment-related services.

While these reforms have largely been a success, the system is still hampered by inefficiency, duplication, and unnecessary bureaucracy. The bill that we are approving today aims to strengthen training services for job seekers accomplishes these goals in several ways: Particularly by streamlining bureaucracy and eliminating duplication; consolidating the three adult WIA training programs, giving States and local communities greater flexibility, and enabling more job seekers to be served with no reduction in services; removing arbitrary barriers that prevent individuals from accessing job